



Wellness Assessment 2018-2019:

Wellness of Students Based on Sexual Orientation

Center for the Study of Student Life

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THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY
OFFICE OF STUDENT LIFE

INTRODUCTION

The Ohio State University Office of Student Life's Student Wellness Center uses a holistic wellness model that includes nine key dimensions of wellness: career, creative, emotional, environmental, financial, intellectual, physical, social and spiritual.

The Wellness Assessment was designed to measure these nine dimensions of wellness in order to give students a better understanding of their own wellness and provide them with resources that they can utilize at Ohio State to improve their wellness. The Wellness Assessment is open year-round to all students. Additionally, in October 2018, the survey was emailed to a random sample of 5,000 undergraduate, graduate and professional students. From the random sample, 951 students responded for a 19.0% response rate. An additional 2,269 students self-selected into taking the survey over the course of the month. This report includes a total of 2,760 students, all of whom completed the survey during October 2018, and documents differences within each dimension of wellness between students' self-reported sexual orientation.

METHODOLOGY

Each wellness dimension contains items to assess a range of attitudes and behaviors. Scores were calculated by adding together the values of all of the items within a given dimension, then dividing by the total number of items, which produced an average wellness score for each dimension. The scores for respondents who did not answer all of the items of a dimension were calculated by summing the scores for the answered items and dividing by the total number of items answered. Students who failed to provide several responses (i.e., less than 50%) for a dimension were excluded from the analysis, since creating wellness scores based on too few items would not be an accurate representation of the overall dimension.

Attitudes and beliefs were measured using Likert scales; respondents indicated their level of agreement with various statements on a 5-point scale. When asked about behaviors, respondents reported the frequency of the occurrence, also on a 5-point scale. Wellness scores range from 1 to 5, with higher scores indicating more positive attitudes and behaviors. Negative items were reverse coded so that unhealthy responses were associated with a lower score.

Demographic items were optional. Therefore, not all students responded to all demographic items. To protect students' identities, demographic categories with fewer than ten respondents are not reported in the demographics table below.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Students who self-identified as straight reported the highest average career (3.89), emotional (3.56) and social (3.92) wellness dimension scores.
- Students who reported another sexual orientation or more than one orientation reported the highest average creative (3.90) wellness dimension score.
- Students who self-identified as bisexual reported the highest average environmental (4.34) and spiritual (4.12) wellness dimension scores.
- Students who self-identified as asexual reported the highest average financial (3.64) and physical (4.17) wellness dimension scores.
- Students who self-identified as gay reported the highest average intellectual (4.29) wellness dimension score.

WELLNESS ASSESSMENT DIMENSIONS & ITEMS

EMOTIONAL

- I am able to appropriately manage my feelings.
- I am able to appropriately express my feelings.
- I would be willing to seek help from others when I am having a difficult time.
- I feel that I am able to cope with my daily stress.
- I have a positive image of my body.

CREATIVE

- I express myself through creative activities.
- I attend arts-related events or programs.
- I think of myself as a creative person.
- I value multiple perspectives when thinking about complex topics.
- The arts help me appreciate other perspectives and cultures.

SPIRITUAL

- I engage in self-reflection.
- I feel a connection to something larger than myself.
- I seek out meaning in my life.
- I have values, morals, and/or a belief system that helps me make decisions and guides my life.
- Harmony and balance within humanity is important to me.

INTELLECTUAL

- I am confident in my ability to find solutions to my problems.
- I am confident that I can learn new skills.
- I am interested in learning new things.
- I engage in intellectually engaging activities.
- I feel that my education is a priority.
- I was able to manage my academic workload during my most recent academic term.

CAREER

- I am confident in my career decisions.
- I envision my future career as a means to contribute to society.
- I feel that my current studies will be helpful to my future career.
- I feel that my major/career decision is an appropriate expression of my abilities and personal strengths.
- I feel that my major/career decision is an appropriate expression of what I find meaningful and important in life.
- I feel that I work in a positive environment.
- I feel that I work in a stressful environment.
- I feel that my current job interferes with other aspects of my life.
- I am able to balance my current job with the rest of my life.
- I set achievable goals in my current job.

