

Determinants of Student Well-being at the University of Puerto Rico, Río Piedras Campus

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INTRODUCTION

During the COVID-19 pandemic, online education became the norm for students, profoundly impacting various aspects of their lives. Social distancing measures took a toll on economic stability, basic needs, and the sense of belonging to university communities. These challenges had significant repercussions on student's well-being. However, no recent studies have delved into how the sense of belonging, basic needs, and economic security relate to the overall well-being of Hispanic populations. Hence, this study explored whether factors such as food security, housing uncertainty, financial well-being, sexual orientation, and the sense of belonging to the university can serve as predictors of students' general well-being.

METHODS

Researchers employed a cross-sectional design with convenience sampling. Data was gathered through an online survey that was completed by 720 students at the University of Puerto Rico, Río Piedras campus. However, 287 cases were eliminated due to missing data, survey errors, and multivariate outliers.

RESULTS

The results of the multiple linear regression analysis revealed that the proposed model significantly predicts 36% of the variance related to student well-being, $F(6,122) = 10.85, p < .001, R^2 = .37$. Specifically, sense of social belonging, sense of academic belonging and sexual orientation emerged as positive correlates of student well-being. Notably, no significant correlations were observed between food security, housing security, homelessness, financial well-being, sense of belonging on campus, and institutional support.



ASSUMPTIONS

Figure 1
Q-Q scatterplot of the residuals for the regression model.

