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Intergenerational Communication: An Evaluation

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Intergenerational Communication: An Evaluation

Abstract

The study evaluates communication tendencies in a younger college-age population and an older population with regard to intra- and intergenerational communication. Voluntary questionnaires were distributed to each population in an attempt to learn more about communication topics, comfort level, and frequency of communication within and outside one's own age range. The findings support the hypothesis that when communicating intergenerationally, individuals tend to attempt to adapt to the person with whom they are communicating, while still retaining a large degree of independence. Further study is recommended on the topic of depth of self-disclosure among intergenerational dyads.

This paper fulfilled W. Bettes's Honor Contract. His faculty supervisor was Professor Terry Helmick of Johnson County Community College.

Keywords

generation studies, age

Cover Page Footnote

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Abstract

The study evaluates communication tendencies in a younger college-age population and an older population with regard to intra- and intergenerational communication. Voluntary questionnaires were distributed to each population in an attempt to learn more about communication topics, comfort level, and frequency of communication within and outside one's own age range. The findings support the hypothesis that when communicating intergenerationally, individuals tend to attempt to adapt to the person with whom they are communicating, while still retaining a large degree of independence. Further study is recommended on the topic of depth of self-disclosure among intergenerational dyads.

Introduction

All too often we hear the common clichés and stereotypes: “young people are the future leaders of the world;” ”with age comes wisdom.” Yet it is much rarer that, when these axioms are listened to, attempts are made to bridge the generation gap. This study examines the intergenerational communication and self-disclosure attempts made by members of the younger population and the older population.

Self-disclosure can be defined as a process of communication in which a sender deliberately reveals information about oneself that is significant and would not normally be known by others (Adler, Rosenfeld, Proctor, 2007). While there are numerous contextual and personality factors at play when one determines whether or how deeply to self-disclose, the initial assumption of the author was that a difference exists in self-disclosure levels of younger and older people. Additionally, it was assumed that when these two populations communicate with one another, the levels of self-disclosure would be different than if the groups were communicating within their own age group.

In order to further understand communication between age groups, the initial goal of studying self-disclosure was expanded to include intergenerational communication that was separate from intergenerational self-disclosure. However, as the two concepts relate closely with one another, this project can be seen as a single study.

Literature Review

Self-disclosure is dependent on the context and circumstances, claims Jeremy Dean, writing for the psychology website PsyBlog. As many people may have experienced, too much self-disclosure too soon can lead to problems. Still, Dean describes the benefits of appropriate self-disclosure. Those who disclose intimate details tend to be liked more than those who don't. People disclose more to people they like. Also, people prefer those to whom they have previously disclosed. The last two points effectively create a bond between a given dyad. As with many elements of communication, the understanding of the disclosure by the recipient is as important as the sender's self-disclosure itself.

Tracy Schmidt and Randolph Cornelius evaluated the content of self-disclosures of college students age 20-23 (Schmidt & Cornelius, 1987). The majority of reasons for self-disclosure involved information sharing, sharing of feelings, although some students admitted strategy in relationship maintenance with a friend as the reason for disclosing. The students also benefited from self-disclosure, as they saw the act helped them to become the kind of person they would like to be. This point is especially important in intergenerational communication, especially if the younger population perceives the older generation as possessing desirable knowledge.

In her article *Self-Disclosure with Friends Across the Life Cycles*, Fran Dickson-Markman argues that throughout the lifespan, there is no real difference in amount, depth, honesty and intent of self-disclosure, which indicates that peer relationships across the life span are more similar than they are different. Her major finding was that as age increases, the negative valence of self-disclosure increases. Dickson-Markman also shows a correlation between length of friendship and the degree and amount of self-disclosure, which, when combined with her

primary findings, indicates the need for longitudinal studies regarding this subject (Dickson-Markman, 1986).

Ngozi Nkongho's research focused on 107 elderly men and women from 6 senior centers in New York City who completed Lohman's Life Satisfaction Scale and a modified version of Moriwaki's self-disclosure questionnaire. As would probably be expected, what an elderly person disclosed to friends and to an adult child were different. Nkongho found that adult children typically receive disclosures related to Body and Health, and Financial and Living Conditions. Friends of the elderly, on the other hand, were the recipients of disclosures involving Achievement, Roles, Personality, Social Relations and Attitudes and Opinions. Perhaps most importantly to the field of general disclosure, Nkongho found a correlation between the amount a person would self-disclose and their general well-being. The correlation may be in fact stronger than Nkongho gives it credit for, since the elderly men and women were lower-class and, given Maslow's hierarchy of needs, apt to want their more basic needs met before concerning themselves with social issues. Regardless, this provides adequate proof that individuals maintain different relationships in order to meet different needs (Nkongho, 1985).

Magai, Consedine, Fiori and King examined changes in 200 African-Americans' and European-Americans' depressive symptomology, stress, sad and happy mood, and self-reported health as it relates to self-disclosure. After 4 weeks, health symptomology declined over time as the subjects disclosed more, indicating a correlation between health and self-disclosure (Magai et al., 2008).

Jaye Bonnesen and Mary Hummert evaluated the quality of both painful and non-painful self-disclosures. They found that those who listened to the PSDs found them to be more painful, more intimate and less appropriate than NPSDs. The elderly people who utilized PSDs were

more likely to be seen as fitting the negative stereotypes of the elderly as opposed to the positive stereotypes (Bonneson & Hummert, 2002). Valerie Barker's research agrees with Bonneson and Hummert. Barker takes the position that the PSDs of grandparents represent a form of identity management. From the perception of the adult grandchildren, grandmothers tended to disclose more and their disclosures were more indicative of PSDs than grandfathers, who were viewed through a more cynical lens. Grandfathers were perceived to be more strategic in their PSDs and were more likely to be perceived as using PSDs for control (Barker, 2004).

