

Town of Troy Health and Wellness Assessment



Results
April 2011

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Keene State College Health Science Department
In Collaboration With
The Troy Samuel E. Paul War Memorial Town Commission

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Abstract:

In 2011 Troy community members reached out to Keene State College for help in revitalizing their town. President Giles-Gee was approached by a member of the University System of New Hampshire's Board of Trustees to investigate the availability of Keene State College faculty and students to assist the Samuel E. Paul War Memorial Town Commission in restoring the Samuel Paul War Memorial Recreational Area.

The purpose of this research study was to conduct a health needs assessment and analysis for the town of Troy, New Hampshire (NH), in order to set the stage for future community health interventions. This study was a cross-sectional design using a modified survey tool, developed by the students and town, to assess the major health risk behaviors of Troy residents. The total number of adults surveyed was 200 residents ages 18 years old and older. Keene State College students found from the results of the survey that there are issues regarding community safety, transportation, knowledge of community resources, and individual health disparities including lack of medical care.

Introduction

The purpose of this research study was to conduct a health needs assessment and analysis for the town of Troy, New Hampshire (NH), in order to set the stage for future community health interventions.

The survey tool collected data on the current perceived health needs and health concerns of Troy residents. The survey was developed to measure areas of health including physical, environmental, social, psychological, and emotional wellbeing. The data provides information that Troy residents can use to assess the health needs of their town. It also provides data for future Troy health and wellness interventions. As Keene State College (KSC) Health Science students, we conducted the survey and presented the data results to Troy residents. In this way, we can help Troy residents to improve their community.

Project Goals & Objectives:

I. Goal: Provided data on areas of perceived health-risk behaviors in the town of Troy.

Objectives:

1. Developed, collected, and analyzed health-risk behavior data for the town of Troy.
2. Identified areas of community health, which Troy residents consider as areas of need for future health interventions.
3. Presented research study findings on campus and to the community.

II. Goal: Provided field experiences for Health Science students.

Objectives:

1. Met in a focus group with town stakeholders and active community members and developed areas for health survey questions.
2. Identified the major concepts and frameworks involved in community health organization related to Troy.
3. Attended town meetings, such as the town commission meetings.

Method

This research project is a cross-sectional study design that encompasses the distribution and analysis of a health survey to several populations of the town including young adults, age 18 and over, middle-aged adults, and seniors of both sexes. The survey tool was reviewed by town stakeholders and commission members prior to distribution. Surveys were distributed by setting up information tables at the post office, school, town voting, and at the March 9th, 2011 town meeting. Permission was granted and documented for these research collection sites.

Sample:

This study surveyed 200 adult Troy residents. There was a focus group with town members and active community leaders that are committed and play an important role in the town's future. The focus group has been a reference source during the research and in creating the assessment tool. The survey was distributed over the course of one month beginning with the town voting March 8th, 2011, through the beginning of April 2011.

Timeline

November 16, 2010. Students' first visit to Troy including recreational areas.

November 1-29, 2010. Grant proposal to help fund independent study project.

February 3, 2011. Meeting with Samuel E. Paul War Memorial Town Commission.

February 4-28, 2011. Developed the Troy needs assessment tool.

February 18, 2011. Focus group meeting with students and community members to develop the assessment tool.

March 2, 2011. Presented the assessment tool to Samuel E. Paul War Memorial Town Commission.

March 8, 2011. Town voting and initial distribution of survey.

March 9, 2011. Troy town meeting and distribution of survey.

March 19, 2011. Data collection at the Troy Post Office.

March 24, 2011. Survey distributed at the Troy Elementary School after school program.

April 1-15, 2011. Analyzed the result data.

April 5, 2011. Last data collection at the Troy Post Office.

April 22, 2011. Academic Presentation at Keene State College

April 27, 2011. Presentation to the town of Troy.

Results

Individual Health and Wellness

Overall Health:

This section of the survey asked questions regarding health insurance status. Regardless of physical and emotional health, individuals without medical care coverage are less likely to seek medical care when needed. The survey found that 12% of Troy residents do not have health insurance. Without health insurance individuals are less likely to receive medical care. Almost 20% of Troy residents surveyed reported that the cost of medical care prevented them from seeking medical treatment. Medical care cost can be a barrier for people to receive medical treatment (Cheshire medical center, 2009).

