

# Covid-19 and the online classroom: self-perceived changes in college students' communicative behavior

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## Introduction

The Covid-19 pandemic began in March 2020. Several surveys (Garris & Fleck 2020) have revealed negative aspects of online instruction (e.g. increased anxiety, lack of interest, decreased attention span), which will affect students' future.

In light of this, it is important to investigate the effects of remote learning on students, in particular the potentially detrimental effects of this mode of instruction on their **socialization** and **classroom interaction**.

### Predictions of this study:

- Remote learning resulted in a decrease in frequency and quality in social interactions.
- Remote learning resulted in a decrease in students' participation and comfort in the classroom.

### The aims of this study were to identify:

- Student challenges in remote learning
- Student preferences in remote learning
- Students' self-perceptions of the changes in their lives and in their socialization skills

## Summary & Discussion

In line with Shim & Lee (2020) and Murphy et al. (2020), our results revealed "advantages, disadvantages, and desired improvements."

>> Almost half of the respondents report a **decrease in the frequency of their social interactions**

>> **Screen time has increased dramatically**

>> Students are **not as comfortable asking clarification questions** in the online classroom

>> **A quality/quantity trade off?** Many people stated that while they do not socialize as much as before, they are now more confident in their relationships with those close to them – supported by an increase in quality conversations in one's household (and a decrease outside of it).

>> **A reason for optimism (Rahiem 2021):** there was a decrease in life satisfaction during the first stage of the pandemic which appears to be improving (but almost none of the 52 respondents reported being "very satisfied" compared to about a third of them pre-pandemic).

>> These findings support and expand previous findings (Alawamleh et al. 2020), using data from a **new population of students: multicultural, highly urban, and used to high density settings**

>> **Future work:** vulnerable populations (digital inequality, ESL students) and faculty perceptions

## Materials & Methodology

A questionnaire was prepared in Google Forms and sent out to potential participants:

[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfXCI6zMfrv8O9jfcnEfl3E52kQqT9keoY8mA4QvpeZ8hulQA/viewform?usp=sf\\_link](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfXCI6zMfrv8O9jfcnEfl3E52kQqT9keoY8mA4QvpeZ8hulQA/viewform?usp=sf_link)

The questionnaire addressed various aspects of the students' classroom and social behaviors during three intervals:

- before the onset of the Covid-19 quarantine
- during the first 6 months of quarantine
- during the past 6 months

### QUESTIONS:

- ❖ # demographic info
- ❖ # classroom behavior
- ❖ # social practices
- ❖ 1 open-ended

During your lectures, if you do not understand a concept, how comfortable do you feel asking your instructor for clarification? 1 = extremely uncomfortable, 5 = extremely comfortable *	1	2	3	4	5
Before quarantine (March 2020)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
During quarantine (March 2020- Dec 2020)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Now (during 2021)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

### RESPONDENTS:

52 students from the NYC area who had been enrolled in remote classes after March 2020