Jeanne Tschann examined the element of self-disclosure and how it changes across gender and marital status lines. Intimate disclosure of married men to friends was found to be lower than that of unmarried men, and women irrespective of their marital status. The non-intimate disclosure level of all married persons was found to be lower than that of all unmarried people. This suggests that having a spouse fulfills a large part of the need for self-disclosure (Tschann, 1988).

Method

This study examined the concept of intra- and inter-generational communication as well as self-disclosure in individuals 60 to 84 and college-aged students 18 to 38. The following ten research questions were proposed:

R1: What topics do older individuals talk about most often with their peers and what topics do older individuals most often talk about with younger individuals?

R2: Which age group do older individuals most often talk to?

R3: Which age group do older individuals most like to talk to?

R4: Which group of people do older individuals talk to the most?

R5: Which groups of people do older individuals feel most comfortable and least comfortable talking with?

R6: Which topics do younger individuals most often talk about with their peers and which topics do younger individuals most often talk about with older individuals?

R7: Which age group do younger individuals most often talk to?

R8: Which age group do younger individuals most like to talk to?

R9: Which group of people do younger individuals talk to the most?

R10: Which groups of people do younger individuals feel most comfortable and least comfortable talking with?

Two questionnaires, one for an older population and one for a younger population, were constructed that asked both closed and open-ended questions that examined amount, depth, satisfaction, and topics of self-disclosure (See Appendices A and B).

Demographic data of gender and age was collected for each group. Participants in the younger populations ranged from 17 to 38 with the most commonly occurring age group being

17-23. Participants in the older populations ranged from 60 to 84 with the most commonly occurring age group as 60-65. There were 15 males and 20 females in the younger group and 11 males and 12 females in the older group that participated in the study.

Questionnaires directed towards the younger population were distributed in two sections of Public Speaking and two sections of Interpersonal Communication Courses at Johnson County Community College. Participants were offered five points of extra credit to complete and return the questionnaire within one week of distribution. No names were placed on the questionnaires. The questionnaires were collected by the professor, who placed them in an envelope and then recorded names of the students for extra credit. Students' responses were guaranteed anonymity. Thirty-five questionnaires were returned.

In distributing the surveys for the older population, two resources were utilized. These included the Brown and Gold Office at Johnson County Community College and the e-mail listserv designated for JCCC employees and faculty. Jerlyn Rowe, administrative assistant for the Brown and Gold Office, distributed via e-mail several copies of the questionnaire to members. Posting on the JCCC listserv was met with a positive response. Faculty and staff over 60 as well as those who were related to or close friends with people over 60 were willing to complete the survey. Twenty-three questionnaires were returned.

Additional questions were asked in the questionnaire which were not analyzed for the research reported in this paper.

Results

In compiling the results of the first two questions, a point system was utilized to be able to accept the answers of the most surveys. Participants were first asked to answer what the top 3 topics were that they talk about with their peers, and then asked to answer what the top 3 topics were that they talk about with the opposite-aged population. In the majority of surveys, the participants indicated their top 3 choices by placing a number in the blank next to the answer. In a limited number of other cases, participants simply check-marked or placed an X in three blanks. In order to accept the answers of as many surveys as possible while respecting the salience of the viewpoints, six points were assigned to each question. A numeric answer translated into a specific number of points: 1=3 points; 2=2 points; and 3=1 point. In the event that a participant checked three answers without regard to order, all three answers were given a value of two points.

In the older population's response to question 1, the most talked-about topics between older individuals and peers was reported to be Current events/political issues, Family, and Health and wellness issues (see table 1).

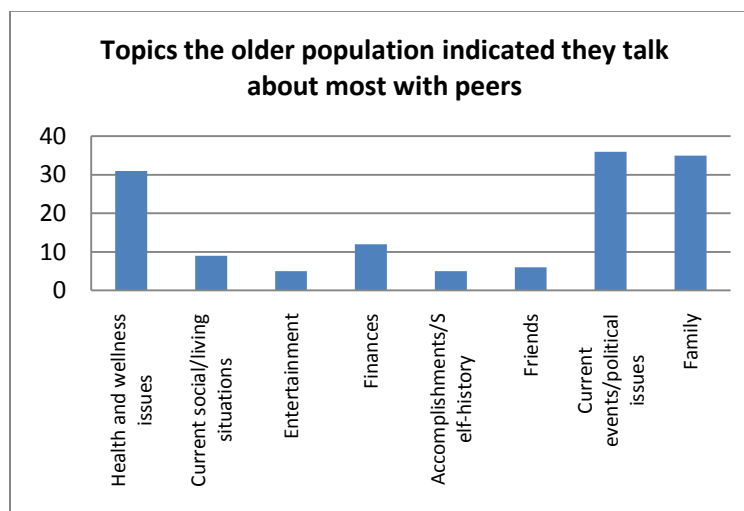


Table 1. The results of the older population's responses to survey question 1.

When the older population was asked about intergenerational communication, they indicated they were most likely to talk about Family, Entertainment and Current Events/Political issues (see table 2).

