

Preferences in a Residence Hall

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Abstract

It is becoming increasingly clear that the environment college students live in has an impact on their daily performances and how they feel mentally and emotionally. The purpose of this study was to gather information regarding participant's preferences in a residence hall. The goal was to survey current NDSU students to gain insight on their preferred residence hall amenities, study habits, and their sustainable practices/habits. Participants were surveyed who previously have, or currently live in a residence hall at NDSU. Participants were contacted through email and participated in the survey willingly. The survey consisted of three major sections: personal space preferences, study preferences, and environmental preferences.

The results provided greater insight to students' preferences when it comes to the space that they live and learn in. Some of these preferences include incorporating various study areas for personal or group learning, better options for recycling on campus, and higher quality resident rooms.

Review of Literature

Preferred Residence Hall Amenities:

- “Residence halls should be designed to encourage positive student interaction, promote learning, and foster student development” (Rutledge, 2012, p. 12).
- Incorporating multipurpose spaces for students to host events and socialize in could help them successfully integrate socially and academically (Kulp, Pascale, & Grandstaff, 2019, p. 2).

Study Habits:

- It was also proven that students who live in a living/learning residence hall have stronger academic outcomes, are more involved with their college environments, and have an overall better adjustment to college (Longerbeam, Inkelas, & Brower, 2007).

Sustainable Practices/Habits:

- “Undergraduate students are an interesting and novel population, as they are still forming their values and beliefs, and therefore may be more open to engage in sustainability efforts” (Whitely et. al., 2018, p. 245).
- Forleo, Romagnoli & Palmieri (2009) found that students are aware of their environmental impact and are willing to protect what is on their campus (Forleo, Romagnoli, & Palmieri, 2019).

Methodology

Measures

An online survey was conducted using Qualtrics, consisting of 22 multiple choice, fill in the blank and five-point Likert scale mixed methods questions.

Subjects

There was a total of 405 participants, who were 18 years or older. The participants currently live or previously lived in a residence hall.

Procedure

The survey was distributed through email Listserve to North Dakota State University's students. The research procedure was conducted through an online survey over a 12-day period.

Selected Participant Quotes

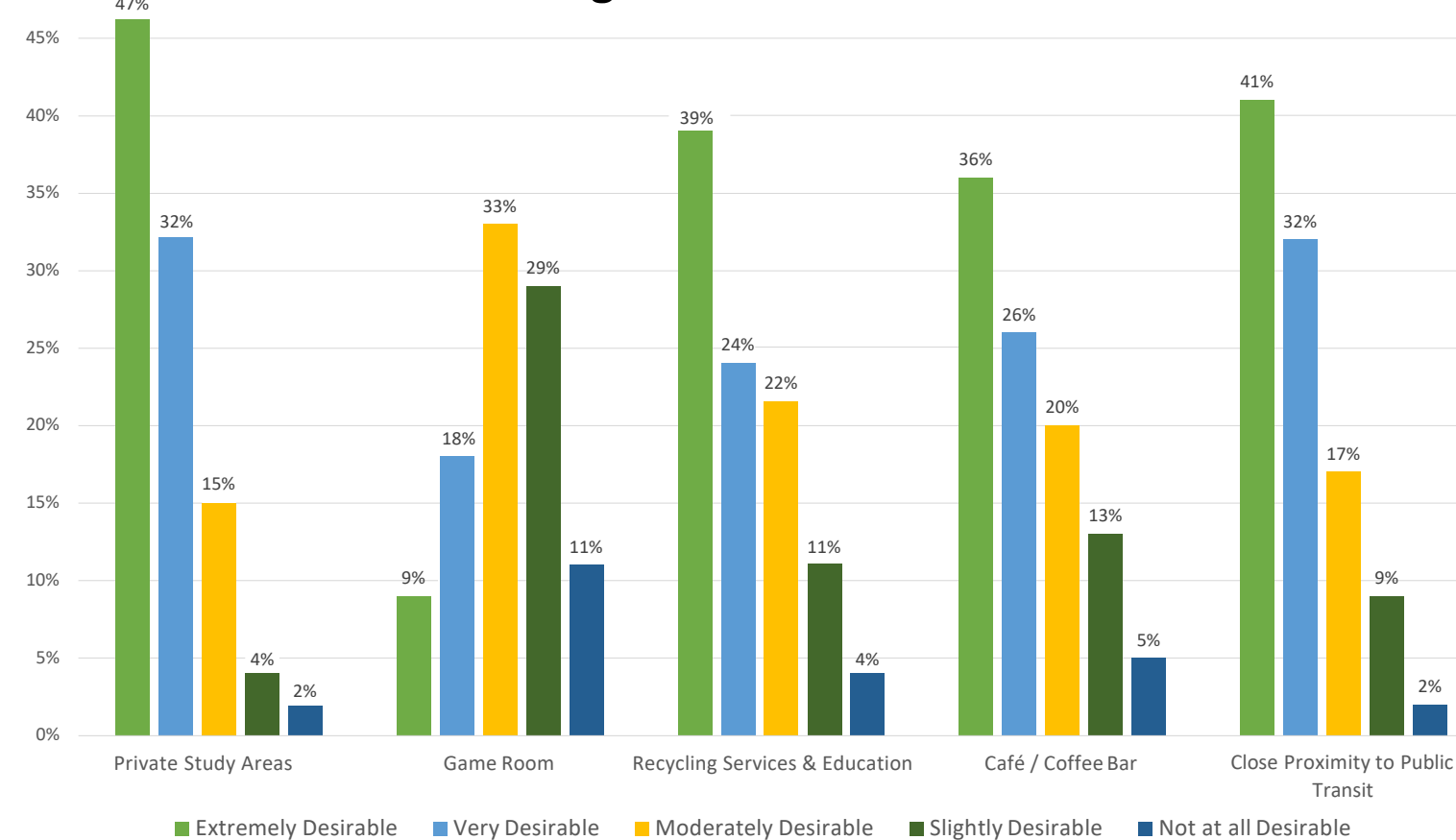
- “Better lighting in rooms, incorporating features that make small rooms feel more spacious/open.”
- “When it comes to study areas, being in a more open environment with lots of natural light and nature is very refreshing. Most study areas are small, enclosed spaces, which are good as an option, but an option for a more open and brighter environment would be desirable.”