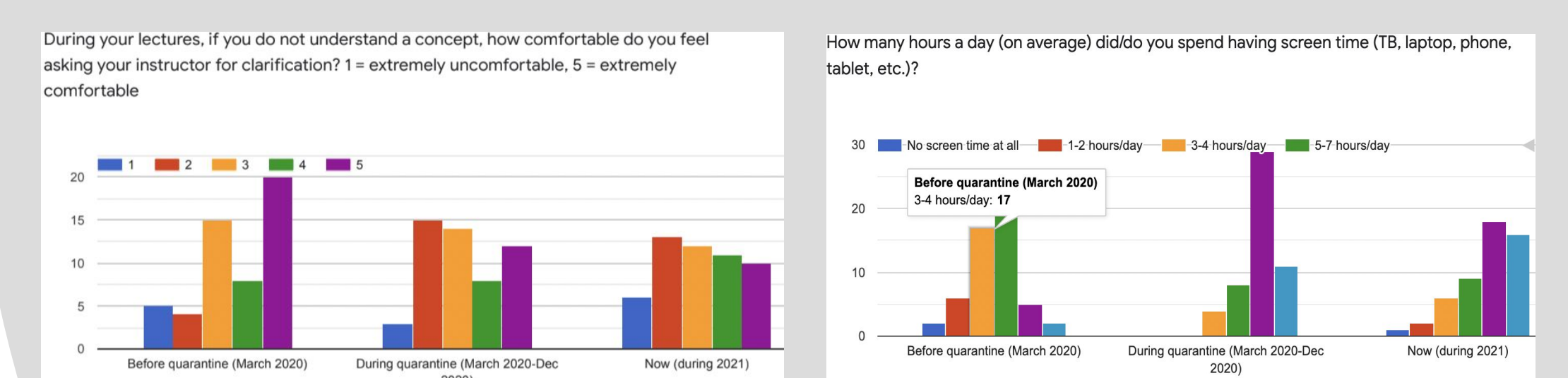
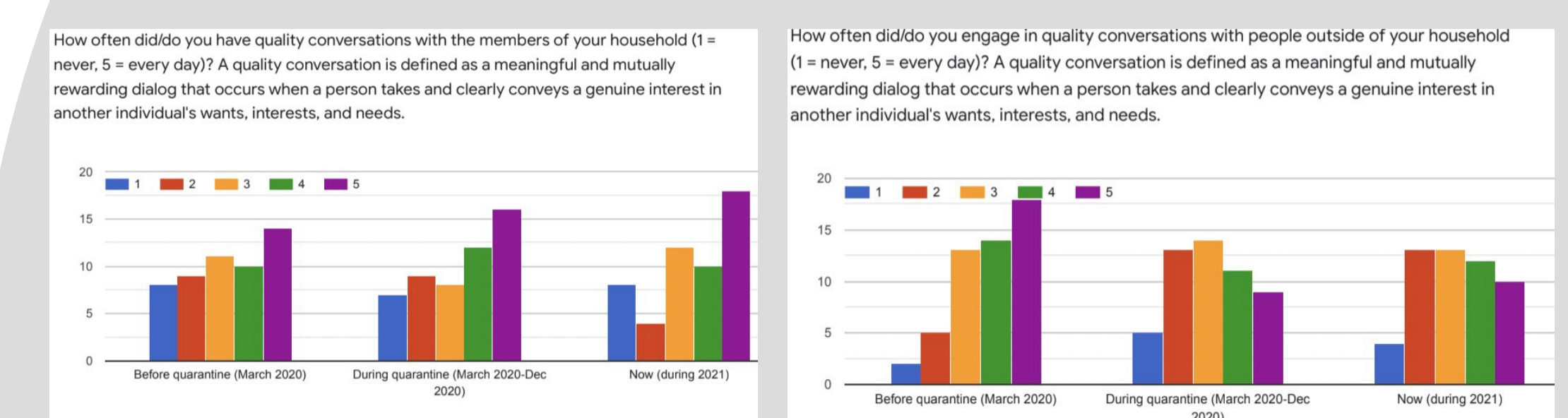
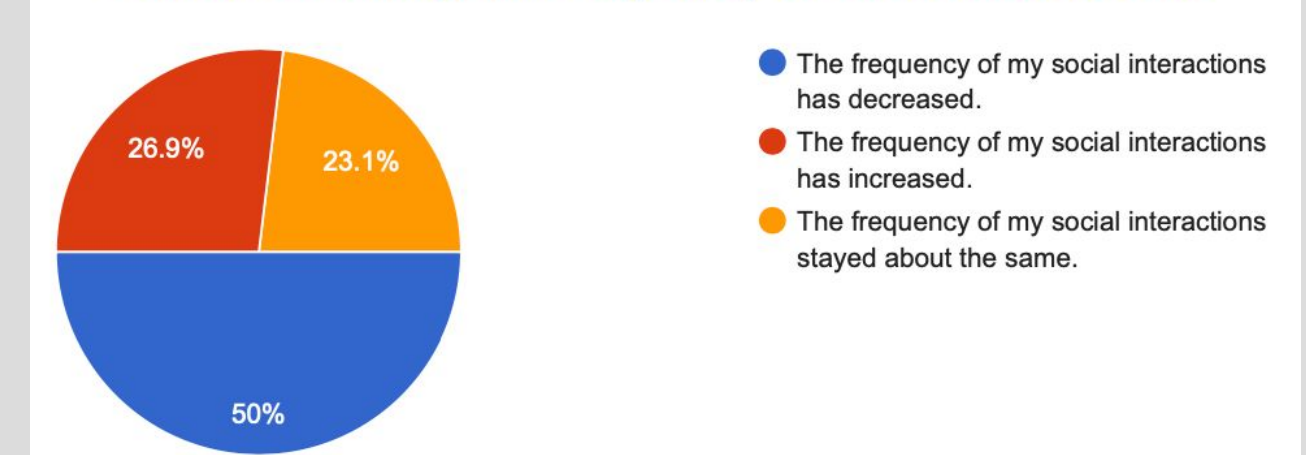