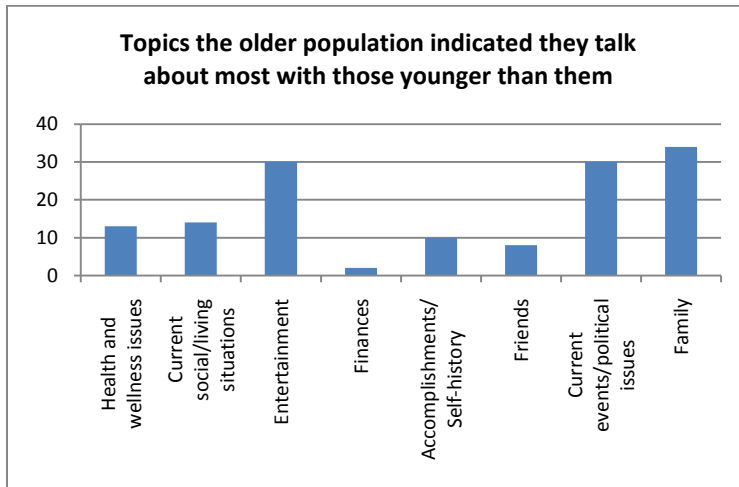


Table 2. The results of the older population’s responses to survey question 2.

Survey question 3 asked the participants which age group they most often talk to. The older population had a wider distribution of answers, though the top two answers for the older population were the age groups of 50-59 and 60-69. The under 20, 70-79, and over 80 age ranges were omitted as no answers were received for these options (see table 3).

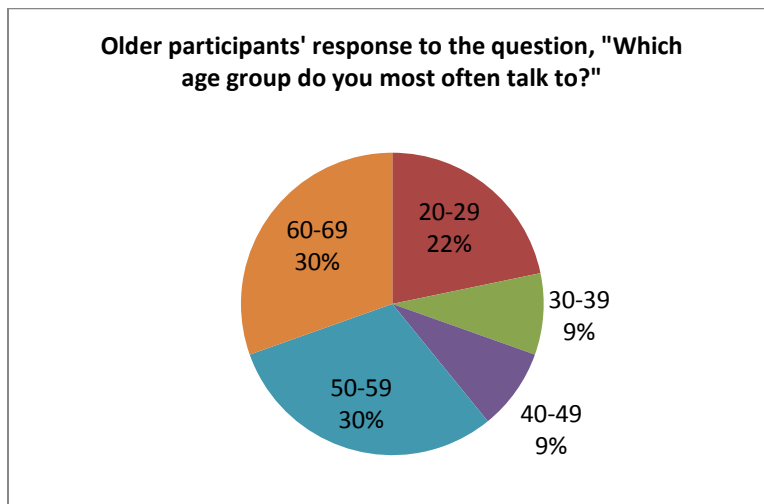


Table 3. The results of the older population’s responses to survey question 3.

Out of the age groups that participants disclosed to, they were asked which they most liked to talk to. The highest number of responses from the older participants was in the 60-69 and 50-59 categories. The two extremes in the choices offered, under 20 and above 80, both received zero responses (see table 4).

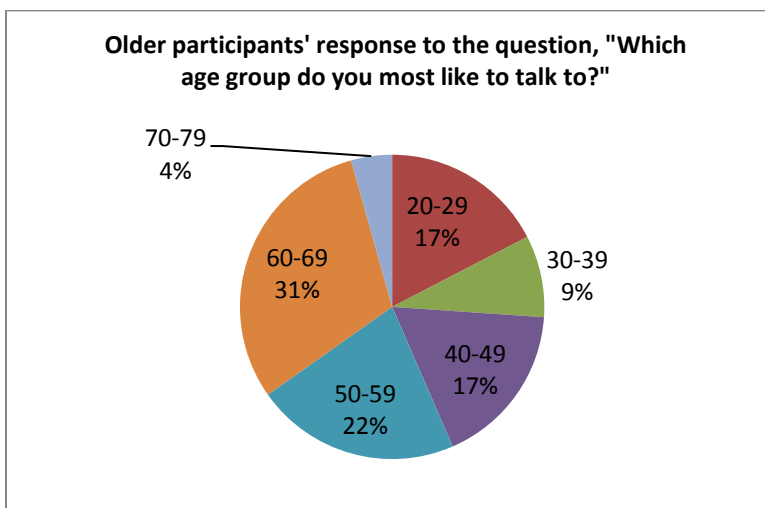


Table 4. The results of the older population’s responses to survey question 4.

The next question asked participants which group of people, as opposed to the age ranges, they talk to the most. For the older population, friends was the most-chosen answer, followed by family members and finally acquaintances from social situations. Grandchildren or younger people and doctors and nurses each received zero responses (see table 5).

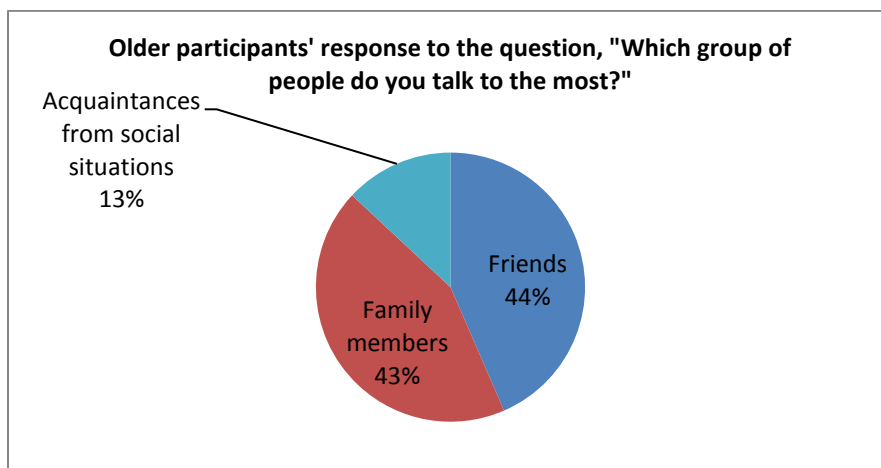


Table 5. The results of the older population’s responses to survey question 5.