Physical Health:

This section of the survey asked questions that directly related to individual health risk factors and risk taking behaviors, both of which can increase disease risk and injury. We found that 51% of Troy residents surveyed did not receive a flu shot within the last 12 months. By not becoming inoculated against the flu individuals are at a higher risk of becoming ill. Almost 40% of Troy residents reported not wearing a helmet while biking, inline skating and other such activities. Of the Troy residents surveyed, 30% reported not exercising 3-4 days per week for 30-60 minutes. It was found that 37.5% of individuals reported exercising at home, 11% of individuals reported exercising at work, and 22% of individuals reported exercising in Troy. Troy residents reported that 85% do not consume the recommended amount of fruits and vegetables per day. Questions 21 and 22 asked “Within the last 30 days, on how many days did you use the following: cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, alcohol, marijuana, amphetamines, or other drugs?” Data shows that there was no statistical evidence that any Troy residents smoked tobacco, drank alcohol, or used any form of illegal drugs.

Emotional and Psychological Health:

Emotional health is important for social and physical wellbeing. An individual can suffer other health related problems due to unhealthy emotional aspects. It was found that 77% of Troy residents reported experiencing average, more than average, or extreme stress within the past 12 months. Also, 15% of Troy residents reported feeling so depressed it was difficult to function within the last 12 months.

*Compared to national data these statistics are average.

Community Health and Wellness

Safety and Transportation:

Community health and safety is important so that residents feel comfortable within their community. Almost 50% of residents reported they felt there is an issue with crime within Troy. Seen in graph 11, are areas of crime, which residents identified as issues. We found that 10% of Troy residents do not feel safe walking in Troy during the day. Almost 20% of Troy residents reported not feeling safe walking in Troy at night. Of the residents surveyed, 75% of community members in Troy reported there is not adequate public transportation.

Social Health:

The Troy community values social wellbeing. It was found that approximately 40% of residents do not feel there are adequate childcare facilities in their community. Forty percent of Troy community members feel there is a need for new mom support groups. Of the Troy residents surveyed, 40% reported a need for parent support groups. Almost 50% of Troy residents surveyed reported the need for caregiver support groups. Thirty-three percent of Troy residents reported they felt there was an issue with school (teen) aged pregnancies and 65% felt there is an issue with drug or alcohol abuse within the town. When asked if people in need generally do not ask for help, 33% of Troy residents felt this was true. Nearly 50% of Troy residents reported a willingness to be involved and volunteer within the community.

Within the Troy community 61% felt a need for educational workshops. Nutritional workshops were the most popular, followed by financial, and parenting workshops. Of the community resources listed, only about 45% were aware of the resources, suggesting that even though the community has plentiful resources they are not widely known (Cheshire medical center, 2009).

Demographics:

Of the 200 residents surveyed in Troy, 46% were male, 47% were females. The average age was 53 years old. We found that 72% of Troy residents surveyed are married, 16% were single, 9% were divorced or separated, and 3% were widowed.

Conclusion

There are significant issues within many aspects of the Troy community in regards to physical, emotional, and community health. However, the community is willing to be involved and volunteer which means the heart of the community is thriving. It is hoped that the results and findings of this project can be used for future community health interventions. In order to build on this experience, KSC Health Science professors and students propose to collaborate with Troy residents by meeting with Troy town residents and key community figures and holding focus groups with Troy leaders and stakeholders. Together the Health Science Department, its students, and the town of Troy, can address the researched health disparities to develop recommendations and interventions.

Appendix I

Reference:

Cheshire Medical Center/ Dartmouth-Hitchcock Keene. (2011). Vision 2020. Retrieved February 5, 2011 from Cheshire Medical Center Web site: http://www.cheshire-med.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=345&Itemid=991

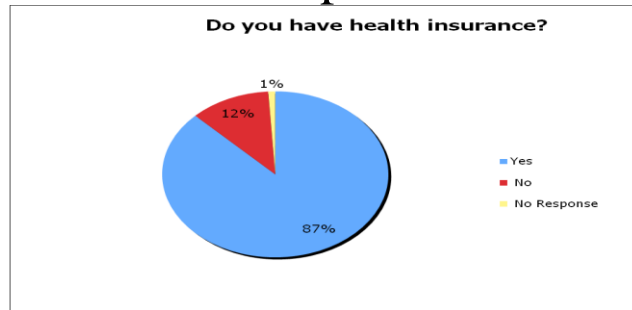
Cheshire Medical Center. (2009). Working together to become the healthiest community. February 5, 2011 from Cheshire Medical Center Web site: http://www.cheshire-med.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=345&Itemid=991

Minkler, M. (2009). Community organizing and community building for health (2nd ed.). New Jersey, Rutgers University Press.