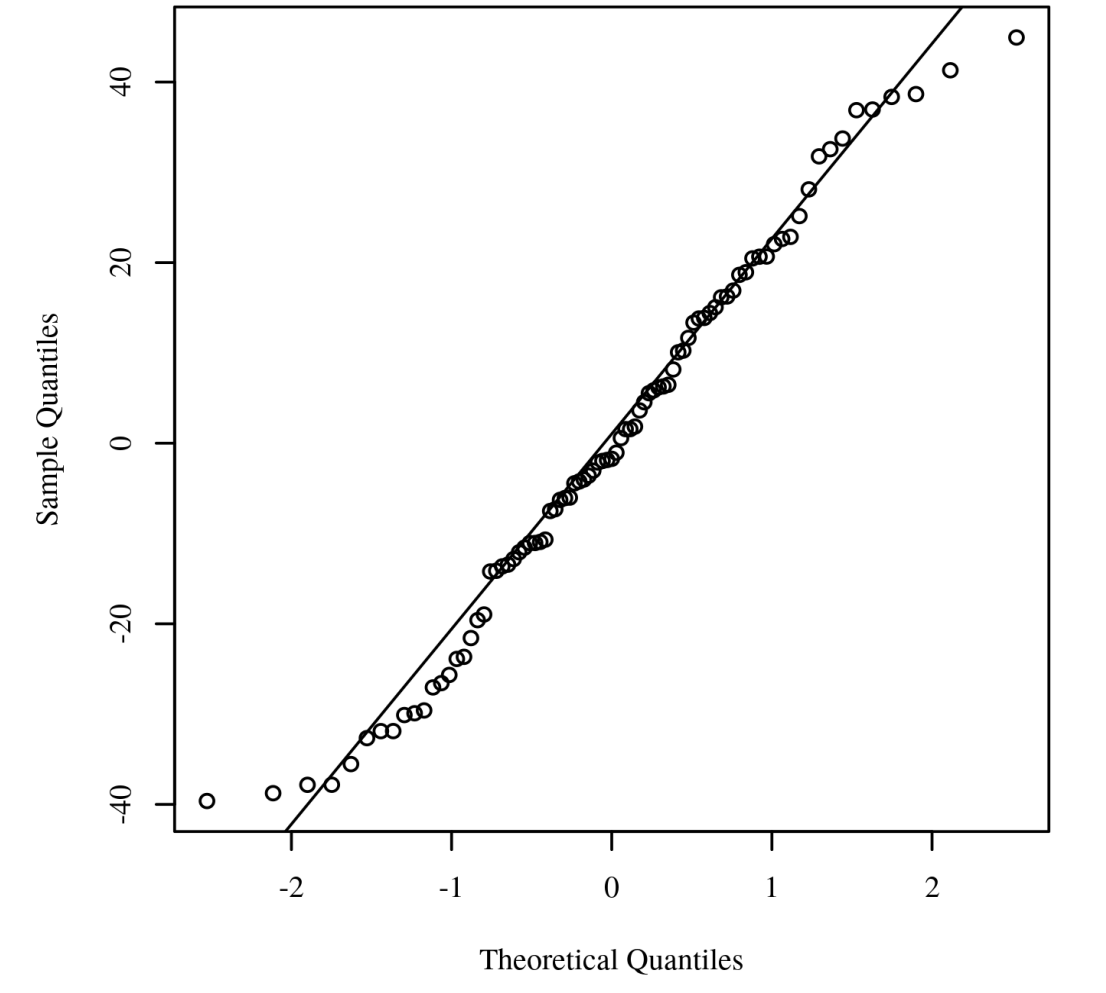
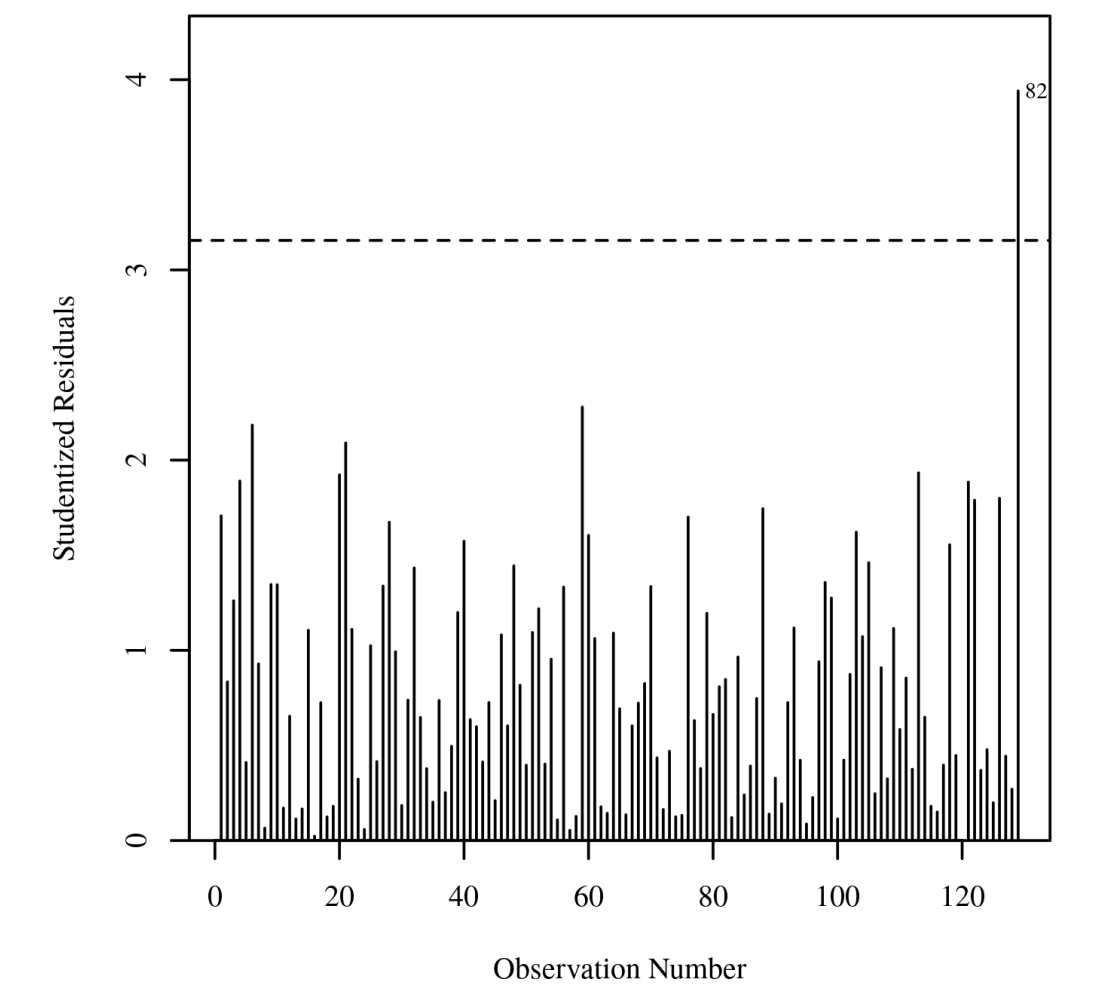


Figure 2
Studentized residuals plot for outlier detection



DISCUSSION

The proposed model explains 37% of the variance related to the psychological well-being of college students. A closer look at the model reveals that sense of social belonging, sense of academic belonging, and sexual orientation are among the best predictors. Researchers suggest maintaining safe spaces, promoting integration initiatives on campus, and addressing the disparities between the homosexual and heterosexual communities can improve psychological well-being.