ENVIRONMENTAL

- I engage in environmentally friendly behaviors (e.g., turn off lights/faucets, walk or bike).
- I take time to appreciate my surroundings.
- I take time to appreciate nature.
- I think it is important to conserve natural resources.
- If given the opportunity, I recycle.

SOCIAL

- I feel a sense of belonging in a community.
- I feel supported by my family.
- I feel that I am a person who other people like to be around.
- I have a strong social network.
- I have at least one close friend whom I trust and can confide in.
- I feel comfortable communicating face-to-face with others.
- I rarely feel lonely.

FINANCIAL

- I think it is important to spend less than I earn.
- I am confident that I can plan a financial budget.
- I have enough money saved to handle financial emergencies.
- I track my spending to stay within my budget.
- I feel stressed by the amount of money I owe (credit cards, student loans, car payments, etc.).
- I feel stressed about my personal finances in general.
- I am confident in my ability to use credit cards responsibly.

PHYSICAL

- I am confident that I can exercise regularly.
- I am confident that I can maintain a nutritious diet.
- I eat a nutritious diet.
- I engage in exercise.
- I get at least 7 hours of sleep per night.
- I use alcohol/nicotine/other substances to manage stress.
- I use illicit drugs (e.g., cocaine, ecstasy).
- I use nicotine products (e.g., cigarettes, vaping, smokeless tobacco).
- I use pain medications, sedatives, sleeping medications or tranquilizers (e.g., OxyContin, Vicodin, Percodan; Valium, Xanax, Ambien) for non-medical reasons without a prescription.
- I use stimulants (e.g., Ritalin, Adderall, Dexedrine) for non-medical reasons without a prescription.
- If you are sexually active, do you practice safer sex?
- How often do you binge drink?
- I consume alcohol.
- I use marijuana for non-medical reasons without a prescription.

DEMOGRAPHICS

		Asexual Students (<i>n</i> = 32)	Bisexual Students (<i>n</i> = 200)	Gay Students (<i>n</i> = 54)	Lesbian Students (<i>n</i> = 30)	Straight Students (<i>n</i> = 2,261)	Another Orientation or More Than One Orientation (<i>n</i> = 183)
Gender Identity	Man	---	18.7%	90.7%	---	31.5%	15.6%
	Woman	78.1%	77.8%	---	96.6%	68.2%	66.7%
	Another Gender	---	---	---	---	---	17.8%
Citizenship	International	---	---	---	0.0%	4.5%	---
	Domestic	93.8%	95.5%	98.1%	100.0%	95.5%	96.2%
First Generation	First Generation	---	24.5%	20.4%	---	19.1%	20.2%
	Non-First Generation	75.0%	75.5%	79.6%	73.3%	80.9%	79.8%
Race/ Ethnicity	African American/Black or African descent	---	---	---	---	4.6%	---
	Asian American/Asian (East, South Southeast)	---	7.6%	---	---	10.1%	8.2%
	Latino(a)/Hispanic	---	5.6%	---	---	3.2%	---
	White/European	65.6%	71.2%	85.2%	70.0%	73.7%	73.6%
	Other race/ethnicity	---	---	---	---	2.1%	---
Greek Status	Multiracial	---	10.1%	---	---	6.3%	9.3%
	Affiliated with a sorority or fraternity	---	9.5%	---	0.0%	10.2%	7.1%
Class Rank	Unaffiliated with a sorority or fraternity	93.8%	90.5%	90.6%	100.0%	89.8%	92.9%
	Undergraduate	78.1%	83.5%	87.0%	70.0%	78.1%	87.4%
Military Status	Graduate/Professional	---	16.5%	---	---	21.9%	12.6%
	Veteran	0.0%	---	---	0.0%	2.2%	---
Employment Status	Civilian	100.0%	99.0%	96.3%	100.0%	97.8%	98.4%
	Does not work during the academic year	43.8%	34.9%	42.6%	36.7%	43.1%	37.0%
	Works less than 20 hours during the academic year	---	42.4%	33.3%	40.0%	39.3%	44.8%
Residence	Works more than 20 hours during the academic year	---	22.7%	24.1%	---	17.6%	18.2%
	Lives on-campus	---	42.3%	58.5%	44.8%	39.7%	46.1%
	Lives off-campus, within walking distance	41.9%	31.4%	24.5%	---	32.6%	32.6%
	Lives off-campus, within driving distance	---	26.3%	---	37.9%	27.8%	21.4%