To measure who people feel most comfortable self-disclosing to, participants were asked who they felt most comfortable talking—and, presumably, disclosing—to. The older population indicated that family members and friends were the groups of people they felt most comfortable disclosing to. Grandchildren/younger people, doctors and nurses, and acquaintances from social situations received no responses (see table 6).

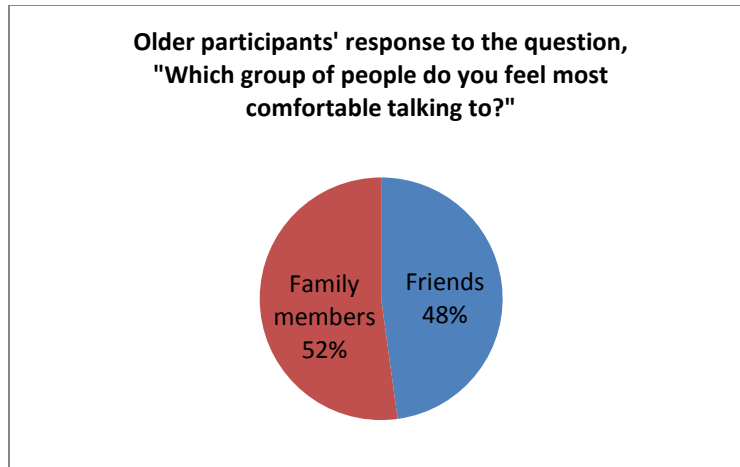


Table 6. The results of the older population's responses to survey question 6.

The opposite question was also asked of the older population to evaluate which group of people they felt least comfortable self-disclosing to. A majority of respondents indicated that doctors and nurses were the group that they felt least comfortable talking to. Complementing the previous question, no older respondents answered friends or family members (see table 7).

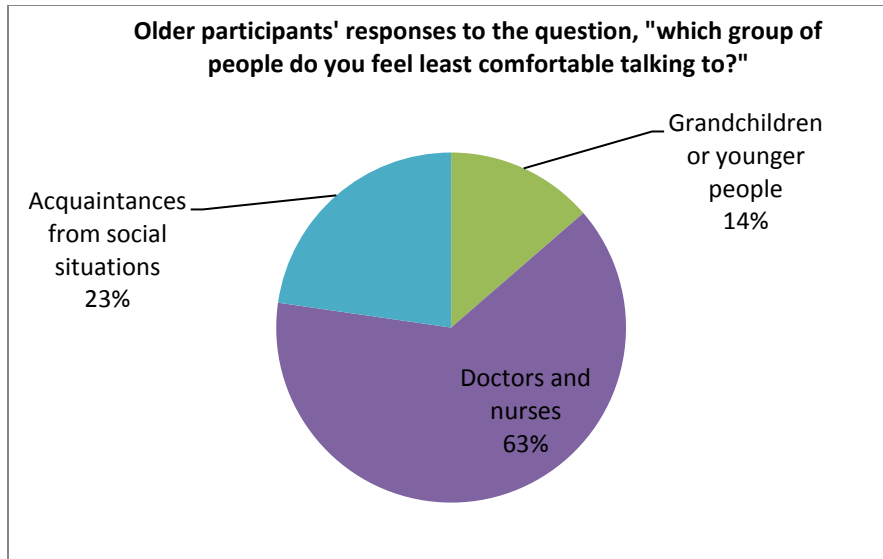


Table 7. The results of the older population’s responses to survey question 7.

The younger population completed a similar survey for purposes of comparison. When asked what they talked about most with peers, the younger population’s responses were somewhat more diverse than those of the older population and included as the top responses Entertainment, Friends and Family (see table 8).

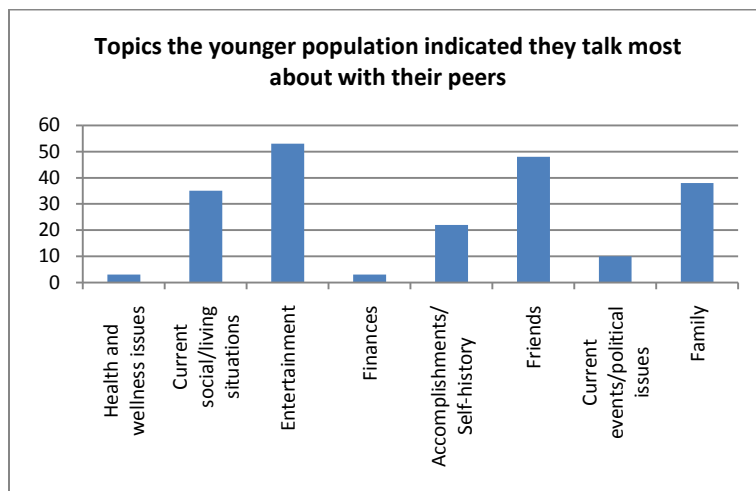


Table 8. The results of the younger population’s responses to survey question 1.

Conversely, the survey asked younger participants what topics they were most likely to discuss with those people older than them. The most popular answers to this question were

Current events/political issues, Accomplishments/self-history and Family, with Current social/living situations closely following behind (see table 9).

