

# Has COVID-19 Changed the Health Consciousness of Pharmacy Students at the University of Findlay?

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## INTRODUCTION

In order to gauge the shift in health consciousness, a survey was administered to pharmacy students of various status. The goal of this survey was to get a better understanding of how pharmacy students' actions have altered since the beginning of the pandemic. The survey asked students about general cleanliness, such as how many times per day they were washing their hands before vs. during the COVID-19 pandemic. Additionally, the survey was focused around social gatherings, and if pharmacy students were more hesitant to get together in groups of 10 or more people, as well as if they were less likely to go out to eat at a restaurant since quarantine began. Finally, the survey asked students about daily activities, such as how often they were now sanitizing while shopping, and if they are more likely to wash their hands after pumping gas at a public gas station. Ultimately, it is apparent that the COVID-19 pandemic has left a lasting impression on pharmacy students and has drastically changed the means by which we must go about our daily lives in order to protect ourselves and those around us.

## METHODOLOGY

The survey conducted represents our exploratory, observational, cross-sectional study with the goal of determining the extent of COVID-19's effect on pharmacy students' health consciousness at the University of Findlay. The survey consisted of 10 questions with 4 demographic questions at the beginning of the survey. The remaining questions centered around hand washing, sanitizing, and other health conscious related activities. This survey was sent out to pharmacy students of any year (P1-P6) at the University of Findlay between the dates of February 9, 2021 to February 23, 2021. Responses were anonymously taken from 54 different participants during this two week period. Within the survey, questions that

required responses based on a participant's own activities were provided a 1 to 5 scale to provide a set number of responses. This scale described 1 as never completing the activity or never being likely to complete the activity, while 5 represented always completing the activity. For questions regarding the number of times the activity was completed, participants were provided 5 answer choices. These choices were "0-2 times", "3-5 times", "5-9 times", and "10 or more times".

## RESULTS

When asked how many times they washed their hands per day before COVID-19, 9.3% (5) reported 0-2 times per day, 63% (34) reported 3-5 times per day, 20.4% (11) reported 5-9 times per day, and 7.4% (4) reported 10 or more times per day. The next question asked was how many times per day they washed their hands since the COVID-19 pandemic began and 1.9% (1) student reported 0-2 times per day, 29.6% (16) reported 3-5 times per day, 48.1% (26) reported 5-9 times per day, and 20.4% (11) reported 10 or more times per day.