FINDINGS

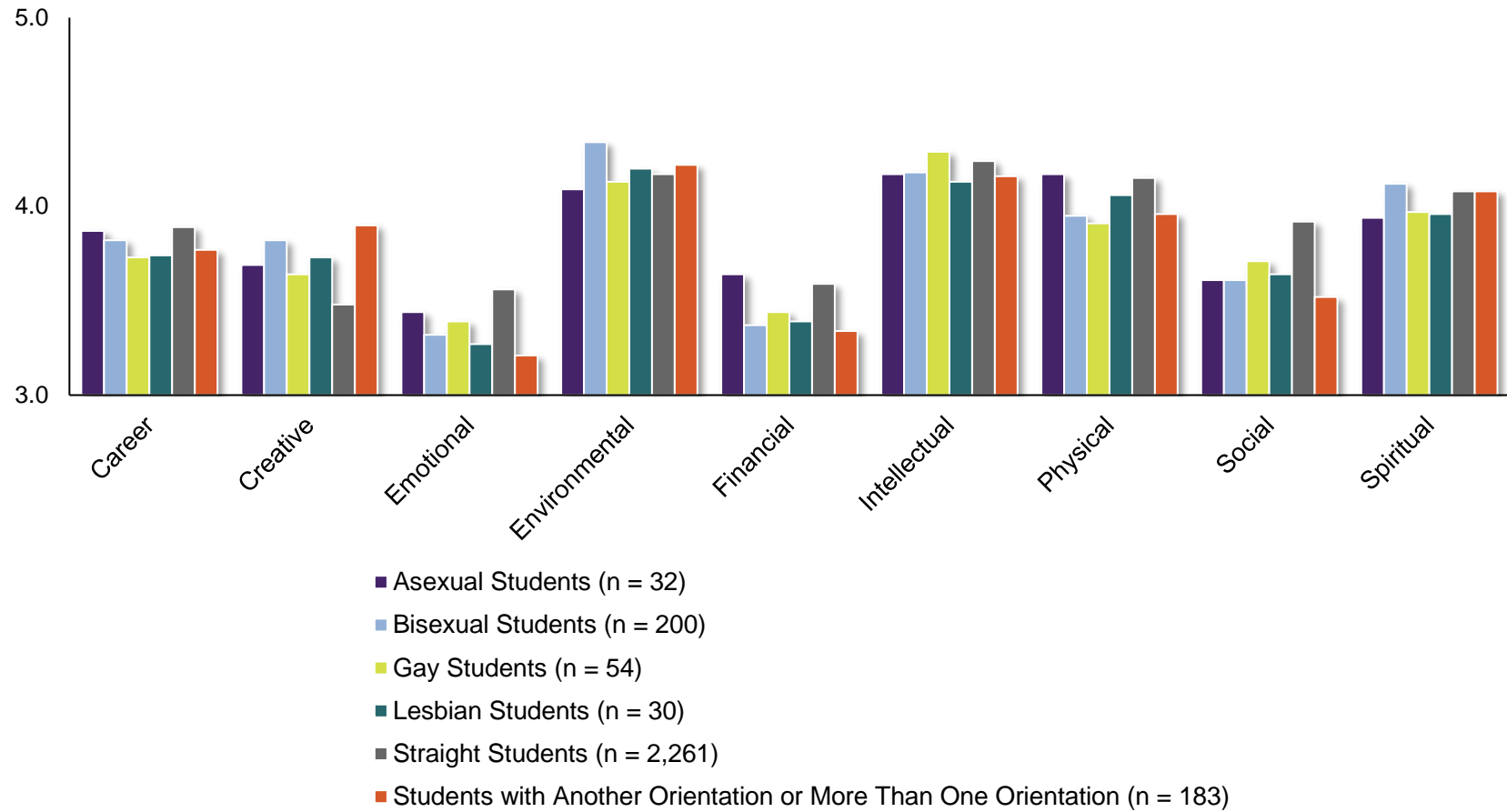
AVERAGE WELLNESS SCORES ACROSS DIMENSIONS