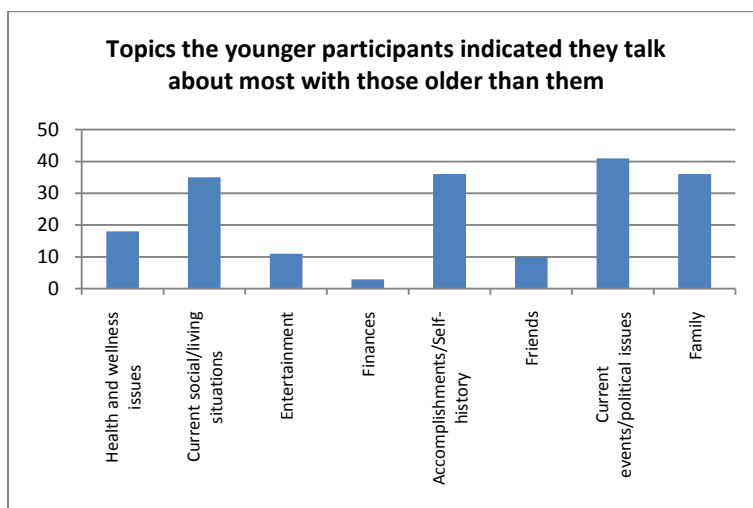


Table 9. The results of the younger population’s responses to survey question 2.

When the younger population was asked what age group they most often talked to, their responses were more homogenous; 86% of the responses were in two categories—under 20 and 20-29. In addition, no responses in the younger population’s survey indicated that they most talk to the following age groups: 50-59, 60-69, 70-79, and 80 and above (see table 10).

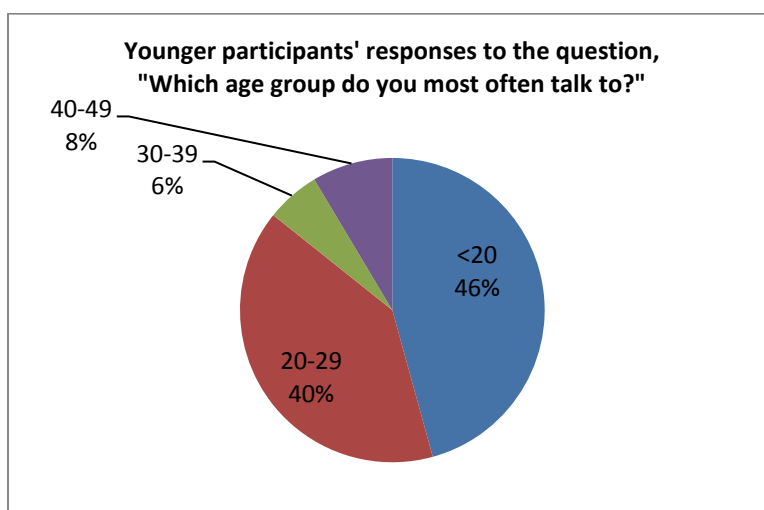


Table 10. The results of the younger population’s responses to survey question 3.

When asked which age group they most liked to talk to, the younger population, similar to survey question 3, primarily selected as their answers 20-29 and under 20. There were fewer

categories without any responses for this question; only the 60-69 category received zero responses (see table 11).

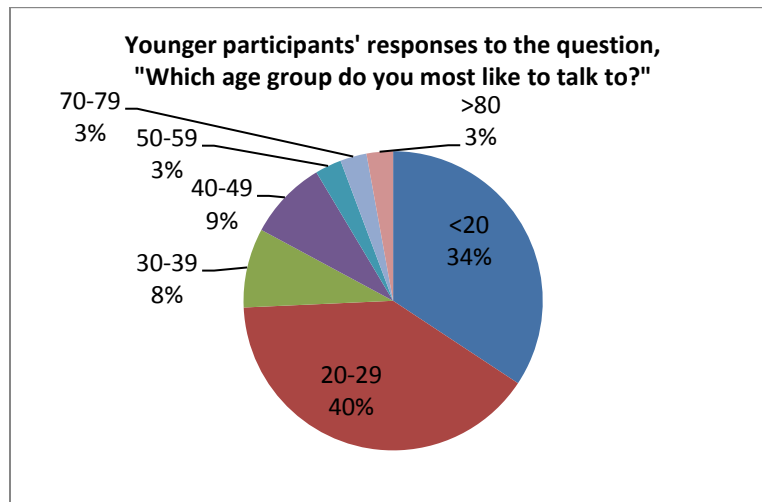


Table 11. The results of the younger population's responses to survey question 4.

The younger participants' responses were very similar to those of the older participants for survey question number 6, asking which group of people they talk to the most. The most common answer was Friends, followed by family members and then acquaintances from social situations. Due to an error in transcription, the category "grandchildren or younger people" remained an option for the younger population on questions 4 through 7, when it should have been changed to "grandparents or older people" to measure comfort or lack thereof in intergenerational communication. As was the case with the older population's response to this question, doctors and nurses and grandchildren or younger people received zero responses (see table 12).

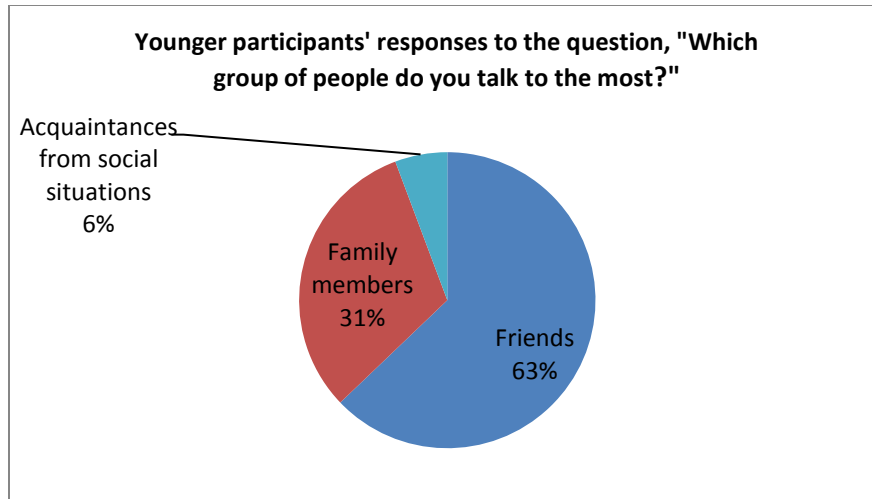


Table 12. The results of the younger population's responses to survey question 5.

