

## MKT 439 Client-Based Market Research

# Awareness & Perception of Mental Health Disorders

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## Introduction

Throughout the course of the Spring 2020 semester, students in Marketing 439 were tasked with performing client-based market research in teams of 4-5 individuals.

Our client, The Northern Arizona Healthcare Foundation (NAHF), is a charitable nonprofit organization focused on improving health and the quality of life of those in the region.

Mental Health First Aid® is a program that the NAHF sponsors. It is an internationally recognized course that teaches how to help someone who may be experiencing a mental health challenge. The NAHF has a goal to train 50,000 Mental Health First Aid® instructors in the region, but to do so they need support and resources from their community.



## Objective

The stakeholders for this project were the Northern Arizona Healthcare Foundation (NAHF) and the students attending NAU. Our client was focused on the best quality and analysis of the results in order to have accurate material to help those who need it the most. The research conducted in this project is applied research because it focuses on addressing a specific decision for an organization.

The objective of this marketing research project is to help the NAHF acquire feedback about the concerns and knowledge of mental health issues amongst college students in the region in order to raise levels of awareness and expand the donor base for the Mental Health First Aid® program. By sending a survey to college students in the region, we can better gauge their interest in attending Mental Health First Aid® classes or donating to NAHF.

## Methods

The NAHF wanted to conduct a short survey in order to gain accurate information about the young adult population's perception and awareness of mental health and intervention strategies.

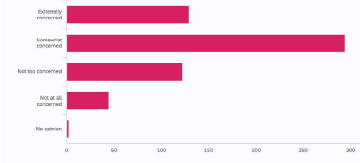
This survey was created through Qualtrics® and distributed in March 2020 to 3,100 students at the W.A. Franke College of Business at Northern Arizona University. This sample frame resembles our population of interest. Students were incentivized to complete the survey by a chance to win a \$100 Target gift card. 585 students completed the survey within the 2-week time period.

The results from the survey were collected and analyzed using Qualtrics® software. This information will help the NAHF move forward with a business plan for the Mental Health First Aid® program.



The survey was also promotional, in part, because it helped communicate to students that there are classes and training available for those who wish to help people with mental health needs.

## Results



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According to the reports from this survey, respondents are generally concerned about mental health among their peers. 72% of respondents answered that they were either "extremely concerned" or "somewhat concerned" about mental health issues among their peers.

The concern for mental disorders is further shown by the fact that most respondents knew family members/friends who suffer from mental disorders. 37.83% of the respondents knew 4 or more individuals who have Anxiety while 33.63% of the respondents knew 4 or more who have Depression.

From these results, we can conclude that mental and behavioral health are relevant and serious concerns among young adults.

Furthermore, respondents are generally unaware of the Mental Health First Aid® Program (as well as mental health intervention strategies in general). However, the large majority of respondents agreed with the following statements:

"Intervention strategies can be learned."  
"Intervention strategies can be of benefit to others."

According to our reports, respondents are interested in attending the Mental Health First Aid® program to help them assist someone experiencing mental or substance use related crises. 40% of respondents answered that they were "extremely interested" in learning about Mental Health First Aid® techniques for Anxiety. 39.93% of respondents said that they were "extremely interested" in learning techniques for Depression, and 36.48% of respondents said they were also "extremely interested" in learning beneficial techniques for Suicidal Thoughts. Every category had the highest percentage of respondents in the "extremely interested" category aside from Psychosis.

Finally, we can conclude that there are a significant number of respondents that are willing to make a monetary contribution to Mental Health First Aid®. Although about half of the respondents (55.54%) said they would not be willing to make a monetary contribution, 44.46% of respondents would. Even though 44.46% is not the majority, it is a significant amount of the population. Furthermore, 24.14% of the respondents feel so passionate/concerned about the cause, that they would encourage others to contribute as well.



## Recommendation to Client

Through our research, we concluded that many young adults are unaware but still interested in learning mental health intervention strategies. Therefore, we strongly encourage the NAHF to target the young adult population due to their interest in learning more about and donating to the Mental Health First Aid® Program.

We recommend that the NAHF looks into allowing different colleges to host Mental First Aid® classes in order to spark a larger interest in the mental health program. We believe that posting fliers in the most populated spaces of colleges would create conversations and build awareness through word of mouth. Our last idea is to recruit student ambassadors to relay information to the student body of local schools in order to increase their awareness and form credibility with a similar age group.

## Research Limitations / Potential Errors

We only reached students who are currently attending NAU. This sample may not be an accurate representation of the young adult population in Northern Arizona and may result in an undercoverage error. The survey will be distributed to other schools around Northern Arizona in the future. This may cause the results to vary.

Another factor that could have potentially skewed the results was the completion rate. The survey was sent out to 3,100 students and only 585 students' responses were recorded, resulting in a 18.8% completion rate. This applied research is directional based on the sample size used.

Throughout this survey, we defined the mental/behavioral disorders to help make options more clear; however, there could have been some confusion amongst the respondents due to individual interpretation of the questions. Respondents may have answered differently based upon how we defined the disorders and worded the questions.

## References

- [https://static1.squarespace.com/static/58c2ed6cd2b8574cf9c80aef/t/5a046c280d9297d31696ce58/1510239276481/Wellbeing+in+Arizona\\_Final17\\_0912.pdf](https://static1.squarespace.com/static/58c2ed6cd2b8574cf9c80aef/t/5a046c280d9297d31696ce58/1510239276481/Wellbeing+in+Arizona_Final17_0912.pdf)
- <https://www.mentalhealthfirstaid.org/take-a-course/what-you-learn/>
- <https://www.nahealthfoundation.org/spring-2019-initiatives-blog/2019/5/13/mental-health-first-aid-for-northern-arizona>

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