The table below documents the average score for each of the nine dimensions of wellness based on students' self-reported sexual orientation. The graph on page six compares the average scores between these sexual orientation categories. All students included in both the table and the graph completed the Wellness Assessment during October 2018. In an effort to simplify the graph, it does not include the numerical values for each of the average scores. Additionally, the graph's vertical axis, which denotes the range for the average wellness dimension scores, starts at 3.0 instead of 1.0. Due to the number of sexual orientation categories, as well as each category's sample size, analyses to investigate statistical significance were not conducted here.

Average Career Wellness Scores	
Asexual Students (<i>n</i> = 32)	3.87
Bisexual Students (<i>n</i> = 200)	3.82
Gay Students (<i>n</i> = 54)	3.73
Lesbian Students (<i>n</i> = 30)	3.74
Straight Students (<i>n</i> = 2,261)	3.89
Another Orientation or More Than One Orientation (<i>n</i> = 183)	3.77
Average Creative Wellness Scores	
Asexual Students (<i>n</i> = 32)	3.69
Bisexual Students (<i>n</i> = 200)	3.82
Gay Students (<i>n</i> = 54)	3.64
Lesbian Students (<i>n</i> = 30)	3.73
Straight Students (<i>n</i> = 2,261)	3.48
Another Orientation or More Than One Orientation (<i>n</i> = 183)	3.90
Average Emotional Wellness Scores	
Asexual Students (<i>n</i> = 32)	3.44
Bisexual Students (<i>n</i> = 200)	3.32
Gay Students (<i>n</i> = 54)	3.39
Lesbian Students (<i>n</i> = 30)	3.27
Straight Students (<i>n</i> = 2,261)	3.56
Another Orientation or More Than One Orientation (<i>n</i> = 183)	3.21
Average Environmental Wellness Scores	
Asexual Students (<i>n</i> = 32)	4.09
Bisexual Students (<i>n</i> = 200)	4.34
Gay Students (<i>n</i> = 54)	4.13
Lesbian Students (<i>n</i> = 30)	4.20
Straight Students (<i>n</i> = 2,261)	4.17
Another Orientation or More Than One Orientation (<i>n</i> = 183)	4.22

