

A comparison of music education and music therapy majors' perception and use of self-care and coping strategies: Considerations pre-COVID-19 pandemic to present time



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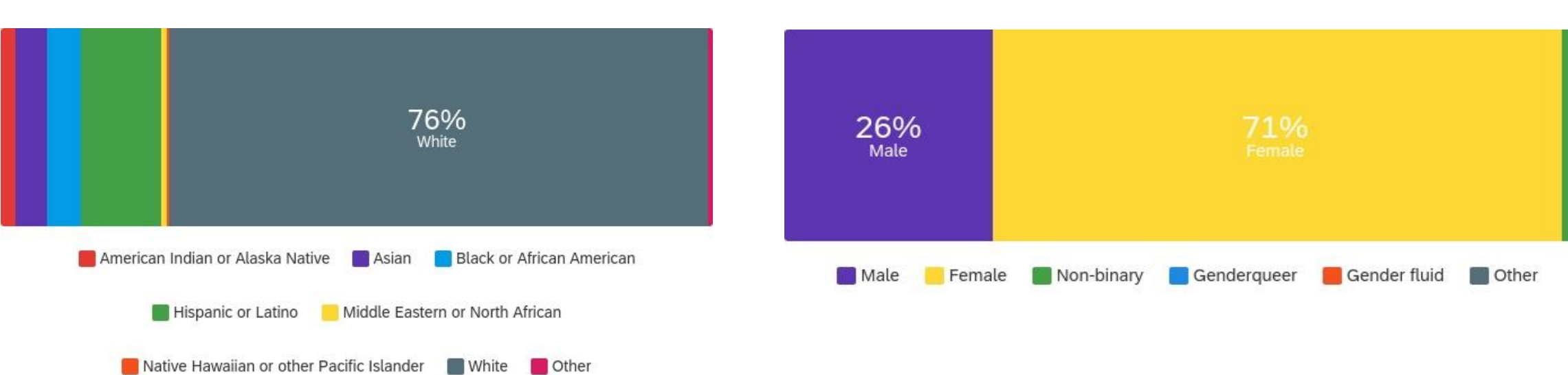
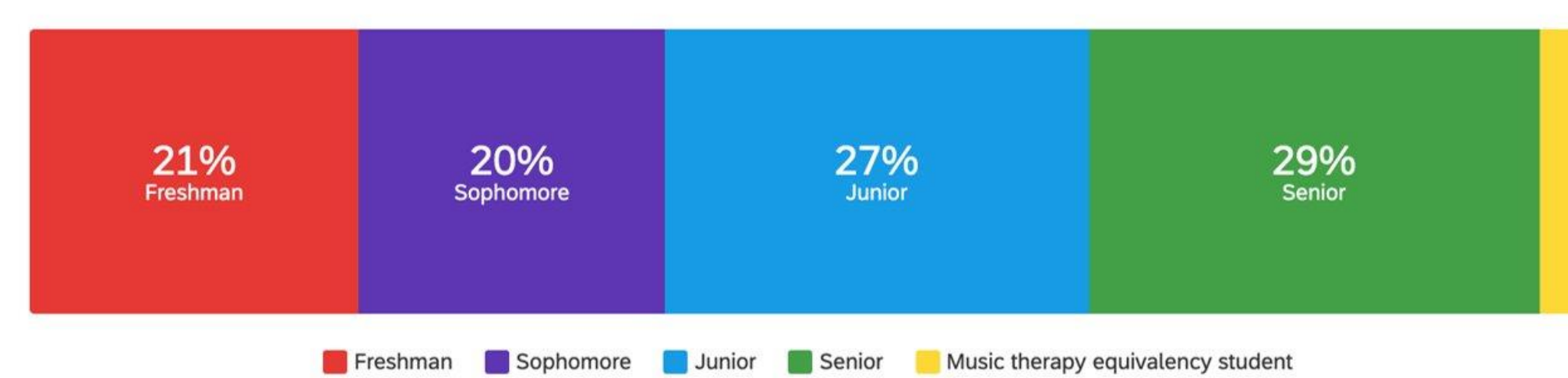