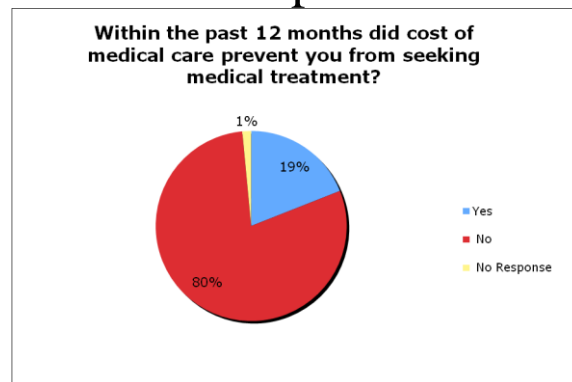
Appendix II

Graphs:

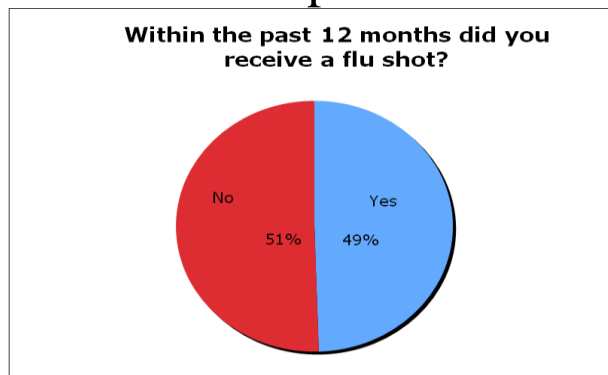
Graph 1



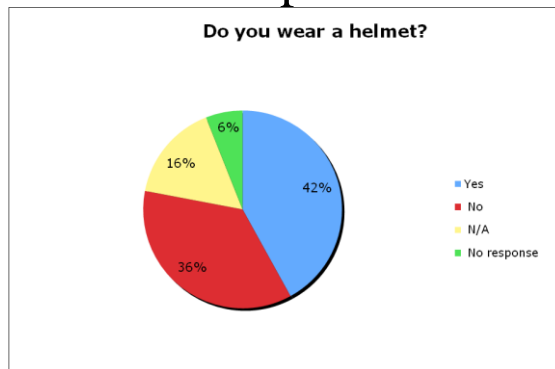
Graph 2



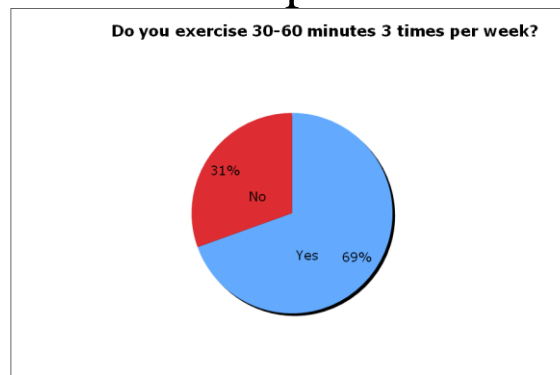
Graph 3



Graph 4



Graph 5

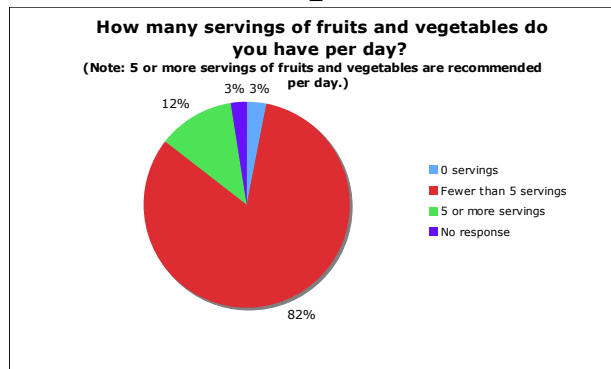


Graph 6

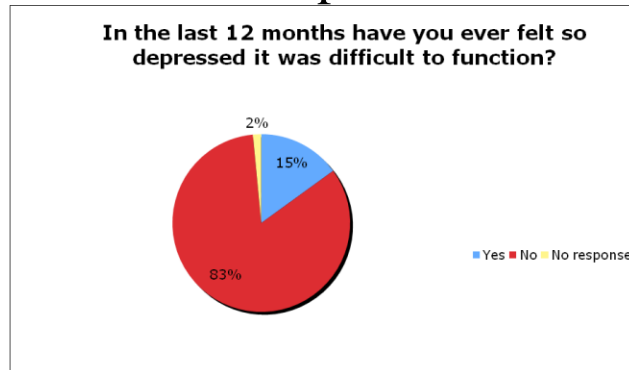


Some people responded “other” which includes the following: Curves,treadmil, farm, Total Fitness gym in Keene, yoga class, Fitzwilliam gym, zumba class at Emerson Elementatry School, Wellness Center, Franklin Perice, Swanzy gym, YMCA, a Keene gym, in the woods, Lady of America in Keene, and Golfing.