When younger people were asked which group of people they felt most comfortable talking with, the response was remarkably similar to that of the older population. The only two responses indicated by the younger population were family members and friends.

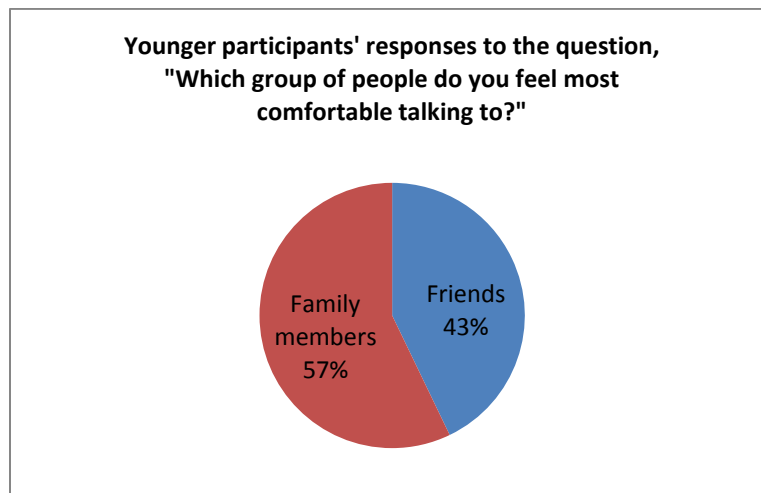


Table 13. The results of the younger population's responses to survey question 6.

The younger population was also asked which group of people they feel least comfortable talking to. As was the case with the older population's response to this question, no participant responded family as an answer to this question. However, a small percentage indicated they felt least comfortable talking to friends (see table 14).

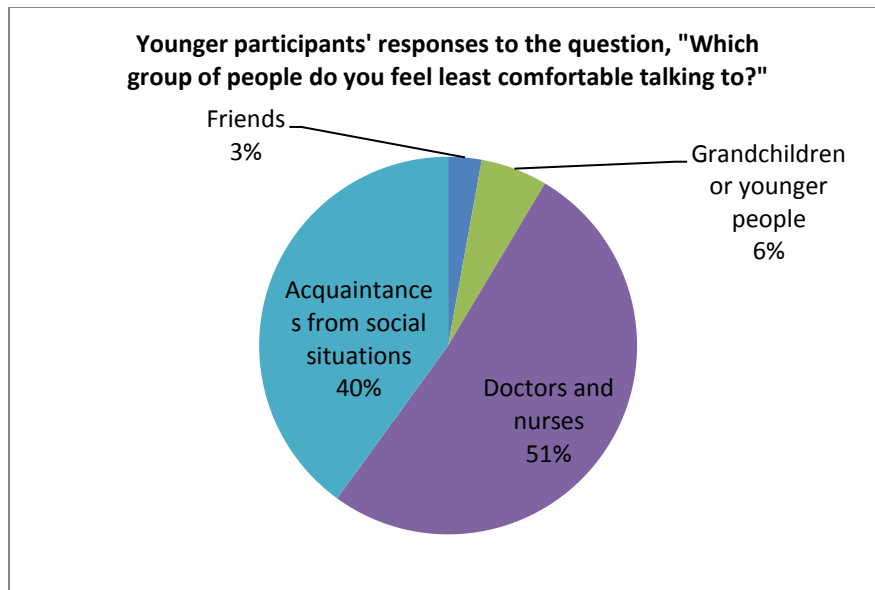


Table 14. The results of the younger population's responses to survey question 7.

Participants were then asked what they believed their reasons were for feeling either comfortable or uncomfortable in intergenerational communication. The questions were left open-ended and were then compiled into generalized categories. The older population indicated the factor that contributed most to their comfort level was the fact that many in the population were used to relating to younger people via children or students. Other answers that arose included an interest in the lives of younger people, as well as similar experiences. The largest factor that makes some in the older population uncomfortable with intergenerational interaction is the difference in interests between both groups. One person reported they could not "see from their perspective," while another said they did not want "to be seen as old-fashioned."

The factors contributing to comfort for the younger respondents were primarily the perceived wisdom, experience and knowledge of the elderly. Respondents also indicated that they felt older people would be likely to listen and be understanding. Ironically, younger participants also indicated as a reason for discomfort in intergenerational interaction that they felt

that older people would be unlikely to understand them as well as younger people. Many younger people also indicated a fear of being judged by the older people.

Discussion

In peer-to-peer communications in the older population, the topics the participants reported discussing most often were Family, Current events/political issues and Health and Wellness issues, responding to R1. While, based on this question, it is impossible to ascertain the depth of these conversations, the subject matter suggests that the older population tends to have surface-level conversations with their peers. When older individuals are communicating intergenerationally, the results of this survey suggest older people tend to adapt to find a common interest with the younger person. Family is the number one response, likely because many who are over 60 have the most intergenerational contact with younger family members. The next two categories in order are Entertainment and Current events/political issues. This may suggest that while older people may try to adapt to the younger person's choice of topics, they still retain a strong degree of independence in choice of topics.

The results of the survey with regard to R2 suggest that older individuals have a tendency to talk most to people around their own age range. Table 3 shows that a combined 60% of the over-60 participants talk most with people in the 50-59 age range and the 60-69 age range. The distribution remains fairly similar when the over-60 participants are asked which age group they prefer to talk to, illustrating the findings of the survey with respect to R3. The survey suggests that even though many of the respondents are not particularly uncomfortable for a variety of reasons (the most-often-cited reason for older people being comfortable is that they have children or students that age), they may still prefer to talk to people their own age. A limitation of this study that ties into several research questions is that the older adults who participated in this study were largely faculty and staff of a community college, and therefore may have all the interaction they desire with individuals 20-29.