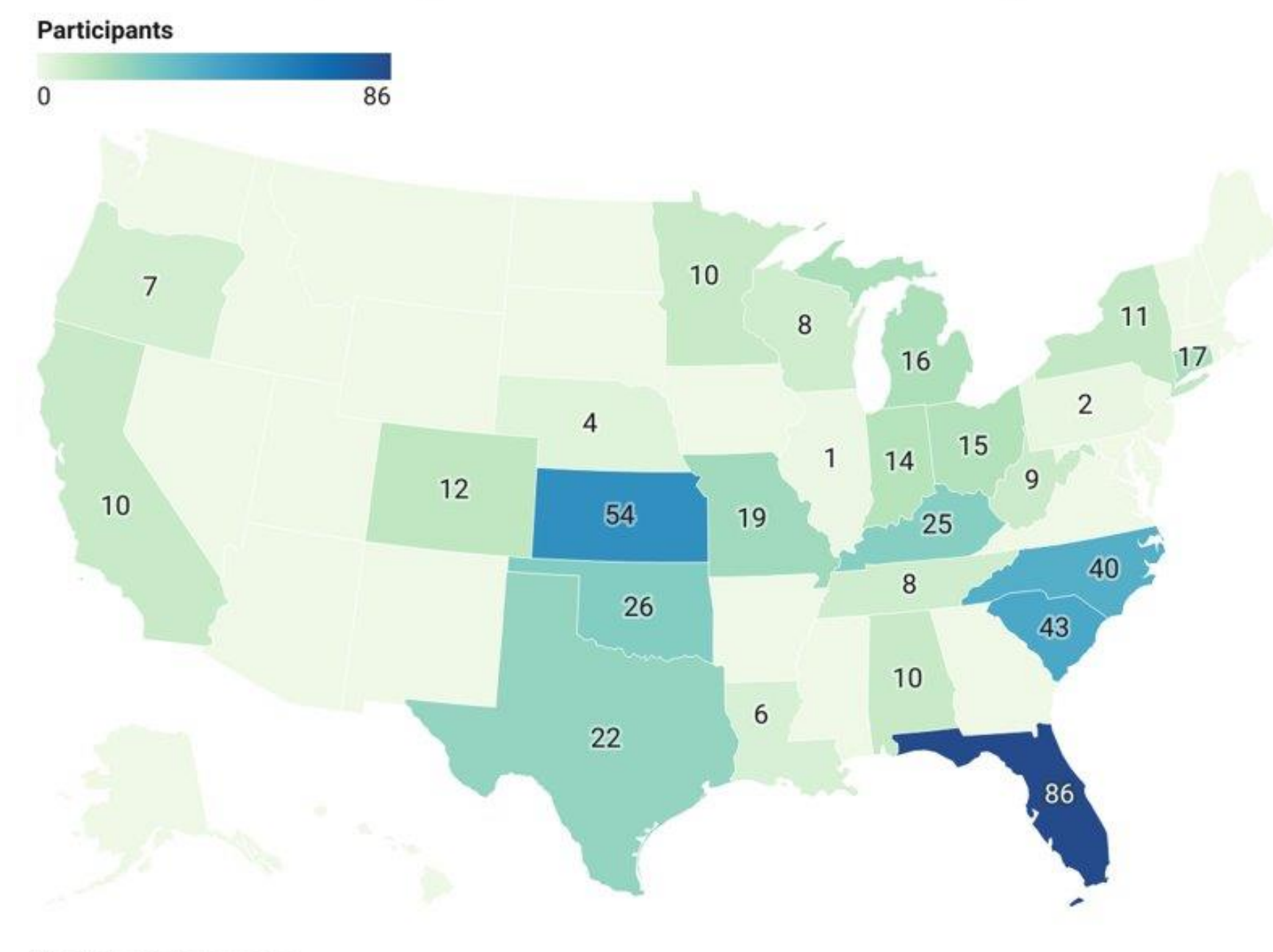
PURPOSE

The purpose of this study was to investigate how music education and music therapy majors perceive and use self-care and coping strategies and how those practices may have changed from before the COVID-19 pandemic to the present time.

