

Q-Step Internship: Starting Point Health, Wellbeing and Safety of Learners Report

Kirstie Ashman, BA Criminology, and Heidi Mitchell, BA Politics



In Summer 2016 we worked alongside Starting Point, a community based not-for-profit social enterprise. They reinvest any money into community projects throughout the borough. The organisation has 11

outreach computer clubs across Stockport as well as coding clubs allowing a wide range of people to access their services. Our project was to find out how these classes impact upon the lives of the learners.

Objectives

The aim of our report was to find out whether the classes held by Starting Point impacted upon learners feelings of safety and/or their health and wellbeing.

During the project, we thought it important to also look at community connectedness and family connectedness, alongside whether they felt safe within their community and if the classes had helped improve their health.

One of our first objectives once starting the project was to carry out some research into the demographics of the area in which we were working and in which the classes were held, in order to better shape the questions we would ask and to better understand the potential results we would gather.

Methods

- Attended computer classes run by Starting Point for two weeks to build rapport with learners where it was explained that we would be collecting data to later analyse, helping give information to funders.
- Created and handed out self-report questionnaires (including both qualitative and quantitative questions) over two weeks comprising of statement questions, likert scales and basic yes/no answer questions.
- Gained a sample of 48 participants using opportunity sampling (handing out the questionnaire to those who attended the classes) and gave the learners one week to complete the questionnaire if they chose to take it home.
- Collated all of the information gathered and created a dataset and codebook in Microsoft Excel. We then converted the file to an Excel (comma separated values) file and imported it to the data analysis software 'R'.
- Once the data was in 'R', we carried out frequency distributions and contingency tables with the data as well as stacked bar charts and various other graphs to visualise the responses we gathered.

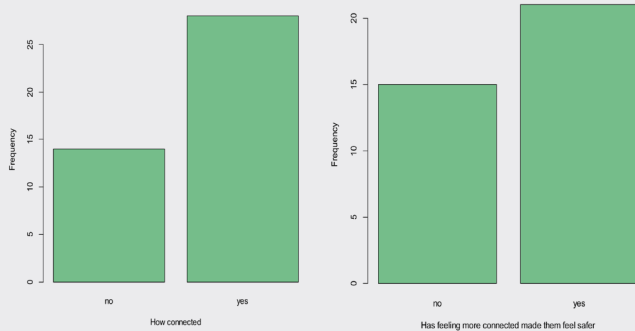


Chart 1: How connected to the community were learners after having attended classes

Chart 2: Has being more connected to the community made learners feel safer

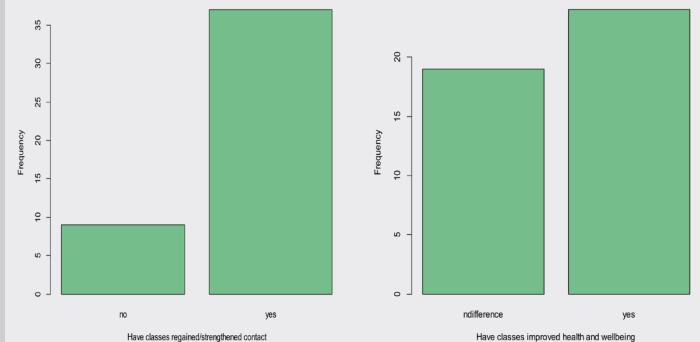


Chart 3: Have the classes helped learners regain/strengthen contact with friends and family?

Chart 4: Have the classes improved learners health and wellbeing?

Conclusions

- When looking at changes to health and wellbeing or safety of individuals, it is important to realise that there will always be more than one variable impacting on this.
- It should also be realised that for some of the questions responses were fixed as there was a lack of ability to change (for example, a long term health problem).
- During the internship, it became clear how crucial statistical information is for organisations like Starting Point who rely on funding from outside companies/associations. For Starting Point this information was crucial to keep their classes running and to keep helping those in their community.

Key findings

- The classes do impact upon feelings of health and wellbeing.
- The classes do impact on feelings of safety within the community.
- The classes impact upon how connected the individual is to their family/friends.
- The classes do impact upon how connected the individual feels to the community.