Results

🏠 Amenities

Private study areas are the most desirable amenity, following proximity to public transit, recycling services and education on ways to help the environment and a café/coffee bar. The amenities that had the highest response rate for least desirable include a game room, bike storage, and snack bar.

Figure 1: Amenities



📚 Study Preferences

Studying at a desk or table (40.59%) and studying alone (42.22%) received the highest response rate of an extremely desirable study preference. While studying with a friend or group (44.91%) and studying on soft seating such as a couch or lounge chair (31.19%) received the highest response rates for moderately desirable.

Figure 2: Study Preferences

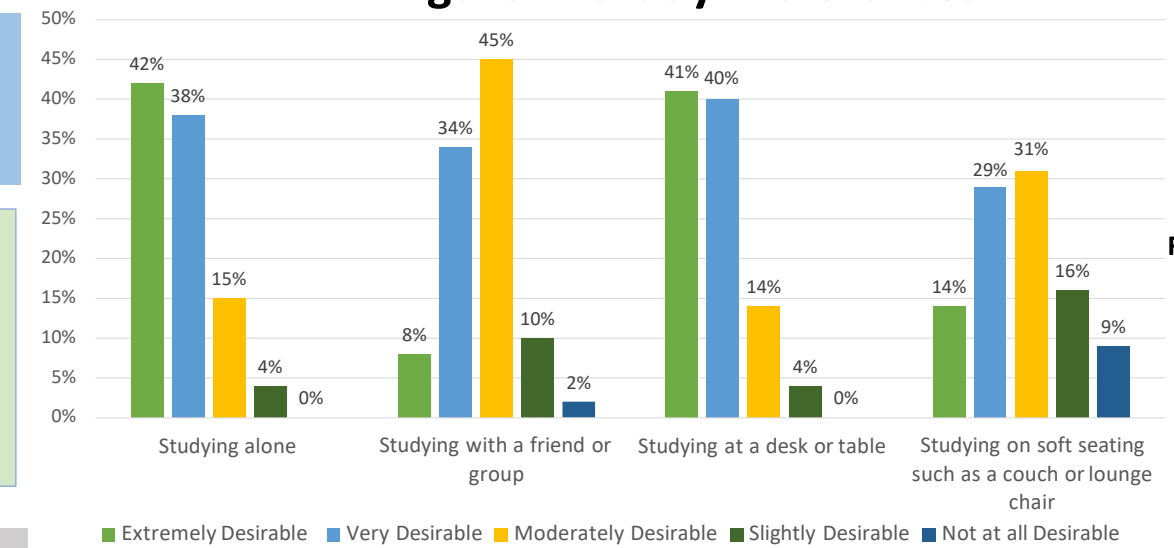


Figure 3: Private Study Areas

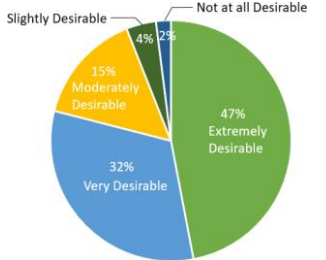
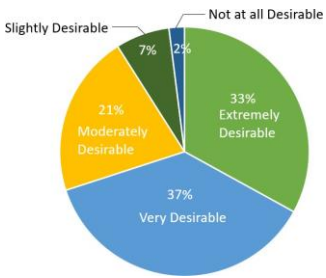


