

Abstract:
 75 people participated in an online survey regarding their beliefs on a variety of health factors. Rational Choice Theory was utilized to create the hypothesis that college females will value health factors that affect their personal appearance for the social benefits of attractiveness over other factors. The survey was sent to college-age females via list-serves. It was discovered that there is an association between how much these students care about what others think about them and how much they care about their visible health.

Background:
 In a previous study by Colligon-Wayne, L. A. & Rawool, V. W. (2008), hearing loss is described as an “invisible” health quality and because it was invisible students may care about it less. Their study spurred this research to see if invisible health qualities are perceived as less important.

Methods:
 IRB approved this research on March 14th, 2016. A survey consisting of 18 questions was sent out via anonymous list-serves. The survey questions offer a variety of examples of invisible and visible health qualities and ask the respondent which is more important to them. The 75 responses were then analyzed using frequencies, descriptive statistics and correlational statistics.

Purpose:
 To investigate beliefs about visible and invisible health qualities and try to test for a relationship between visible health factors and how much the respondents care about what others think of them.

Theory:
 Rational Choice Theory- the idea that individuals act in their own interest and make decisions to give them the greatest benefits.

Findings:

How often do you worry about what others think of you?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent	
Valid	Always	12	14.6	17.1	17.1
	Often	28	34.1	40.0	57.1
	Sometimes	26	31.7	37.1	94.3
	Rarely	3	3.7	4.3	98.6
	Never	1	1.2	1.4	100.0
Total	70	85.4	100.0		
Missing	System	12	14.6		
Total		82	100.0		

- When asked how much they care about:
- having white teeth- 90.3% cared either a great deal, a lot, or a moderate amount about it.
 - having strong bones- 87.4% cared either a great deal, a lot, or a moderate amount about it.
 - catching a cold- 91.6% cared either a great deal, a lot, or a moderate amount about it.
 - fitting in their ideal clothing size- 93% cared either a great deal, a lot, or a moderate amount about it.
 - washing their face- 79.2% cared either a great deal, a lot, or a moderate amount about it.



- The majority of those surveyed responded that they thought about their health every day (58.9%)
- Only 5.7% of the respondents rarely or never care about what others think of them

Data Analysis:
 Respondents varied in age with 13 18 year-olds, 14 19 year olds,

13 20 year-olds, 25 21 year-olds, and 8 in the 22+ category. A wide variety of majors was also evident. It was discovered that there is a significant correlation between how much respondents care about maintaining their ideal clothing size and how much they worry what others think about them, $r = .455, p = .000$. There is not a significant correlation between how often respondents worry about what others think of them and how much they care about having strong bones, $r = -.193, p = .110$. This shows that the visible health quality of clothing size relates to worrying about what others think, while the invisible quality of bone strength does not relate to worrying what others think of them. This supports the hypothesis that college-age females value physical appearance.

Summary: In general, respondents were more likely to value a visible health factor over an invisible factor. Correlations showed that respondents who worried about what others think were also more likely to care about visible health factors like clothing size.

Recommendations:
 While there are strong correlations, this study does not directly inform the respondents that the survey is about visible and invisible factors. By using examples of each, an unconscious response was discovered. However, we cannot yet relate it to how much students worry what others think if we do not have a confirmation that this belief affects their actions. Future case studies would help connect these two variables. Future studies should also consider how to categorize invisible and visible health factors. While this study categorizes sleep as invisible, one could argue that the amount of sleep someone has is apparent in their physical appearance. In addition, offering more variables for visible and invisible factors would alleviate circumstantial variation of personal preference. Eliminating invisible variables that cause pain (such as having a cold) could also help decrease variability.