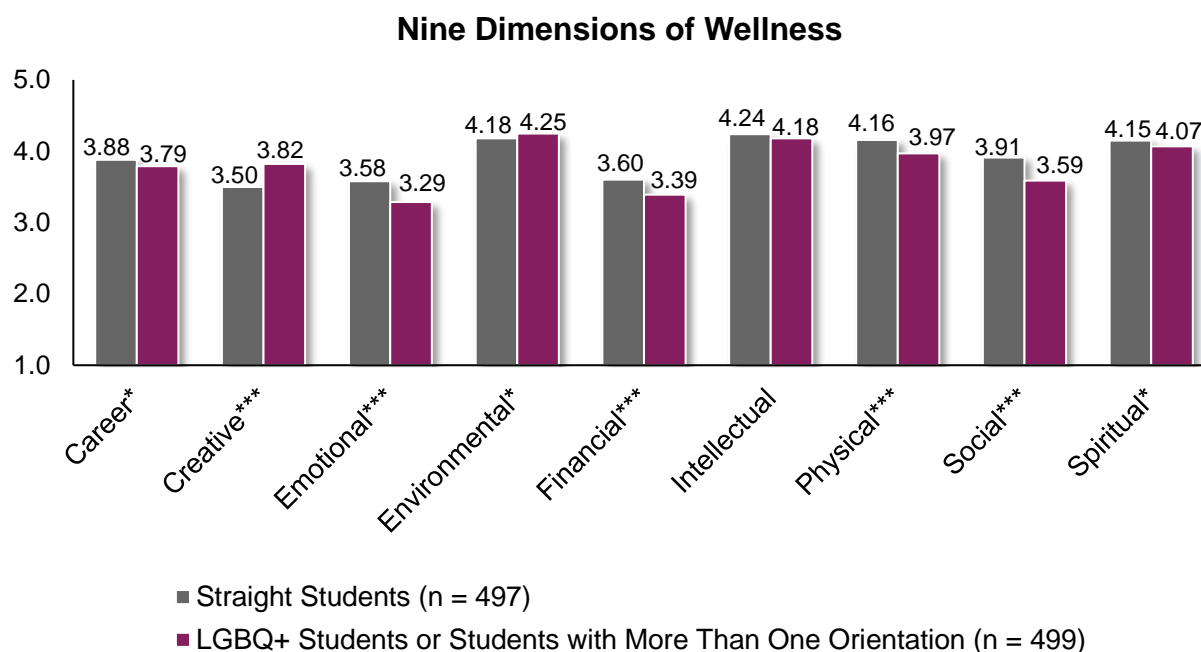
Average Financial Wellness Scores	
Asexual Students (<i>n</i> = 32)	3.64
Bisexual Students (<i>n</i> = 200)	3.37
Gay Students (<i>n</i> = 54)	3.44
Lesbian Students (<i>n</i> = 30)	3.39
Straight Students (<i>n</i> = 2,261)	3.59
Another Orientation or More Than One Orientation (<i>n</i> = 183)	3.34
Average Intellectual Wellness Scores	
Asexual Students (<i>n</i> = 32)	4.17
Bisexual Students (<i>n</i> = 200)	4.18
Gay Students (<i>n</i> = 54)	4.29
Lesbian Students (<i>n</i> = 30)	4.13
Straight Students (<i>n</i> = 2,261)	4.24
Another Orientation or More Than One Orientation (<i>n</i> = 183)	4.16
Average Physical Wellness Scores	
Asexual Students (<i>n</i> = 32)	4.17
Bisexual Students (<i>n</i> = 200)	3.95
Gay Students (<i>n</i> = 54)	3.91
Lesbian Students (<i>n</i> = 30)	4.06
Straight Students (<i>n</i> = 2,261)	4.15
Another Orientation or More Than One Orientation (<i>n</i> = 183)	3.96
Average Social Wellness Scores	
Asexual Students (<i>n</i> = 32)	3.61
Bisexual Students (<i>n</i> = 200)	3.61
Gay Students (<i>n</i> = 54)	3.71
Lesbian Students (<i>n</i> = 30)	3.64
Straight Students (<i>n</i> = 2,261)	3.92
Another Orientation or More Than One Orientation (<i>n</i> = 183)	3.52
Average Spiritual Wellness Scores	
Asexual Students (<i>n</i> = 32)	3.94
Bisexual Students (<i>n</i> = 200)	4.12
Gay Students (<i>n</i> = 54)	3.97
Lesbian Students (<i>n</i> = 30)	3.96
Straight Students (<i>n</i> = 2,261)	4.08
Another Orientation or More Than One Orientation (<i>n</i> = 183)	4.08