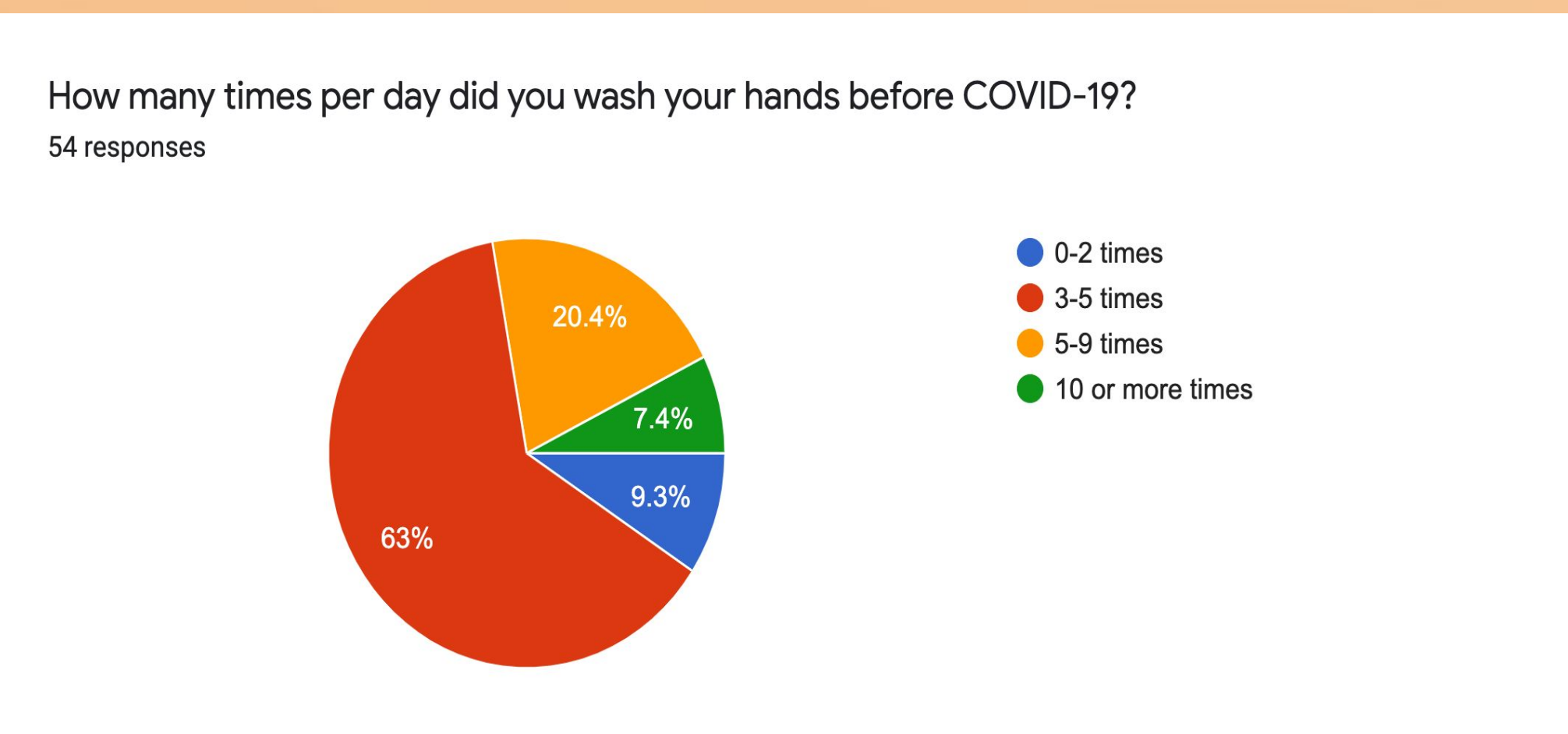


Fig 1: Handwashing before COVID-19

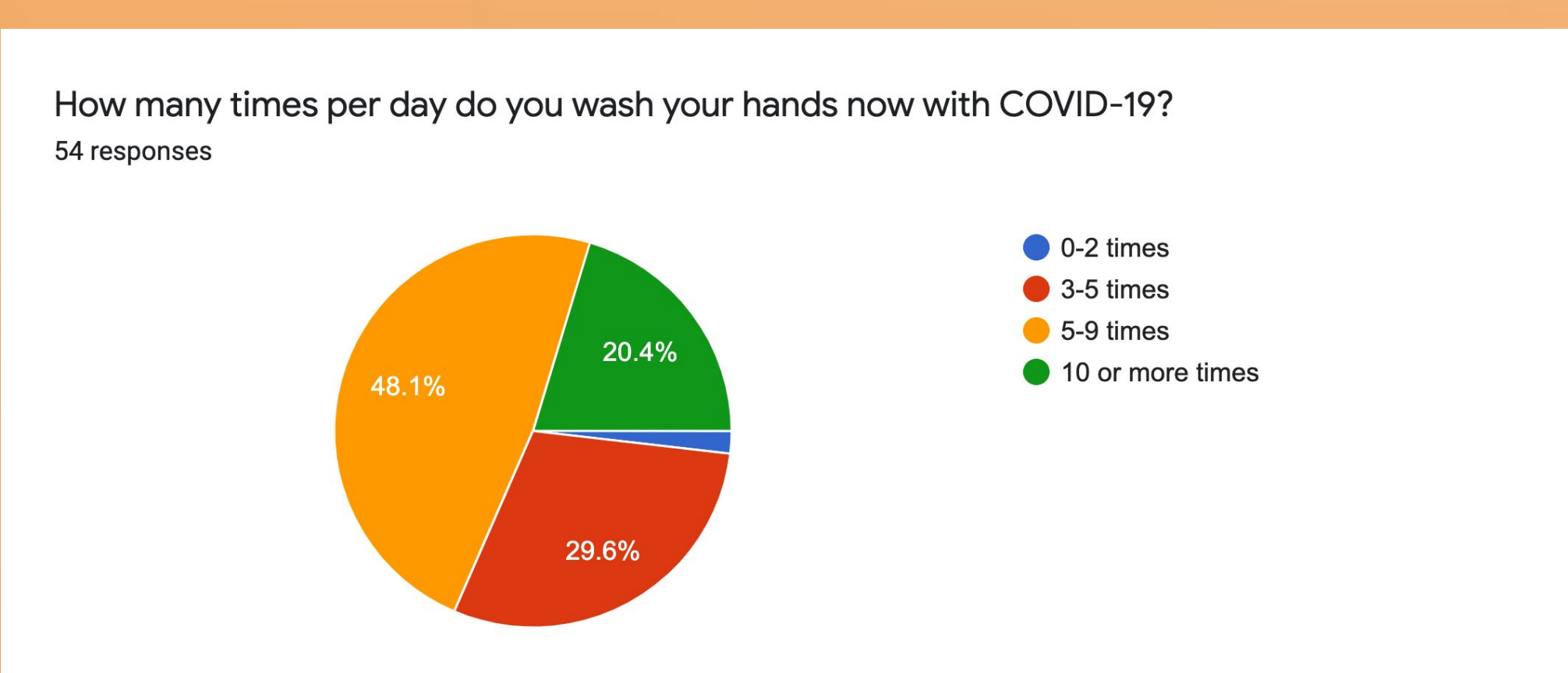


Fig 2: Handwashing during COVID-19

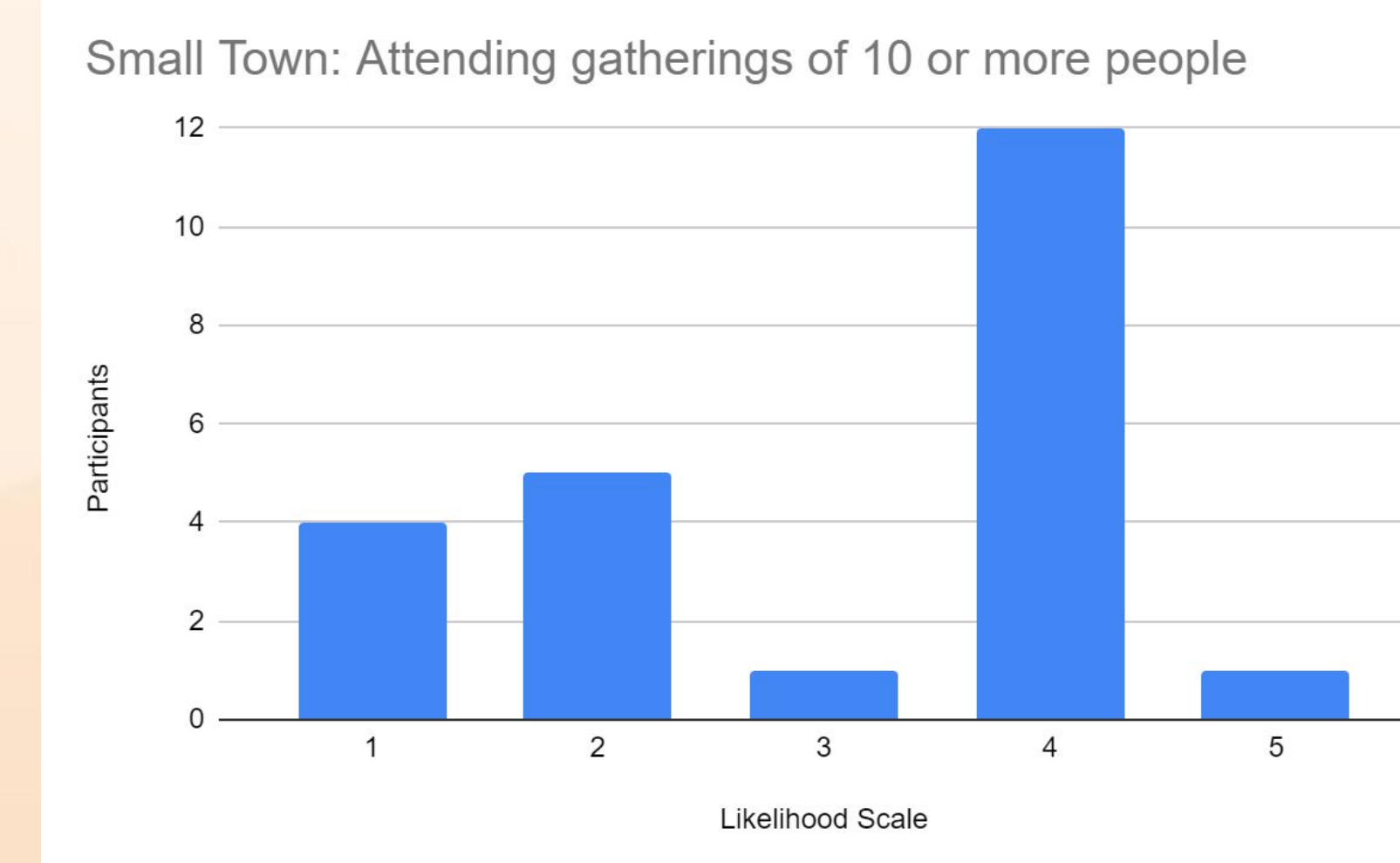


Fig 3: Small town gatherings

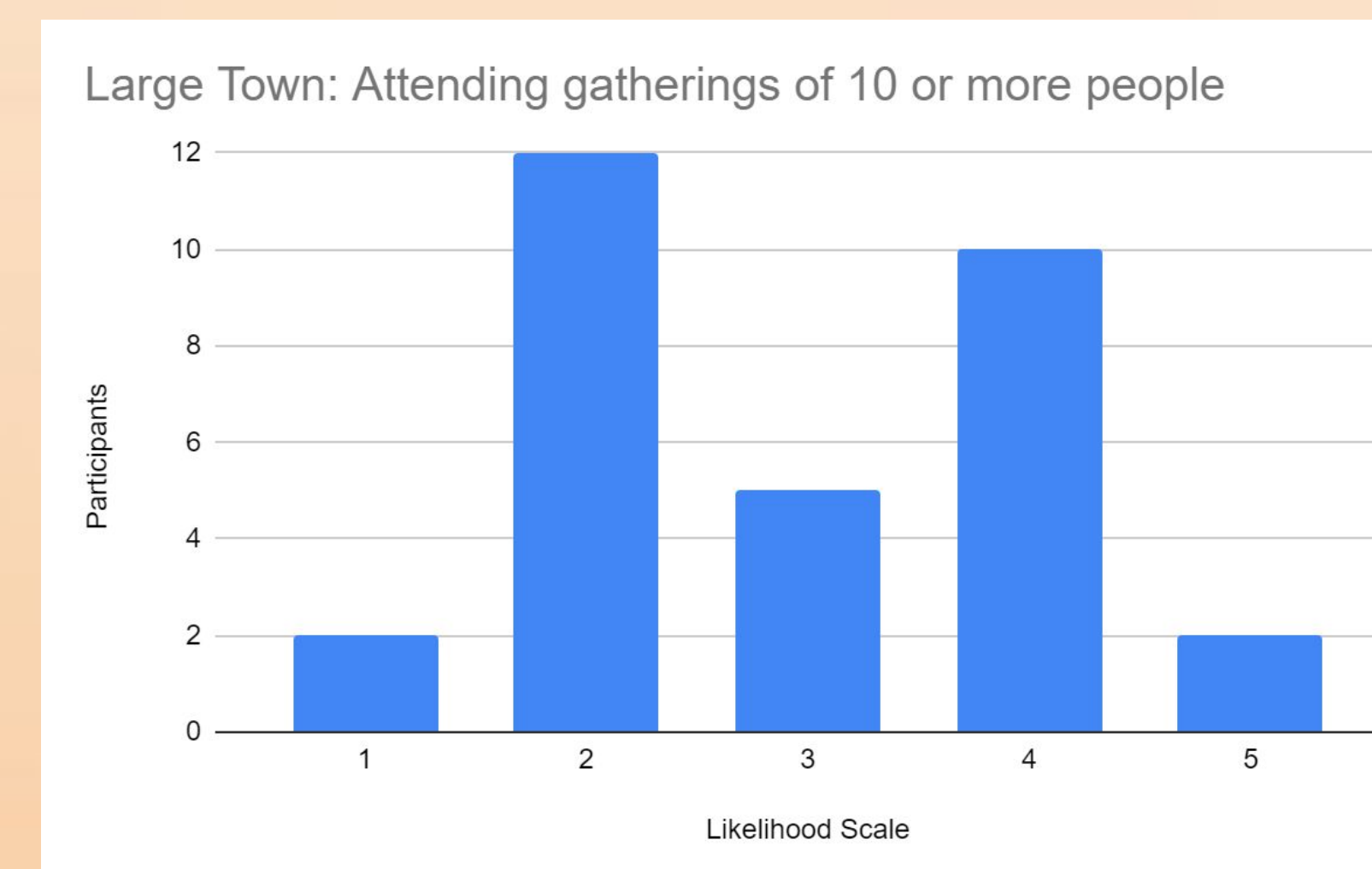


Fig 4: Large town gatherings

When asked how likely they would be to go out to eat during COVID-19, 7.4% (4) responded with a rating of 1, 22.2% (12) responded with a rating of 2, 31.5% (17) responded with a rating of 3, 29.6% (16) responded with a rating of 4, and 9.3% (5) responded with a rating of 5. 22.2% (12) students reported the likelihood of washing their hands after pumping gas during COVID-19 as a rating of 1, 25.9% (14) reported