LIMITATIONS

The main limitations were related to the sampling technique, missing cases, and several outliers. In addition, many imputations were made to the financial well-being scale due to missing data.

SOCIODEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Figure 1
Student's Gender Identity

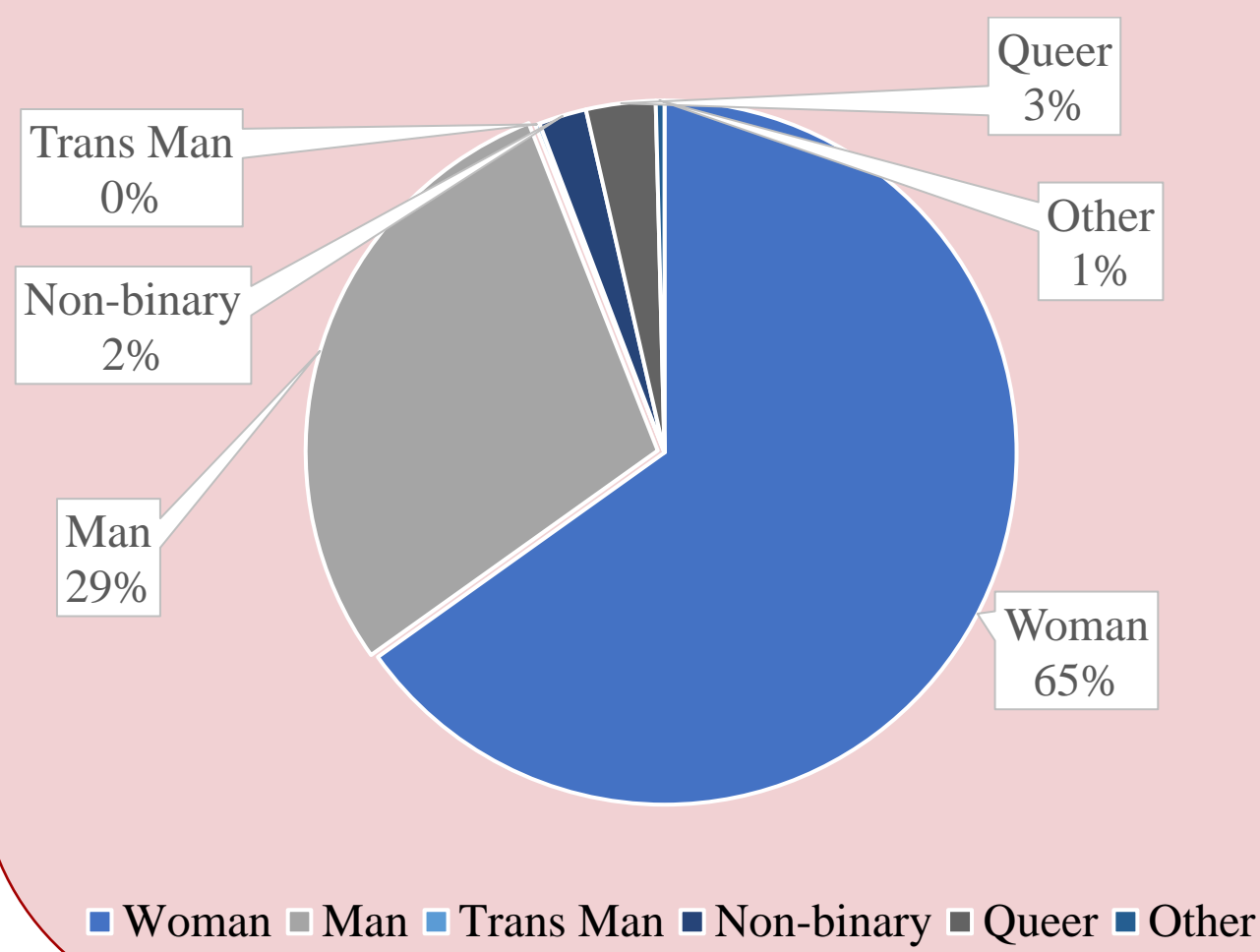


Figure 2
Students per Faculty

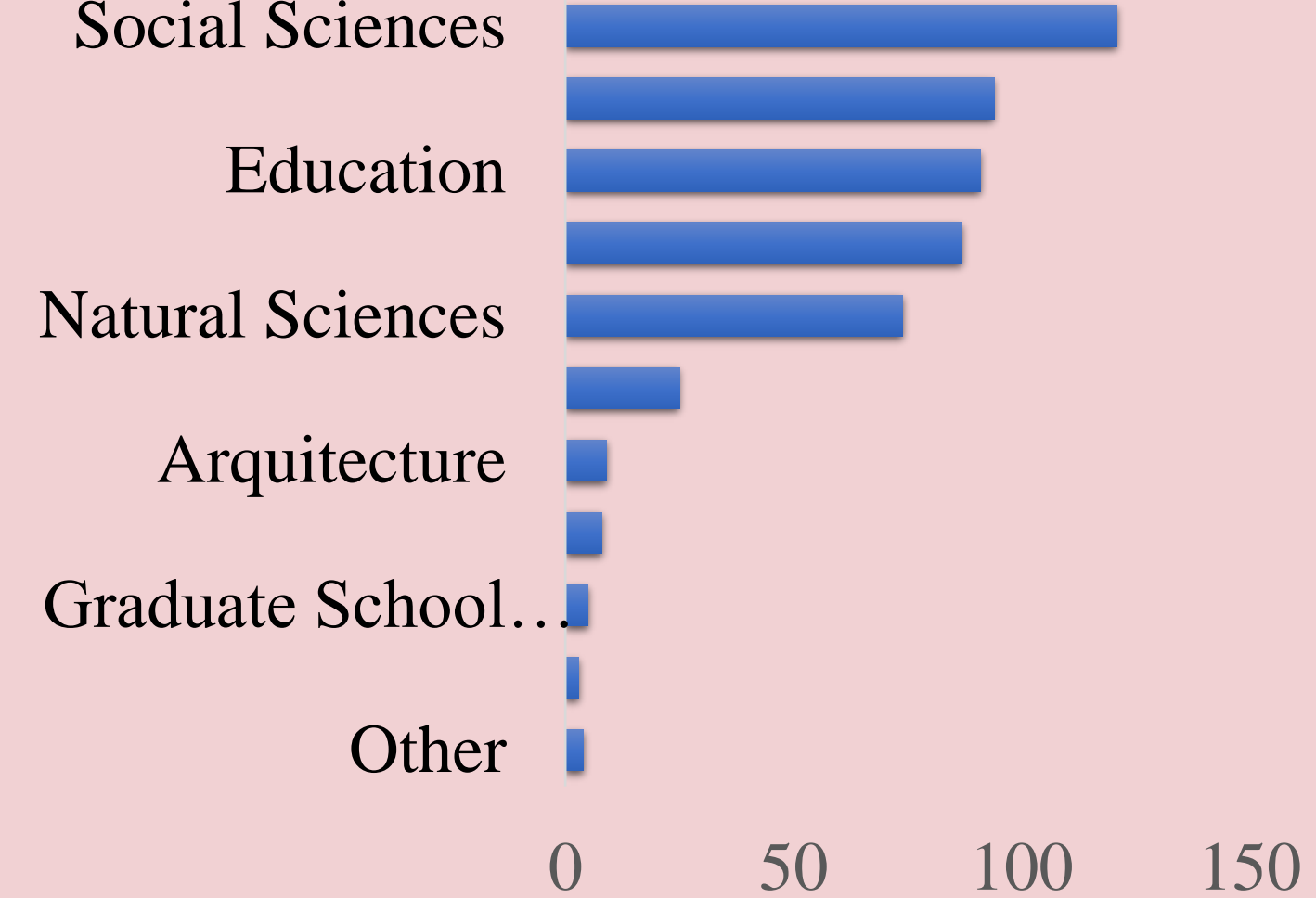
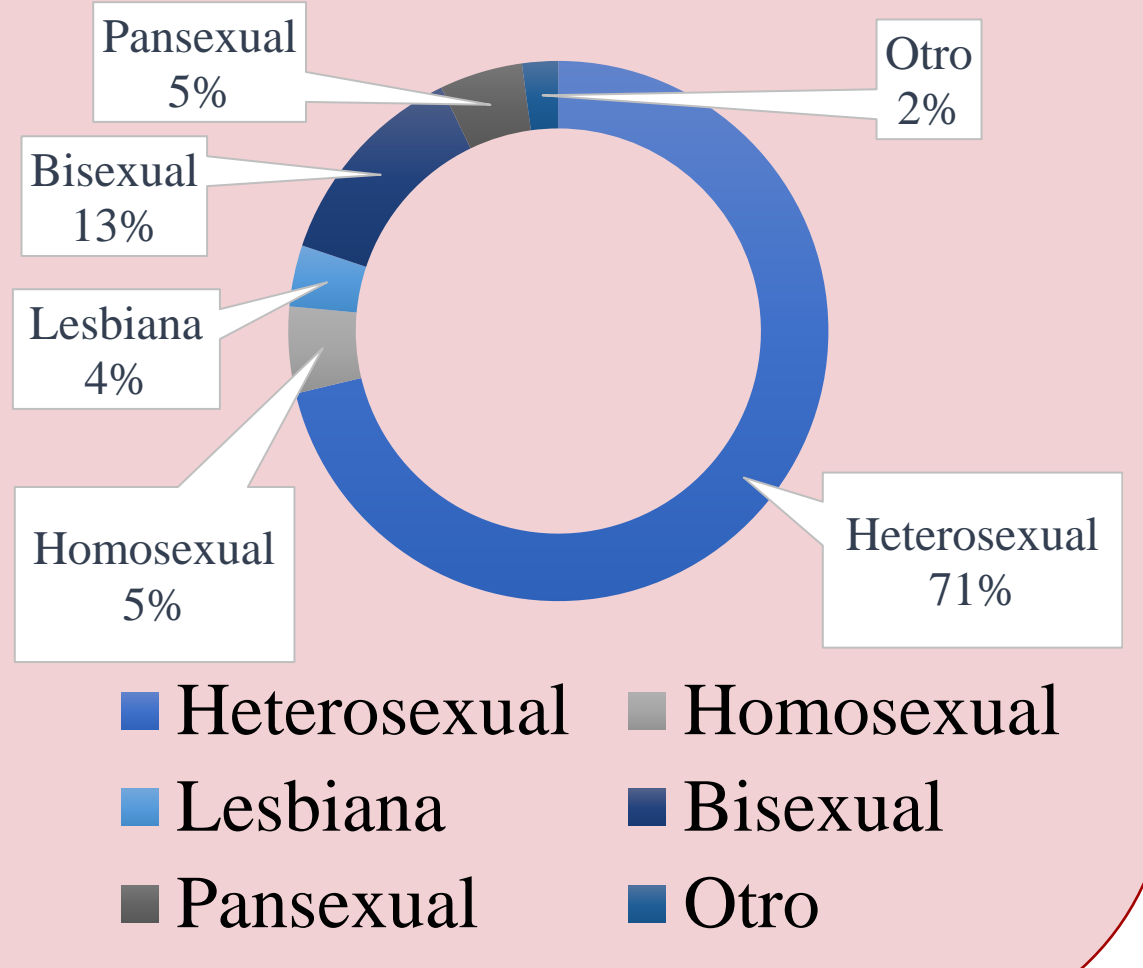