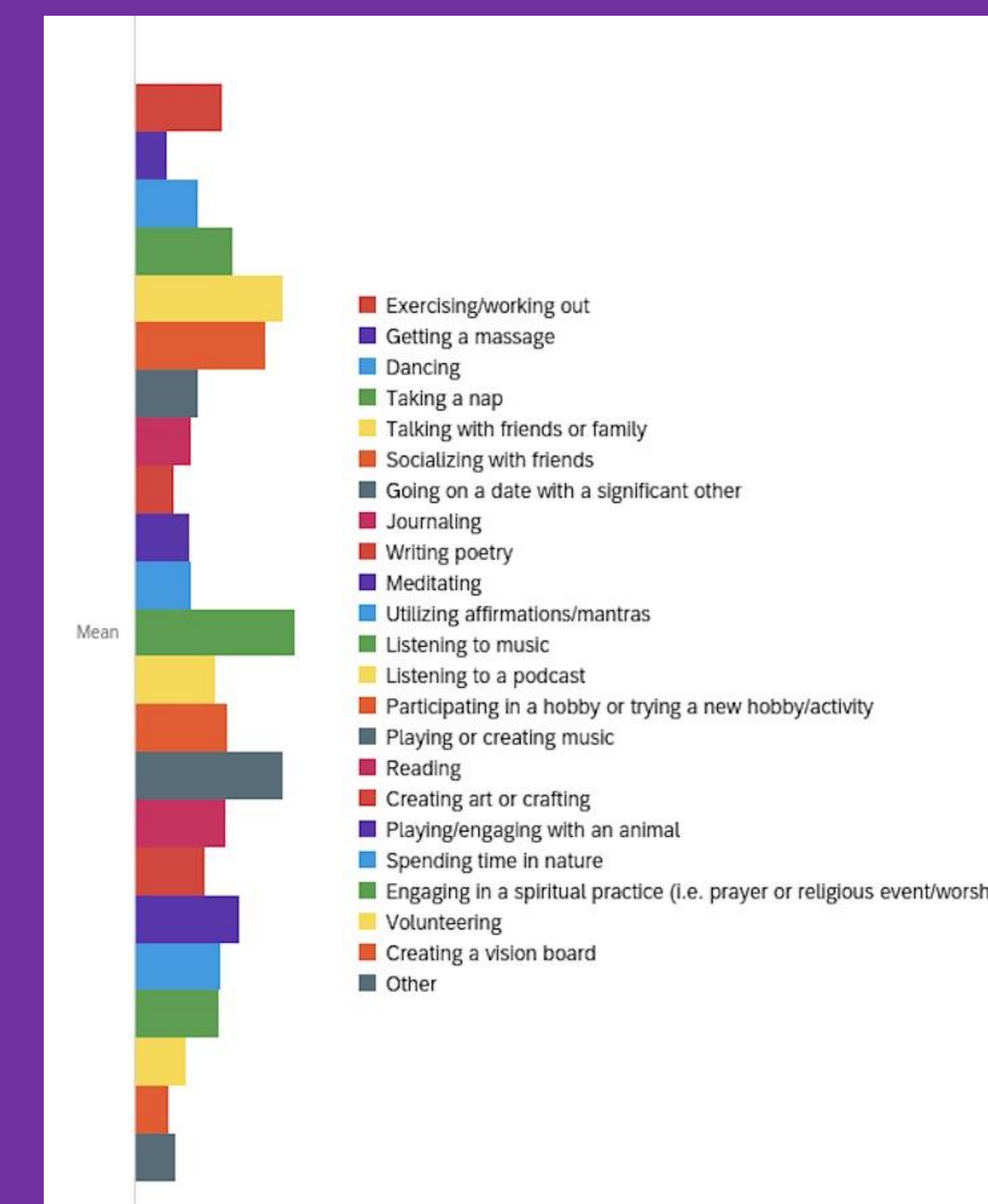
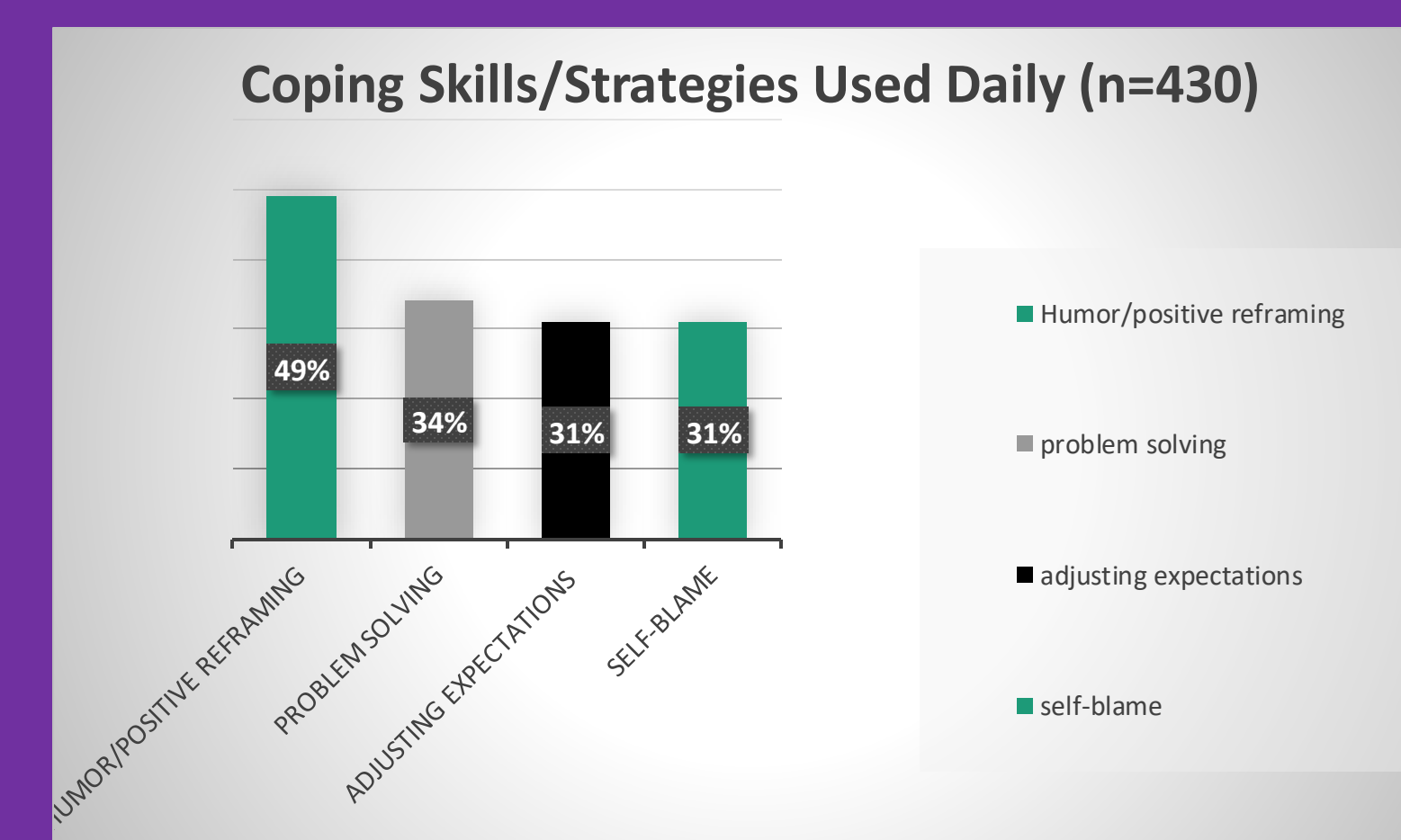
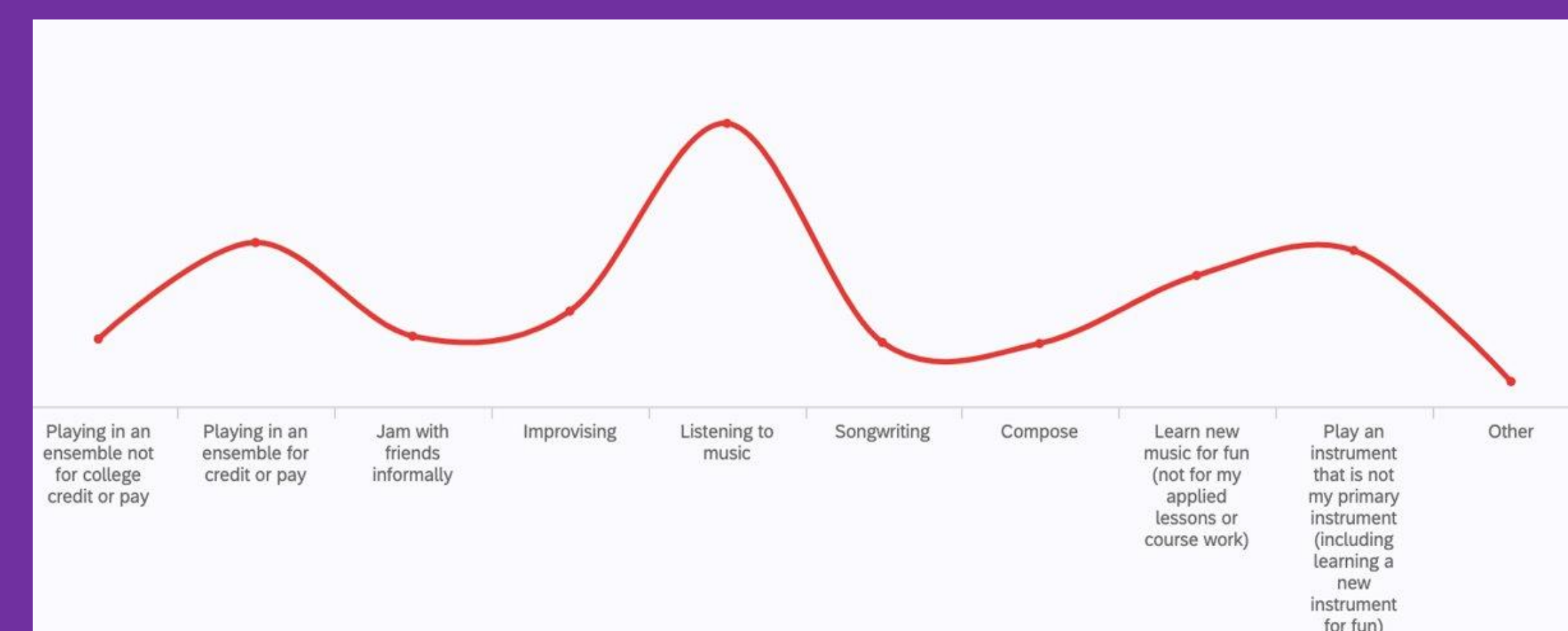
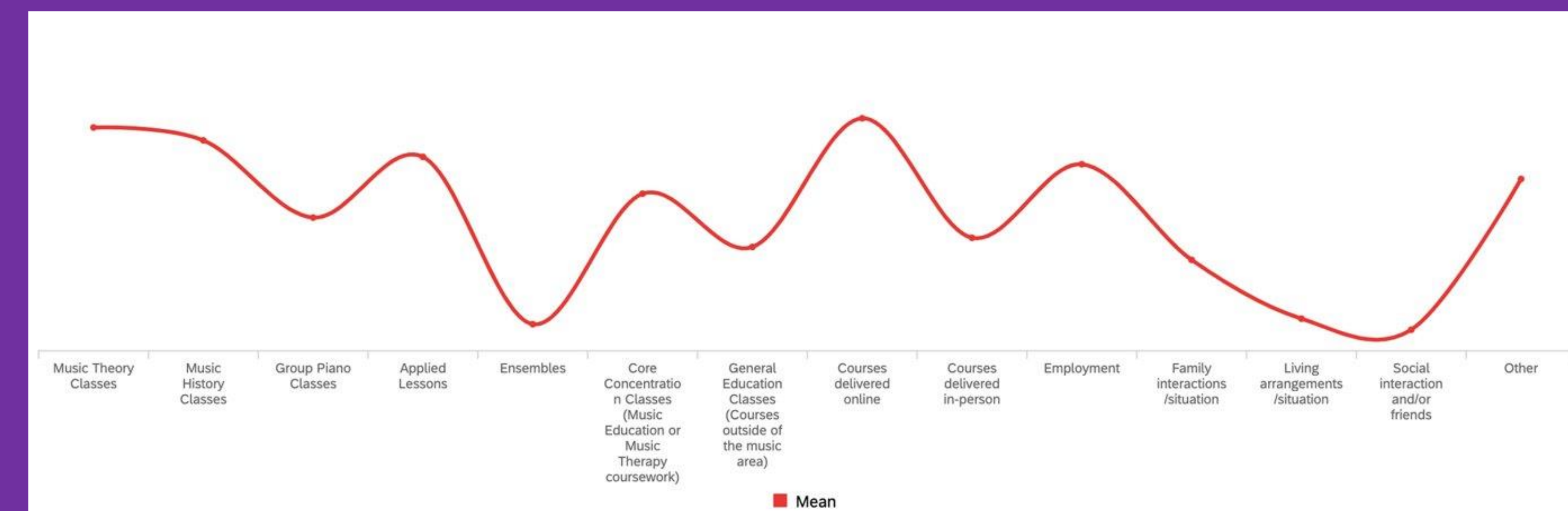
METHODS

1. Data mining was used to collect email addresses of 506 music education and 88 music therapy department chairs at NASM accredited colleges and universities throughout the United States.
2. Department chairs of 29 music therapy programs and 68 music education programs agreed to distribute the Qualtrics [survey link](#) to undergraduate music education and music therapy students in their department via email.
3. Participants (N=596) in the study were n=381 (67%) music education undergraduates, n=187 (33%) music therapy undergraduates (including music therapy equivalency) and n=28 unidentified undergraduates.