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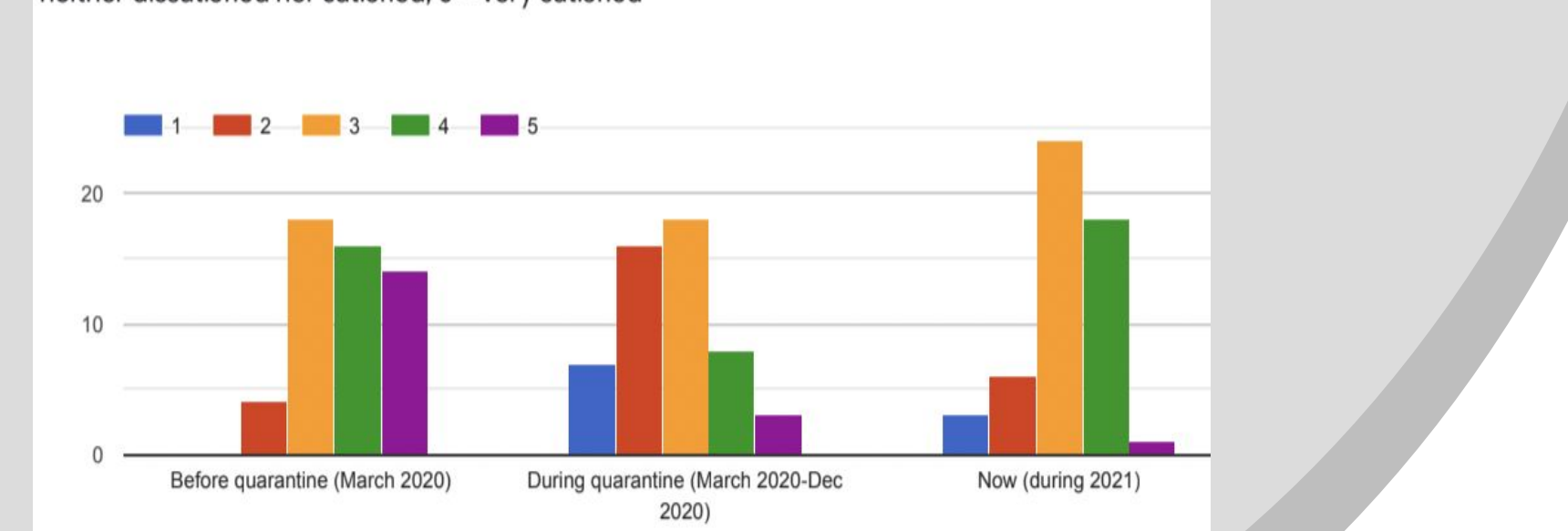
Speech & Communication For All