a rating of 2, 3.7% (2) reported a rating of 3, 24.1% (13) reported a rating of 4, and 24.1% (13) reported a rating of 5. In response to the question of how often they sanitized their hands after shopping during COVID-19, 7.4% (4) responded with a rating of 1, 14.8% (8) responded with a rating of 2, 18.5% (10) responded with a rating of 3, 11.1% (6) responded with a rating of 4, and 48.1% (26) responded with a rating of 5. For the final question of how likely they were to attend an event of more than 10 people, we analyzed the data as small (Less than 10,000 people) versus large towns (10,000 or more people). For small towns, four people responded 1, five people responded 2, one person responded 3, twelve people responded 4, and one person responded 5. For large towns, two people responded 1, twelve people responded 2, five people responded 3, ten people responded 4, and two people responded 5.

## CONCLUSIONS

When pharmacy students at UF were asked about their handwashing habits before the COVID-19 pandemic, most of them answered 3-5 times per day (63%), but when asked about their hand washing habits during the pandemic, most of them answered 5-9 times per day (48%). This shows that UF pharmacy students have changed their habits and are washing their hands more frequently due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

We evaluated the data about willingness to participate in various social activities, such as attending events with 10 or more people, and compared the results between different population sizes. We found, on average, people from smaller towns were more likely to attend larger social gatherings during the pandemic, while people from large towns were less likely to attend larger social gatherings. Further research could be conducted to find why this disconnect exists between different population sizes.

In conclusion, pharmacy students at the University of Findlay were found to change their normal cleanliness habits and became more health conscious due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

## REFERENCES

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