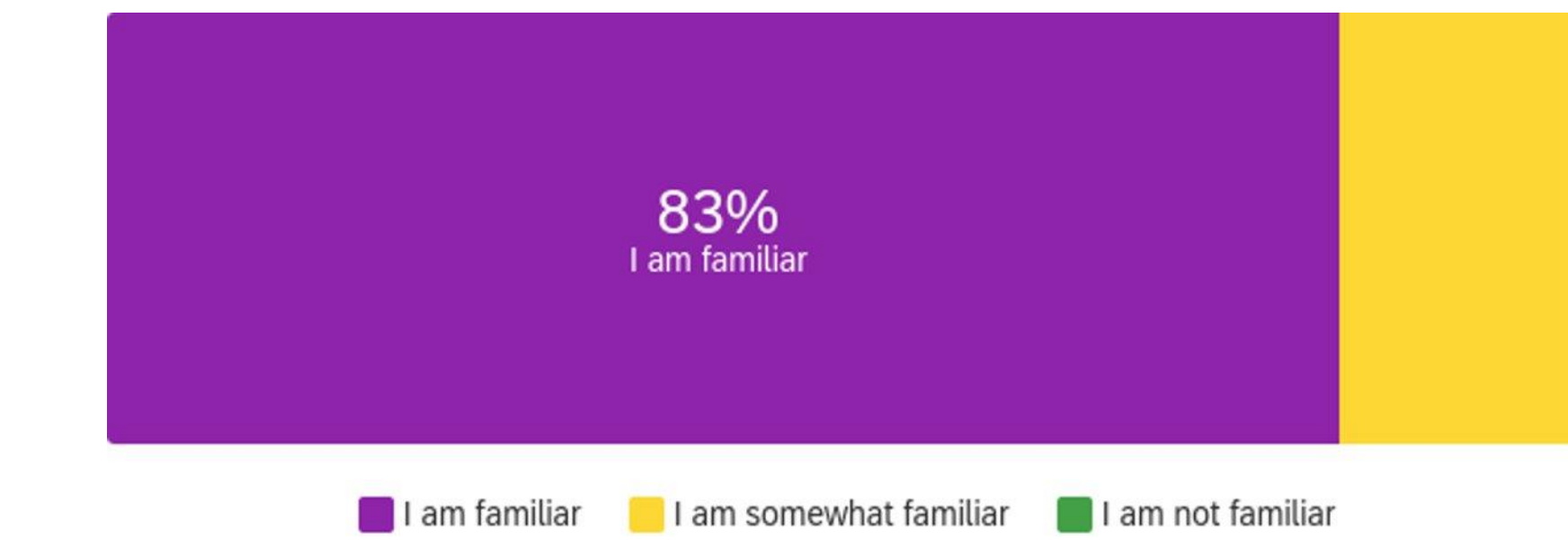
States Participating in the Mental Health Survey



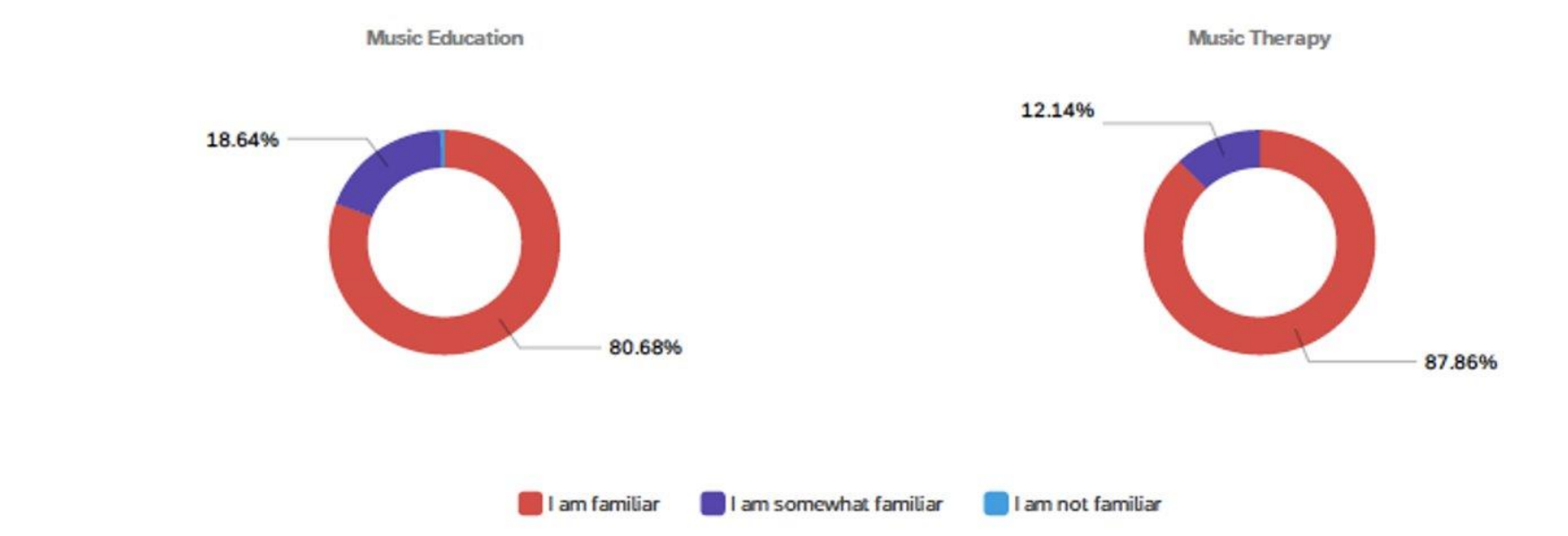
Most music education and music therapy students are familiar with self-care and coping strategies, and over half found that their practices changed due to COVID-19. Most participants use daily music listening for self-care & coping, which has not changed because of COVID-19. Participants experienced the most stress in online courses, music theory and history coursework, and applied lessons. Most participants have not gone to a university or community-based counseling center.