The study indicated the older population was nearly evenly divided regarding who they talked to the most. Friends and Family were the top two responses, with 44% and 43% of the population giving those responses, respectively, in response to R4. The third most popular response was Acquaintances from social situations, receiving 13%. In answer to R5, older people indicated that Friends and Family were the groups of people the older population reported they were most comfortable talking to, presumably indicating that older people would prefer to talk more with these two groups of people, as opposed to Acquaintances from social situations.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, the number one response from the older population to survey question 7, asking participants who they felt least comfortable talking to, was doctors and nurses. Social acquaintances was the second-most-popular answer, which may be surprising given that 13% of respondents indicated they talked most with this group of people. Further study could focus on social pressures of individuals to interact a certain way with people they may otherwise avoid.

Research questions 6-10 were essentially the same, only focusing on the younger population. Answering R6, younger individuals, perhaps unsurprisingly, tend to have more surface-level conversations with their peers, as evidenced by the fact that the highest-ranking topic younger people discuss is Entertainment. When younger individuals have conversations with those older than them, though, the most-discussed topics include Current events/political issues, Accomplishments/self-history, and Family. Interestingly, even though election statistics show an ideology gap between younger and older people, and conventional wisdom has long labeled politics a taboo subject, it seems to be a fairly common topic of intergenerational conversation, as evidenced by the fact that the subject is on both groups' highest-ranked intergenerational discussion topics. It seems reasonable to infer that younger people talk to older

people about issues such as current events to gain insight into a different point of view, as younger people overwhelmingly said that knowledge and experience are the factors that drive them to interact with older individuals.

Responding to R7, the survey indicated that younger people, like their older counterparts, gravitated toward people their own age or slightly younger. This is further shown by the response to question R8: the younger population's responses of who they like to talk to are much less evenly distributed than the comparable survey question for the older population and heavily skewed toward the younger age groups.

With regards to R9, the survey showed the younger individuals as more likely to talk to friends the most, followed closely by family members. Only 6% of respondents indicated that they talk most with social acquaintances. Interestingly, tying into R10, a majority of younger participants indicated they were most comfortable talking with family members, even though they talked to friends more often. This could indicate that the younger population holds superficial conversations with friends, while they disclose more deeply to family members. The question asking younger participants which group of people they felt least comfortable with yielded probably the most surprises in the survey. A majority of younger participants indicated they feel least comfortable talking to doctors and nurses, with social acquaintances the next-most-popular answer at 40%. As mentioned in the results section, another limitation of this study is the error in transcription: the category "grandchildren or younger people" was erroneously left in the surveys intended for the younger audience; it should have been changed to read "grandparents or older people." Making this correction may have shifted the respondents' answers as more may have claimed they felt least comfortable disclosing to this group of people.

As individuals communicate with people of a different generation, it seems likely that there is an element of self-consciousness pervading each population. In the survey administered, the most-cited reason that younger people feel uncomfortable talking to older individuals was a perceived lack of understanding in the older population. A significant number of younger individuals indicated a fear of being judged by their older counterparts, as well.

Bonneson and Hummert (2002) and Barker (2004) describe pitfalls for older individuals to avoid. Painful self-disclosures, described by Bonneson and Hummert as negative, intimate self-disclosures, tended to make recipients of such more cognizant of the negative stereotypes of elderly individuals. When asked about the PSDs, adult grandchildren viewed the PSDs, especially those by grandfathers, as manipulative. Further research should evaluate the reception of self-disclosure and communication attempts between generations in a greater capacity than in a grandparent-grandchild dyad.

Still, the benefits of self-disclosure are likely to outweigh any potential consequences. Elderly people who self-disclose have a higher sense of well-being (Nkongho, 1985). There is also a positive correlation between self-disclosure and health (Magai et al., 2008).

Further research could focus on those elements of the questionnaire that were omitted from the study due to space constraints, including depth of self-disclosure in peer-to-peer and intergenerational conversations, desire of populations to communicate more or less with peers and with those younger or older than them, and comparative comfort levels of self-disclosures of individuals of different ages.

Additionally, since the attitudes regarding communication and self-disclosure of all people of a specific age group are not homogenous, it may be beneficial in future research to evaluate factors such as marital status. As was mentioned before, Tschann (1988) found people

who are married are less likely to deeply disclose to friends, as their communication needs are more fulfilled by having a spouse.

Besides the aforementioned limitations—the error in question transcription and the population selection mechanism—further limitations to this study include a lack of random sampling in the participants: the respondents in the older population responded to a solicitation to complete the survey, and the younger participants were also self-selected. In addition, the younger population was more diverse in age range, from 17-38 years old, and the younger population was more responsive to requests for surveys, delivering roughly double the number of completed surveys as did the older population. Allowing survey questions 1 and 2 to be more open-ended would allow for a wider variety of responses, but may make it more difficult to collect trends.