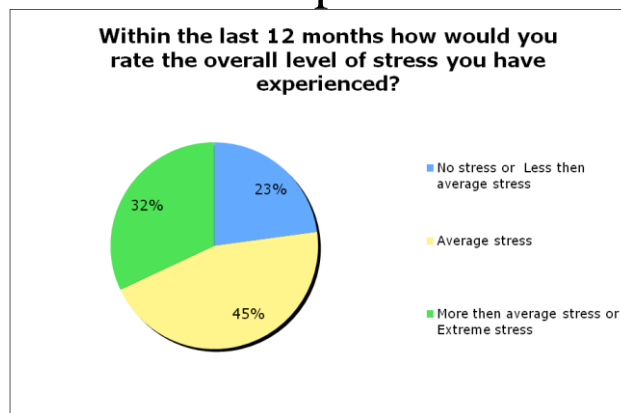
Graph 7



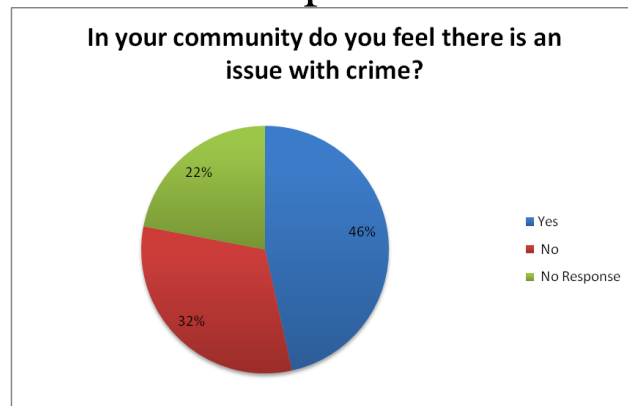
Graph 8



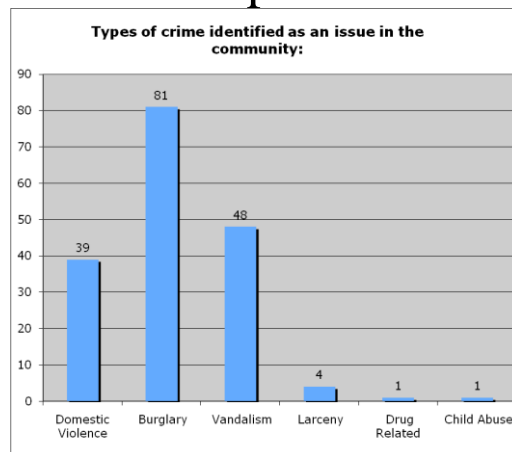
Graph 9



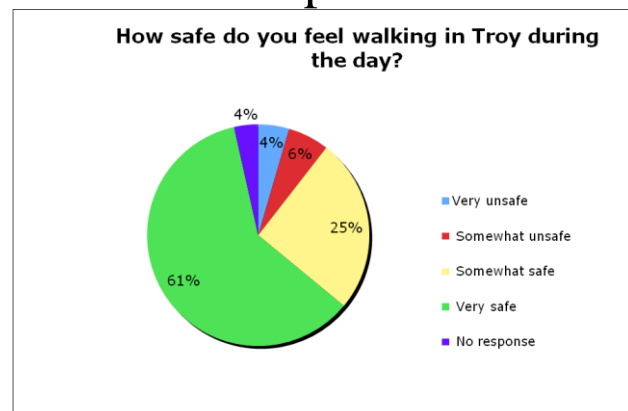
Graph 10



Graph 11

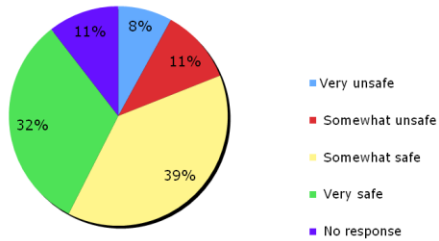


Graph 12



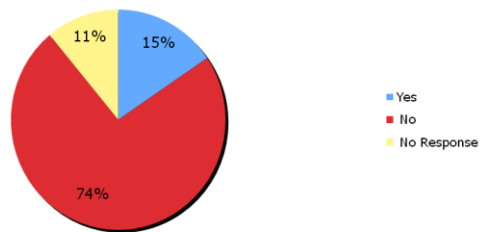
Graph 13

How safe do you feel walking in Troy at night?



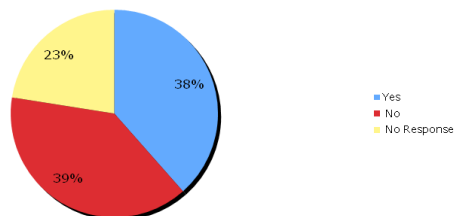
Graph 14

In your community do you feel there is adequate transportation?



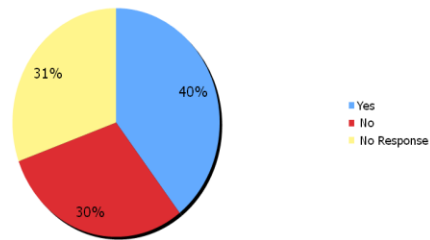
Graph 15

In your community do you feel there are there adequate childcare facilities?