## Results Part 2

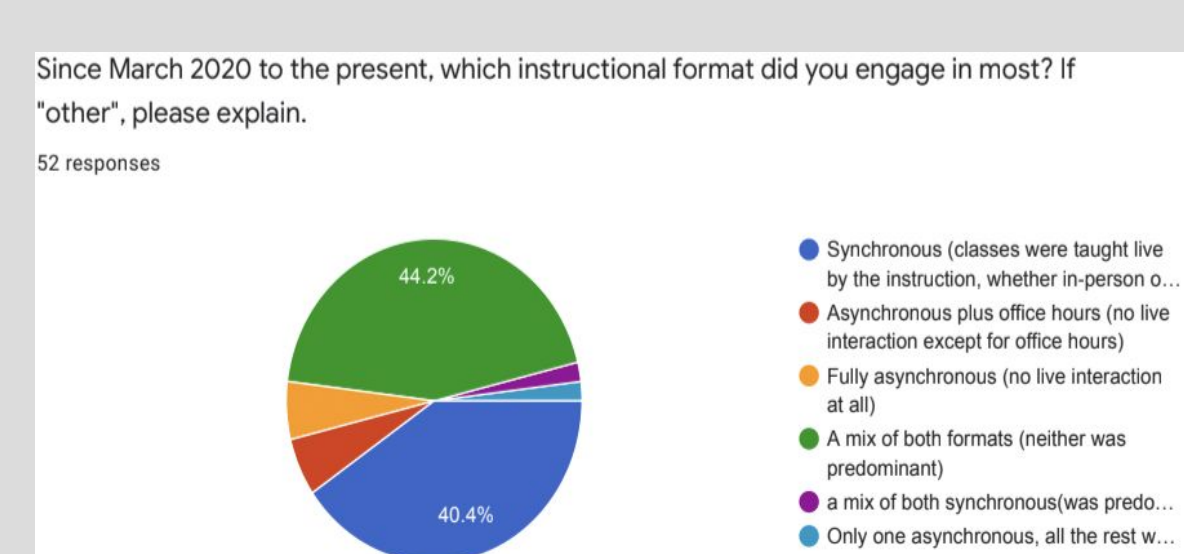
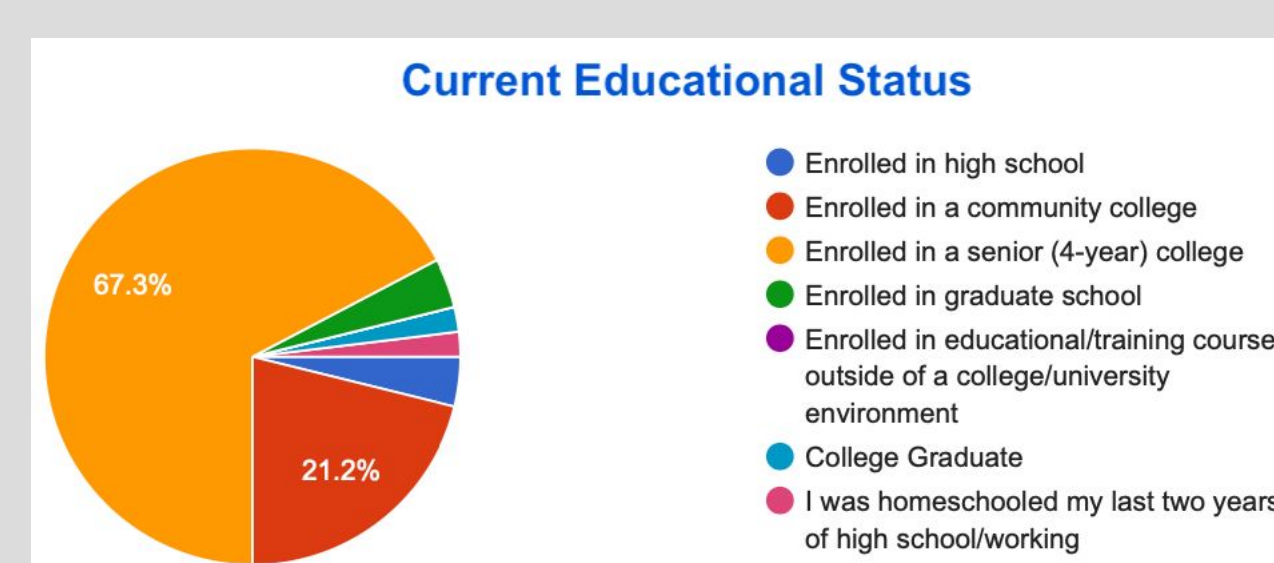
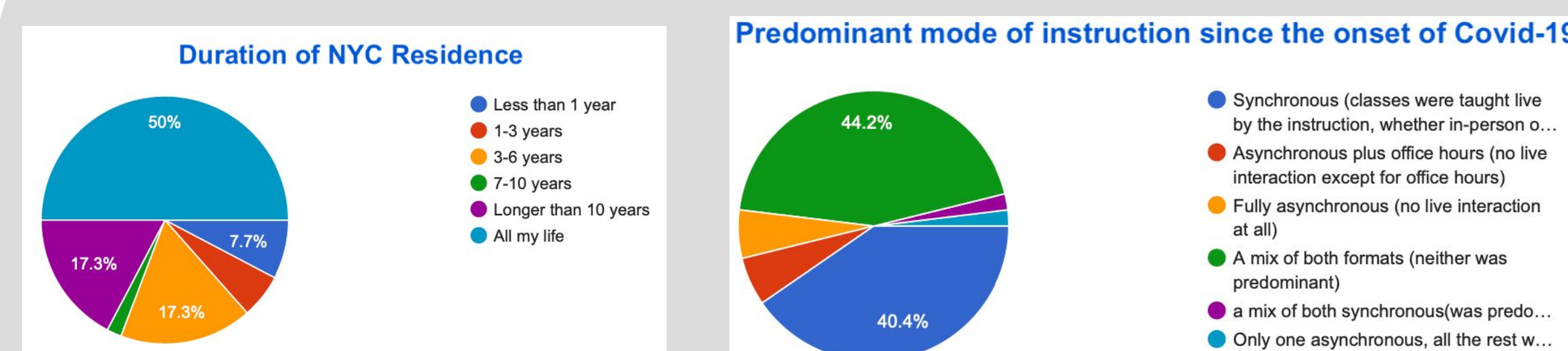
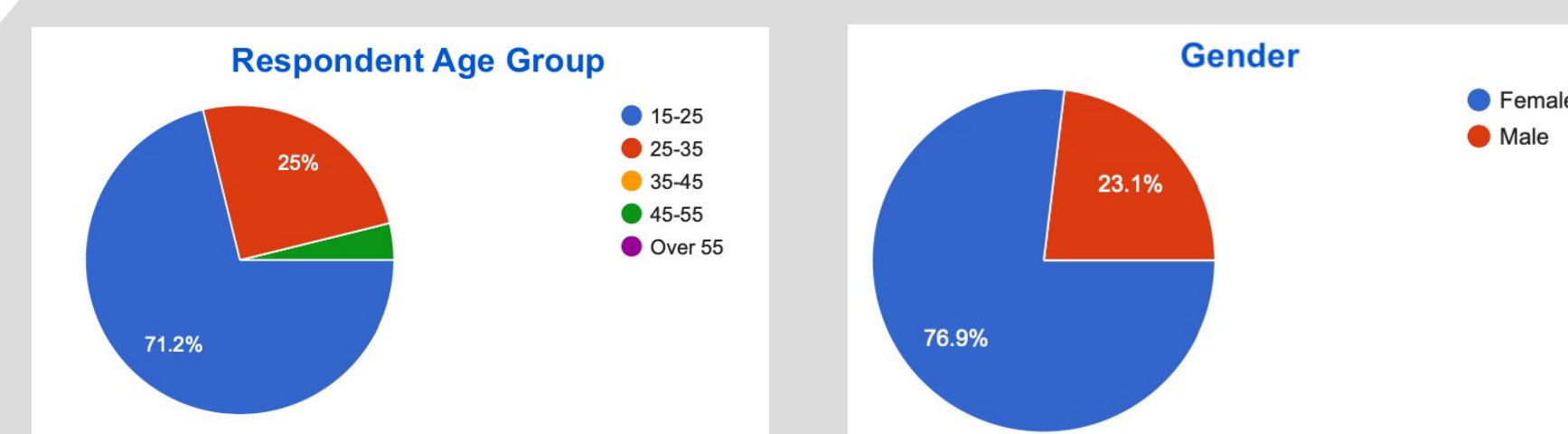
Perceived Change in Frequency of Social Interactions



Overall, please rate your life satisfaction during the past 2 years. 1 = very dissatisfied, 3 = neither dissatisfied nor satisfied, 5 = very satisfied



## Results Part 1



"My internet social skills have 100% improved. Before I didn't even feel comfortable FaceTiming a friend, but now it's a way of life! Also for some reason I feel more comfortable participating in virtual class than I do in in person classes. Idk why..."

"During this time it been very hard for me to interact with the outside world it brings up anxiety when I have to go outside and be around people."

"My attention span dropped tremendously, otherwise my skills in online procrastination increased two fold."

"I think in 2020 during lock down my mental healthy was severely affected which led me to become super anti-social. When I'm feeling depressed I tend to isolate myself even more by not reaching out to anyone. The lock down has made me appreciate small human interactions more now though. For example I feel more appreciative of things like a small friendly exchange with a store clerk, or helping out a stager with directions or reaching something in the grocery store etc."

"I have unfortunately lost the interest in making new friends a little. Because so many streaming site have so many new titles it distracts me from reality. But I did enjoy having to do almost nothing during quarantine, but I do still fear for my family's well being more than ever because of this virus."