Figure 3
Students' Sexual Orientation



MAIN RESULTS

The results of the linear regression model were significant, $F(8,78) = 5.65, p < .001, R^2 = .37$, indicating that approximately 36.68% of the variance of Psychological Wellbeing can be explained by the model.

Table 1
Linear Regression Model Predicting College Students Psychological Well-being

Variable	B	SE	95.00% CI	β	t	p
(Intercept)	119.47	22.93	[73.82, 165.13]	0.00	5.21	< .001
Financial Well-Being	-1.20	0.77	[-2.74, 0.33]	-0.14	-1.56	.122
Sense of Social Belonging	1.00	0.35	[0.30, 1.70]	0.31	2.83	.006
Sense of Academic Belonging	1.33	0.63	[0.07, 2.59]	0.23	2.10	.039
Sense of Belonging on Campus	-0.98	0.51	[-2.00, 0.04]	-0.18	-1.91	.059
Sexual Orientation	17.24	5.27	[6.74, 27.74]	0.32	3.27	.002
Food Security	-0.34	0.82	[-1.98, 1.29]	-0.04	-0.42	.679
Homelessness	8.37	6.43	[-4.44, 21.18]	0.14	1.30	.197
Housing Security	5.61	5.56	[-5.46, 16.68]	0.10	1.01	.316