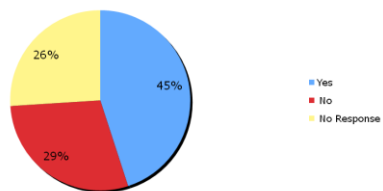
Graph 16

In your community do you feel there is a need for new mom support groups?



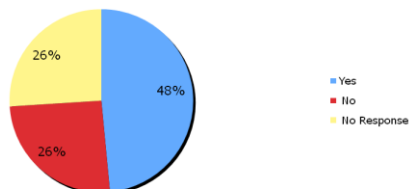
Graph 17

In your community do you feel there is a need for parent support groups?



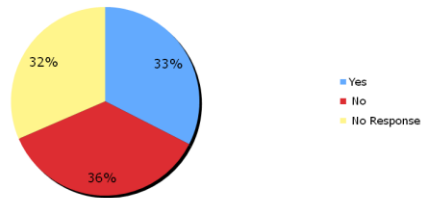
Graph 18

In your community do you feel there is a need for caregiver support groups?



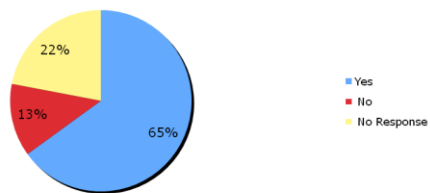
Graph 19

In your community do you feel there is an issue with school aged (teen) pregnancy ?



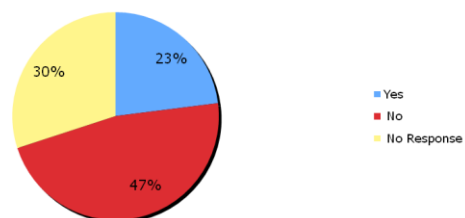
Graph 20

In your community do you feel there is an issue with drug or alcohol abuse?