Nine Dimensions of Wellness



FOCUS ON STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES

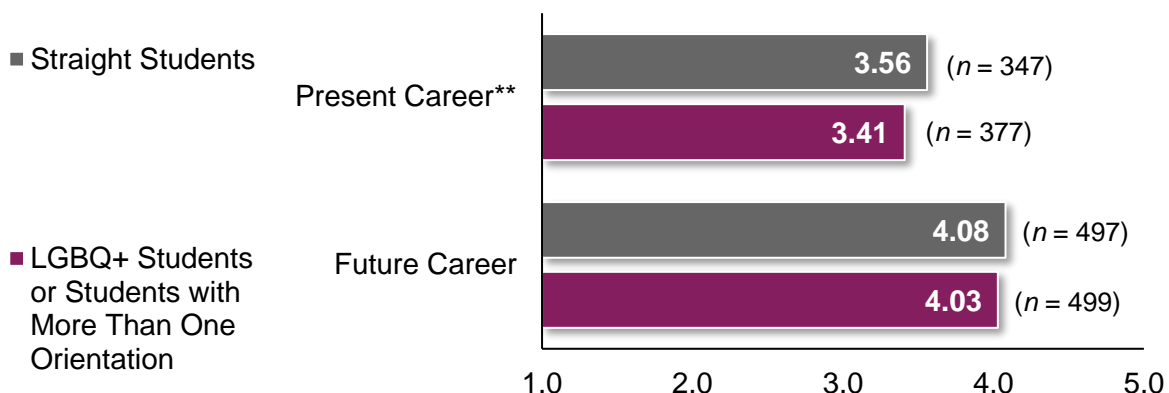
In an attempt to investigate if statistically significant differences were present within each dimensions' average wellness score based on students' sexual orientations, students who self-identified as LGBTQ+ or self-identified as more than one sexual orientation were aggregated together ($n = 499$). A random sample of 497 students who self-identified as straight was then created as a comparison group. To investigate whether differences between these two groups of students were statistically significant, t -tests were conducted. Asterisks denote statistically significant differences between the two groups' average scores. Overall, a statistically significant association was detected between straight students and LGBTQ+ students or students with more than one sexual orientation on the career, creative, emotional, environmental, financial, physical, social and spiritual wellness dimensions.



Focus on Two Aspects of Career Wellness Dimension

To further investigate the statistically significant difference detected within the career wellness dimension, the graph below compares the average wellness scores of the two aspects within this dimension: present career and future career. Present career is comprised of the five items from the overall career wellness dimension that specifically relate to a student's present job, while future career is comprised of the five items that relate to a student's future job (See Appendix). Straight students had significantly higher present career wellness (3.56 vs. 3.41**). No statistically significant differences were detected between the two groups of students on the future career aspect.

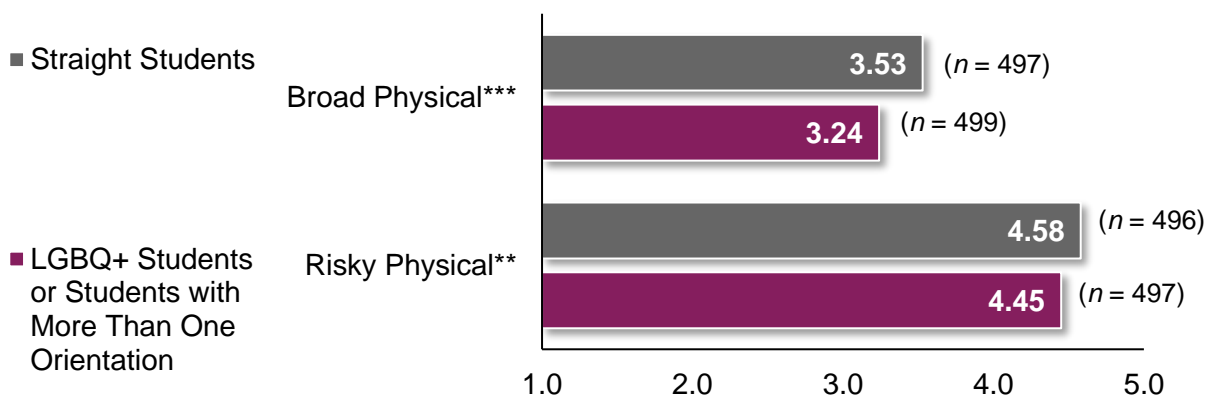
Two Aspects of the Career Wellness Dimension