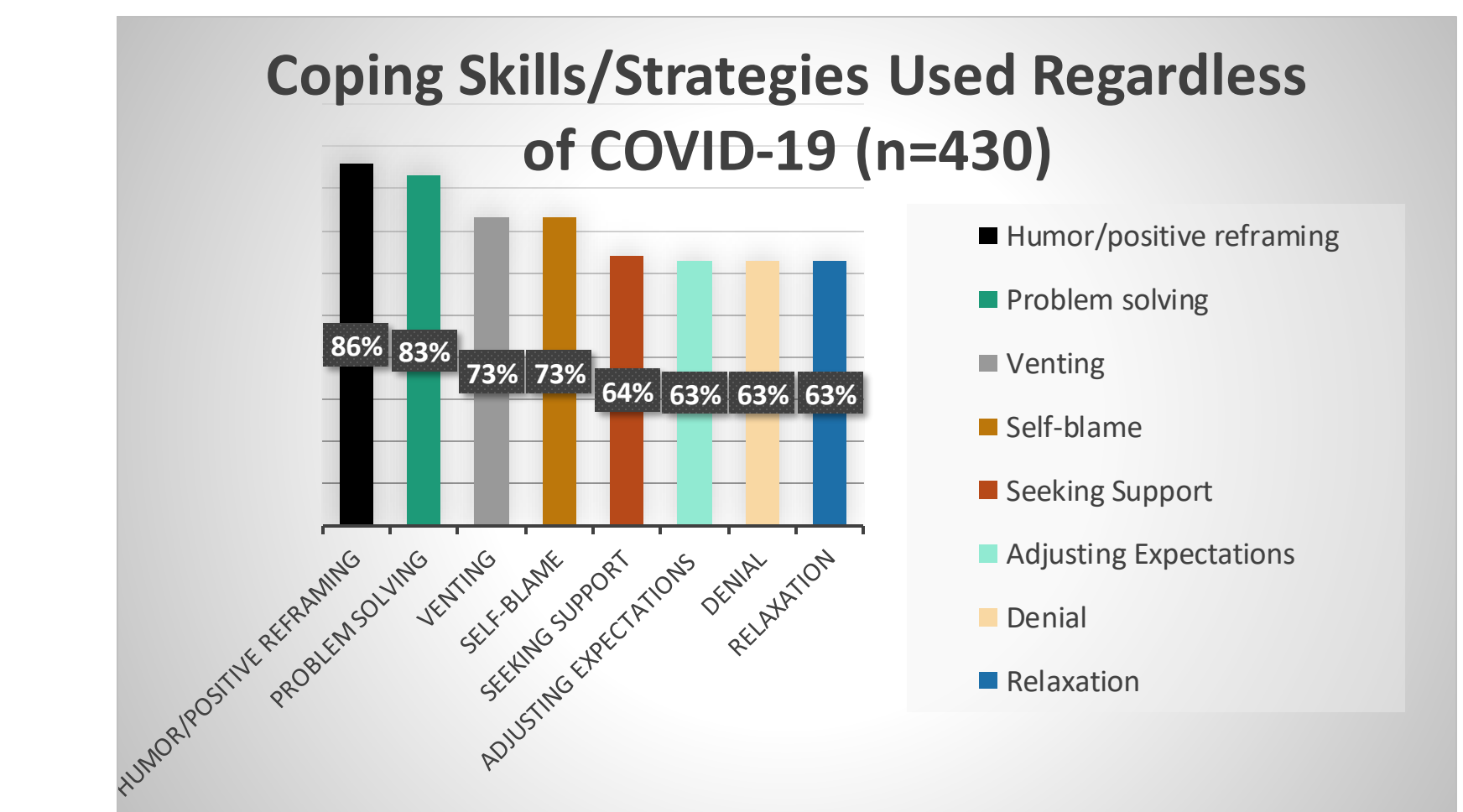
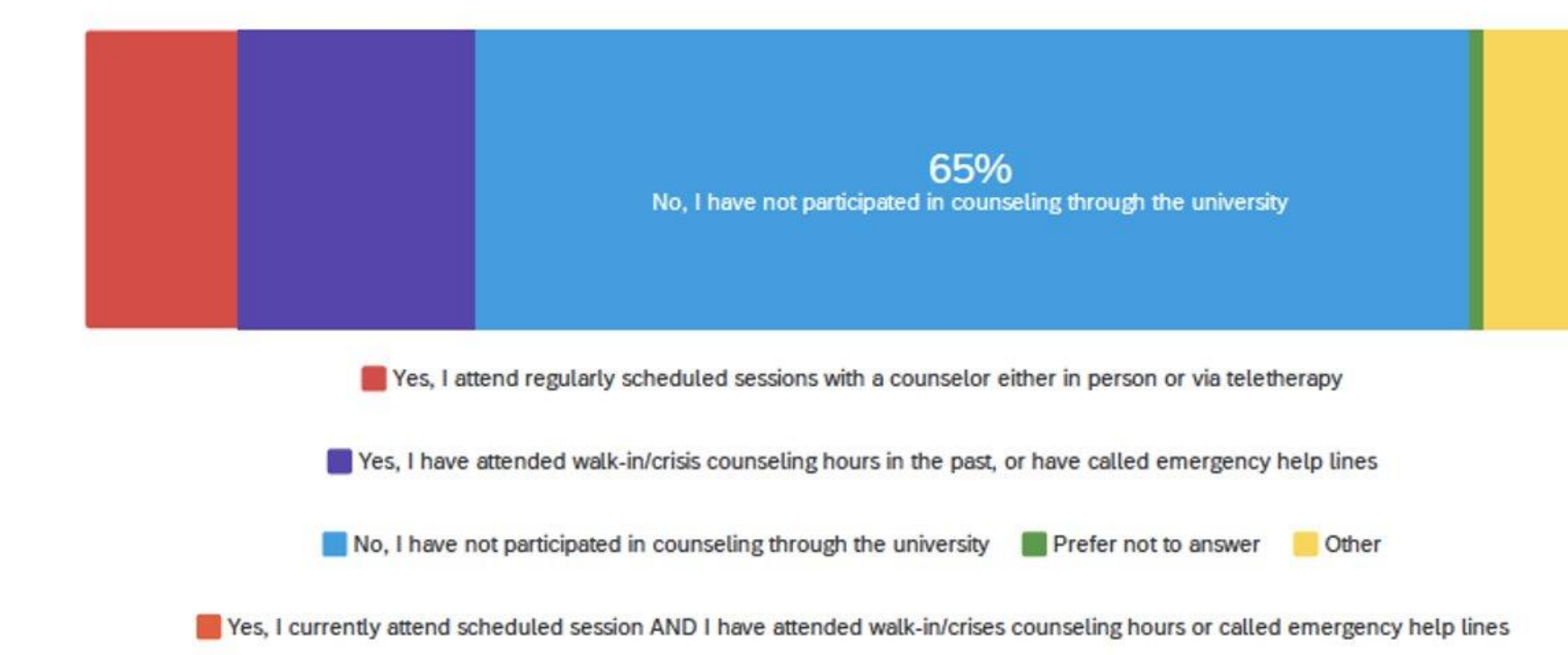
Participants' familiarity with term, "Self-Care"



Participants' familiarity with term, "Self-Care," by major



Participation in university counseling center



IMPLICATIONS FOR MUSIC TEACHER & MUSIC THERAPY EDUCATION

- Teach and incorporate information and experiences related to self-care in the classroom
- Make time and space to talk about mental health and wellbeing and the strategies to address these needs in life.
- This does not mean you are the therapist! Know the resources available on your campus. Do not just refer students, rather, take the time to walk them to the counseling center, or allow students to sit in your office while they call crisis hours.
- Consider implementing curricular changes that would give students more choice in their degree programs. If students experience the greatest stress in music theory and history courses, perhaps it is time to re-evaluate how much students use these skills in their future careers and how much time should be devoted to these courses in the typical degree program.
- Faculty must serve as models by practicing self-care and positive coping strategies. Faculty cannot pour from an empty cup.

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