Figure 4: Group Study Areas



♻️ Recycling & Sustainability Efforts

Most participants responded they would be very likely to participate in the sustainable actions listed. 61.44% of participants were very likely to participate in keeping a separate bin in their room for recycling. 75.93% of participants were very likely to recycle paper, plastic and glass into provided bins. 52.36% said they would choose re-usable bags over plastic bags. 89.53% would use a water bottle if filtered water fountains were provided and 37% would participate in gardening if they were able to cook with what was grown.

Figure 5: Recycling & Sustainability Efforts

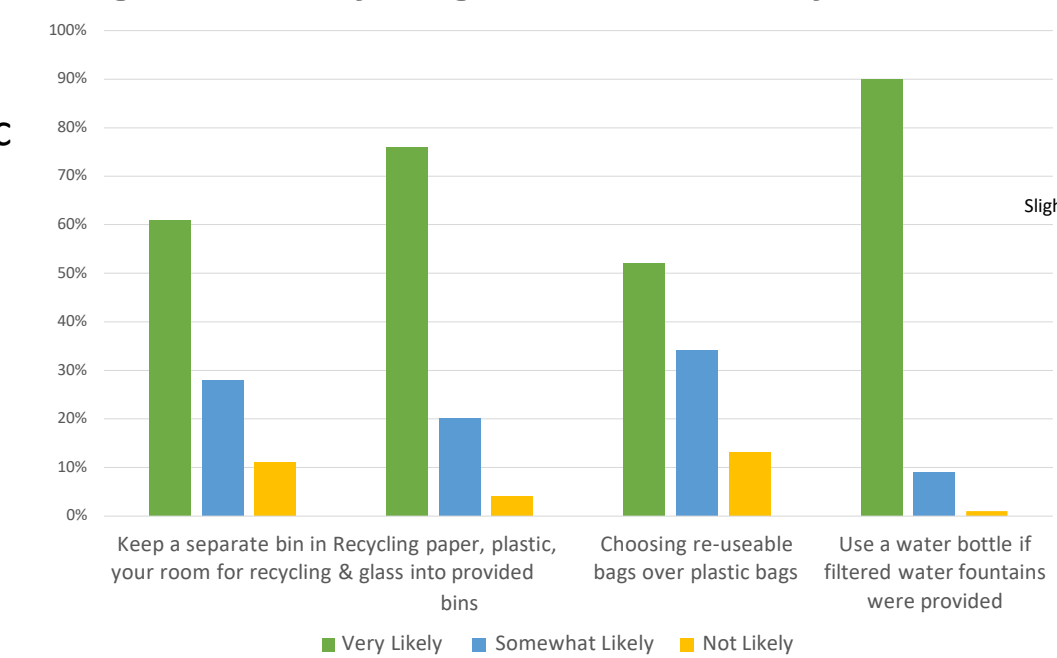
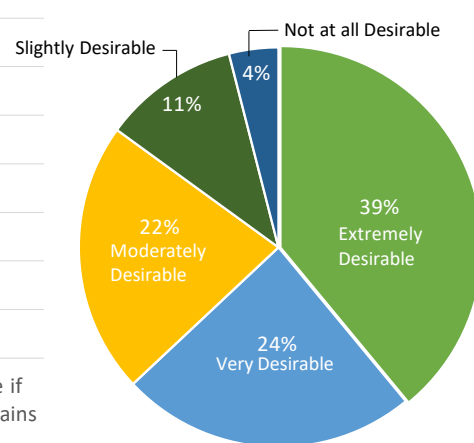


Figure 6: Recycling Services & Education on ways to help the Environment



Conclusion

After analyzing the data that was collected, the results suggest that most participants (79%) find it extremely or very desirable to study alone. Participants also desired to live with one or more roommates than to live alone. In the future, it would be desirable to have small group discussions with first year students who answered this survey to gain more insight on how they are transitioning into university living.