Appendix A: Questionnaire distributed to older population

1. Of the following 8, please rank the top three topics that you most often talk about with your peers.

A. Health and wellness issues_____	E. Accomplishments/self-history_____
B. Current social/living situations_____	F. Friends_____
C. Entertainment_____	G. Current events/political issues_____
D. Finances_____	H. Family_____

2. Of the following 8, please rank the top three topics that you most often talk about with those younger than you.

A. Health and wellness issues_____	E. Accomplishments/self-history_____
B. Current social/living situations_____	F. Friends_____
C. Entertainment_____	G. Current events/political issues_____
D. Finances_____	H. Family_____

3. Which age group do you most often talk to? Circle one.

A. People under 20	E. People 50-59
B. People 20-29	F. People 60-69
C. People 30-39	G. People 70-79
D. People 40-49	H. People 80+

4. Which age group do you most like to talk to? Circle one.

A. People under 20	E. People 50-59
B. People 20-29	F. People 60-69
C. People 30-39	G. People 70-79
D. People 40-49	H. People 80+

5. Which group of people do you talk to the most? Circle one.

A. Friends	D. Doctors and nurses
B. Family members	E. Acquaintances from social situations (church, classes, etc.)
C. Grandchildren or younger people	

6. Which group of people do you feel most comfortable talking to? Circle one.

A. Friends	D. Doctors and nurses
B. Family members	E. Acquaintances from social situations (church, classes, etc.)
C. Grandchildren or younger people	

7. Which group of people do you feel least comfortable talking to? Circle one.

A. Friends	D. Doctors and nurses
B. Family members	E. Acquaintances from social situations (church, classes, etc.)
C. Grandchildren or younger people	

Appendix A, cont'd.

8. When you talk with your peers, how open or in-depth are your typical conversations? Please circle one number on the scale.

Surface conversations.....1 2 3 4 5.....Great detail or very in-depth

9. When you talk with younger friends, or relatives, how open or in-depth are your typical conversations? Please circle one number on the scale.

Surface conversations.....1 2 3 4 5.....Great detail or very in-depth

10. Are you satisfied with the chance you get to communicate to others your age?

Would like to communicate less...1 2 3 4 5...Would like to communicate more

11. Are you satisfied with the chance you get to communicate to others younger than you?

Would like to communicate less...1 2 3 4 5...Would like to communicate more

12. How comfortable are you with telling family members about serious issues that affect you?

Very uncomfortable...1 2 3 4 5...Very comfortable

13. How comfortable are you with telling peers about serious issues that affect you?

Very uncomfortable...1 2 3 4 5...Very comfortable

14. How comfortable are you with telling younger individuals about serious issues that affect you?

Very uncomfortable...1 2 3 4 5...Very comfortable

15. If you feel comfortable talking with individuals younger than you, in the 20 to 30 year old age range, what do you think causes your feeling of being comfortable? List any reasons that may apply.

16. If you feel uncomfortable talking with individuals younger than you, in the 20 to 30 year old range, what do you think causes your feeling of being uncomfortable? List any that may apply.

Please circle your response.

Age: Under 65 65-69 70-74 75-79 80-84 85-90+
Gender: Female Male

Appendix B: Questionnaire distributed to the younger population

1. Of the following 8, please rank the top three topics that you most often talk about with your peers.

A. Health and wellness issues_____	E. Accomplishments/self-history_____
B. Current social/living situations_____	F. Friends_____
C. Entertainment_____	G. Current events/political issues_____
D. Finances_____	H. Family_____

2. Of the following 8, please rank the top three topics that you most often talk about with those older than you.

A. Health and wellness issues_____	E. Accomplishments/self-history_____
B. Current social/living situations_____	F. Friends_____
C. Entertainment_____	G. Current events/political issues_____
D. Finances_____	H. Family_____

3. Which age group do you most often talk to? Circle one.

A. People under 20	E. People 50-59
B. People 20-29	F. People 60-69
C. People 30-39	G. People 70-79
D. People 40-49	H. People 80+

4. Which age group do you most like to talk to? Circle one.

A. People under 20	E. People 50-59
B. People 20-29	F. People 60-69
C. People 30-39	G. People 70-79
D. People 40-49	H. People 80+

5. Which group of people do you talk to the most? Circle one.

A. Friends	D. Doctors and nurses
B. Family members	E. Acquaintances from social situations (church, classes, etc.)
C. Grandchildren or younger people	

6. Which group of people do you feel most comfortable talking to? Circle one.

A. Friends	D. Doctors and nurses
B. Family members	E. Acquaintances from social situations (church, classes, etc.)
C. Grandchildren or younger people	

7. Which group of people do you feel least comfortable talking to? Circle one.

A. Friends	D. Doctors and nurses
B. Family members	E. Acquaintances from social situations (church, classes, etc.)
C. Grandchildren or younger people	

Appendix B, cont'd.

8. When you talk with your peers, how open or in-depth are your typical conversations? Please circle one number on the scale.

Surface conversations.....1 2 3 4 5.....Great detail or very in-depth

9. When you talk with older friends or relatives how open or in-depth are your typical conversations? Please circle one number on the scale.

Surface conversations.....1 2 3 4 5.....Great detail or very in-depth

10. Are you satisfied with the chance you get to communicate to others your age?

Would like to communicate less...1 2 3 4 5...Would like to communicate more

11. Are you satisfied with the chance you get to communicate to others older than you?

Would like to communicate less...1 2 3 4 5...Would like to communicate more

12. How comfortable are you with telling family members about serious issues that affect you?

Very uncomfortable...1 2 3 4 5...Very comfortable

13. How comfortable are you with telling peers about serious issues that affect you?

Very uncomfortable...1 2 3 4 5...Very comfortable

14. How comfortable are you with telling older individuals about serious issues that affect you?

Very uncomfortable...1 2 3 4 5...Very comfortable

15. If you feel comfortable talking with individuals who are older than you, perhaps people your grandparents' age, what do you think causes your feeling of being comfortable? List any reasons that may apply.

16. If you feel uncomfortable talking with individuals who are older than you, what do you think causes your feeling of being uncomfortable? List any reasons that may apply.

Age: A. 18-23 B.24-28 C.29-33 D.34-38 E.39-43 F.43-48 G.49+

Gender: Male Female

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