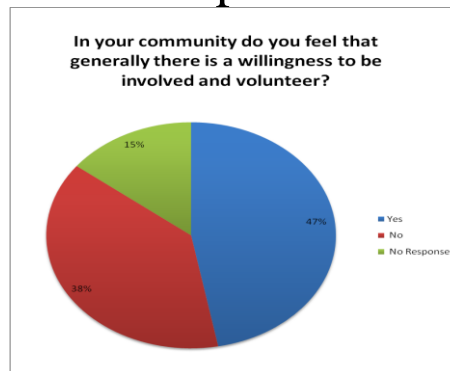


Graph 21

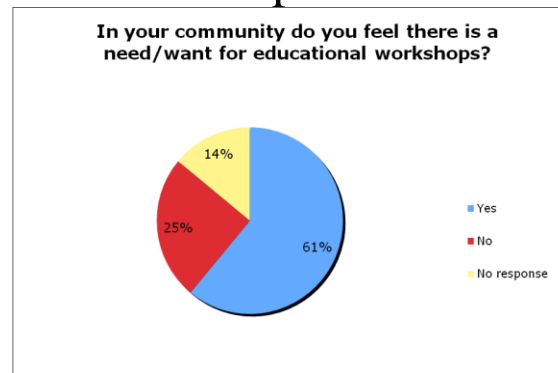
In your community do you feel that generally people in need do not ask for help?



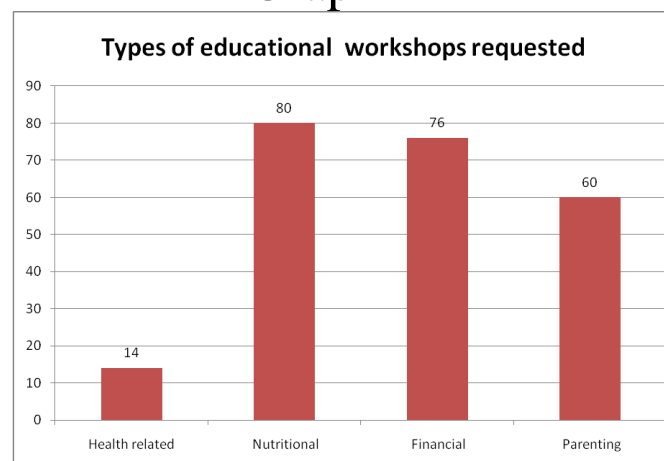
Graph 22



Graph 23

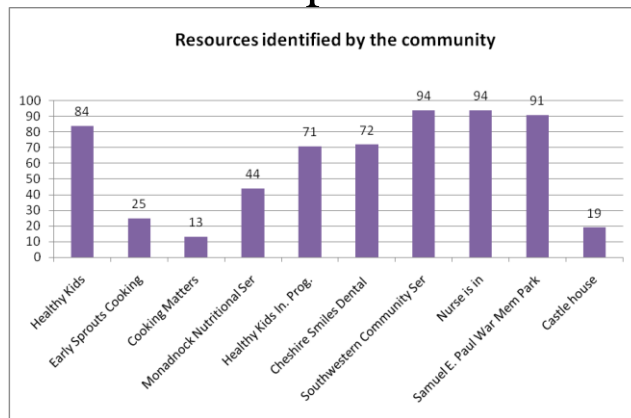


Graph 24

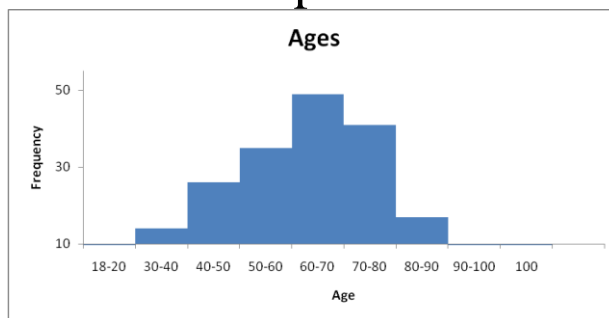


Other responses included: computer, recreational, diabetes, emergency training like CPR, gardening, bully prevention, community get-togethers, social activities, environmental, career search, special education, and lifestyle workshops.

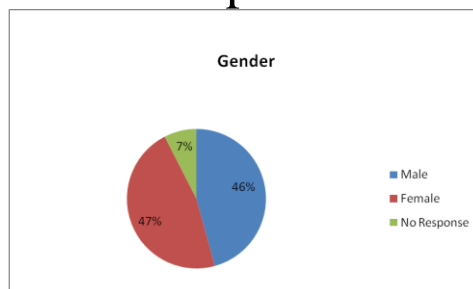
Graph 25



Graph 26



Graph 27



Graph 28