Focus on Two Aspects of Physical Wellness Dimension

Similarly, to further investigate the statistically significant difference detected within the physical wellness dimension, the following graph compares the average wellness scores of the two aspects within this dimension: broad physical behaviors and risky physical behaviors. The aspect of broad physical behaviors is comprised of the five items from the overall physical wellness dimension that specifically relate to a student's general physical wellness, while the aspect of risky physical behaviors is comprised of the eight items that relate to a student's more dangerous or reckless physical behaviors (See Appendix). The higher a risky physical behaviors score, the less risky physical behaviors a student engages in (i.e., higher scores are healthier). When compared to straight students, LGBTQ+ students or students with more than one sexual orientation had significantly lower scores on broad physical behaviors (3.53 vs. 3.24***), as well as significantly lower scores on risky physical behaviors (4.58 vs. 4.45**).

Two Aspects of the Physical Wellness Dimension



CONCLUSION

The Wellness Assessment allows us to investigate the relationship between the average scores for each dimension of wellness when comparing samples of students who self-identify as asexual, bisexual, gay, lesbian, straight, as well as students who reported another sexual orientation or more than one orientation at Ohio State. This report shows that students who self-identify as straight reported the highest average career (3.89), emotional (3.56) and social (3.92) wellness dimension scores. Additionally, students who reported another sexual orientation or more than one orientation reported the highest average creative (3.90) wellness dimension score. Students who self-identify as bisexual reported the highest average environmental (4.34) and spiritual (4.12) wellness dimension scores, while students who self-identify as asexual reported the highest average financial (3.64) and physical (4.17) wellness dimension scores. Lastly, students who self-identify as gay reported the highest average intellectual (4.29) wellness dimension score. This report also highlights statistically significant differences detected between LGBTQ+ students or students with more than one sexual orientation ($n = 499$) compared to a random sample of 497 students who self-identified as straight within each dimensions' average wellness score. Specifically, a statistically significant association was detected between these two groups' average scores on the career, creative, emotional, environmental, financial, physical, social and spiritual wellness dimensions. Moreover, further investigations revealed that straight students had significantly higher present career wellness (3.56 vs. 3.41**). No statistically significant differences were detected between the two groups of students on the future career aspect. Additionally, when compared to straight students, LGBTQ+ students or students with more than one sexual orientation had significantly lower scores on broad physical behaviors (3.53 vs. 3.24***), as well as significantly lower scores on risky physical behaviors (4.58 vs. 4.45**). These results contribute to our understanding of differences in wellness based on students' sexual orientation at Ohio State.

APPENDIX

CAREER AND PHYSICAL WELLNESS ASPECTS & ITEMS

As mentioned above, the career wellness dimension is comprised of two aspects: present career and future career. Similarly, the physical wellness dimension is comprised of two aspects: broad physical behaviors and risky physical behaviors. The items that fall into each of these aspects are outlined below.

Present Career
I feel that I work in a positive environment.
I feel that I work in a stressful environment.
I feel that my current job interferes with other aspects of my life.
I am able to balance my current job with the rest of my life.
I set achievable goals in my current job.
Future Career
I am confident in my career decisions.
I envision my future career as a means to contribute to society.
I feel that my current studies will be helpful to my future career.
I feel that my major/career decision is an appropriate expression of my abilities and personal strengths.
I feel that my major/career decision is an appropriate expression of what I find meaningful and important in life.
Broad Physical
I am confident that I can exercise regularly.
I am confident that I can maintain a nutritious diet.
I eat a nutritious diet.
I engage in exercise.
I get at least 7 hours of sleep per night.
Risky Physical
I use alcohol/nicotine/other substances to manage stress.
I use illicit drugs (e.g., cocaine, ecstasy).
I use nicotine products (e.g., cigarettes, vaping, smokeless tobacco).
I use pain medications, sedatives, sleeping medications or tranquilizers (e.g., OxyContin, Vicodin, Percodan; Valium, Xanax, Ambien) for non-medical reasons without a prescription.
I use stimulants (e.g., Ritalin, Adderall, Dexedrine) for non-medical reasons without a prescription.
If you are sexually active, do you practice safer sex?
How often do you binge drink?
I use marijuana for non-medical reasons without a prescription.