



Analyzing Response Disparities Between Food Needs and Overall Satisfaction of JRA in Holocaust Survivors



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Abstract

The Jewish Relief Agency (JRA) is a nonprofit organization that works to serve food and provide living essentials to the Greater Philadelphia area. Every 2 years, the JRA sends out a survey to its clients, which collects demographic data, food box preferences and satisfaction, and connection to the Jewish community. From there, the data is sorted into different categories, depending on whether the responder is a part of the Family Friendly food program, the Everyday Essentials program, or a Holocaust survivor. My interest in the dataset is the respondents who identified as Holocaust survivors. Surprisingly, there is often a disparity between respondents who are satisfied with the overall experience with the JRA, and whether the food received meets their food needs. This study aims to compare the responses between JRA satisfaction and food needs in Holocaust survivors in the 2020 and 2022 survey. It is hypothesized that there will be a difference between whether food needs are met and overall satisfaction with the JRA. A proportion comparison will be done, comparing both the responses for both questions, and how the responses changed between the years 2020 and 2022. The results of the comparison will be able to provide the JRA with a clearer understanding of how to better provide for the Holocaust survivor community.

Methods

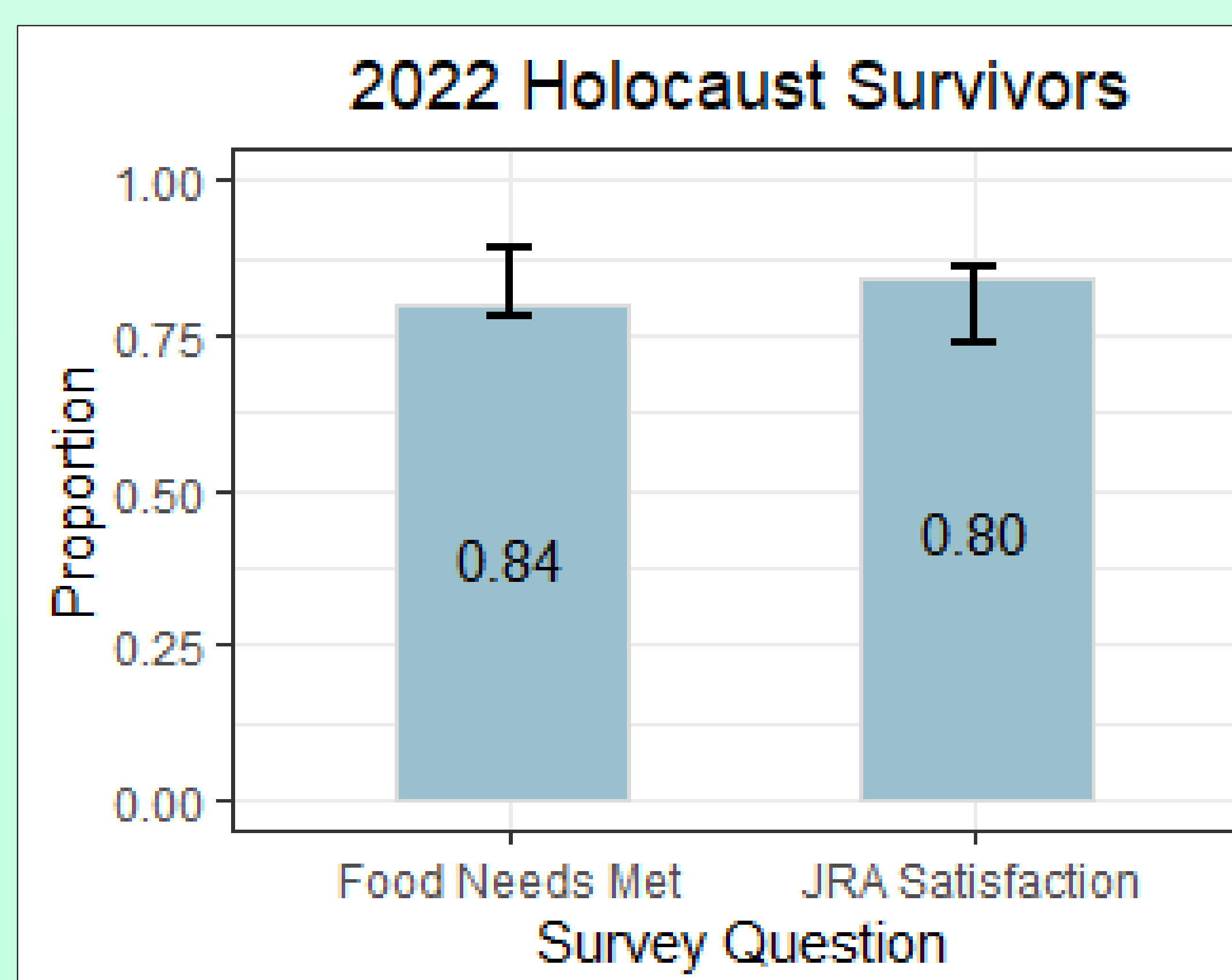
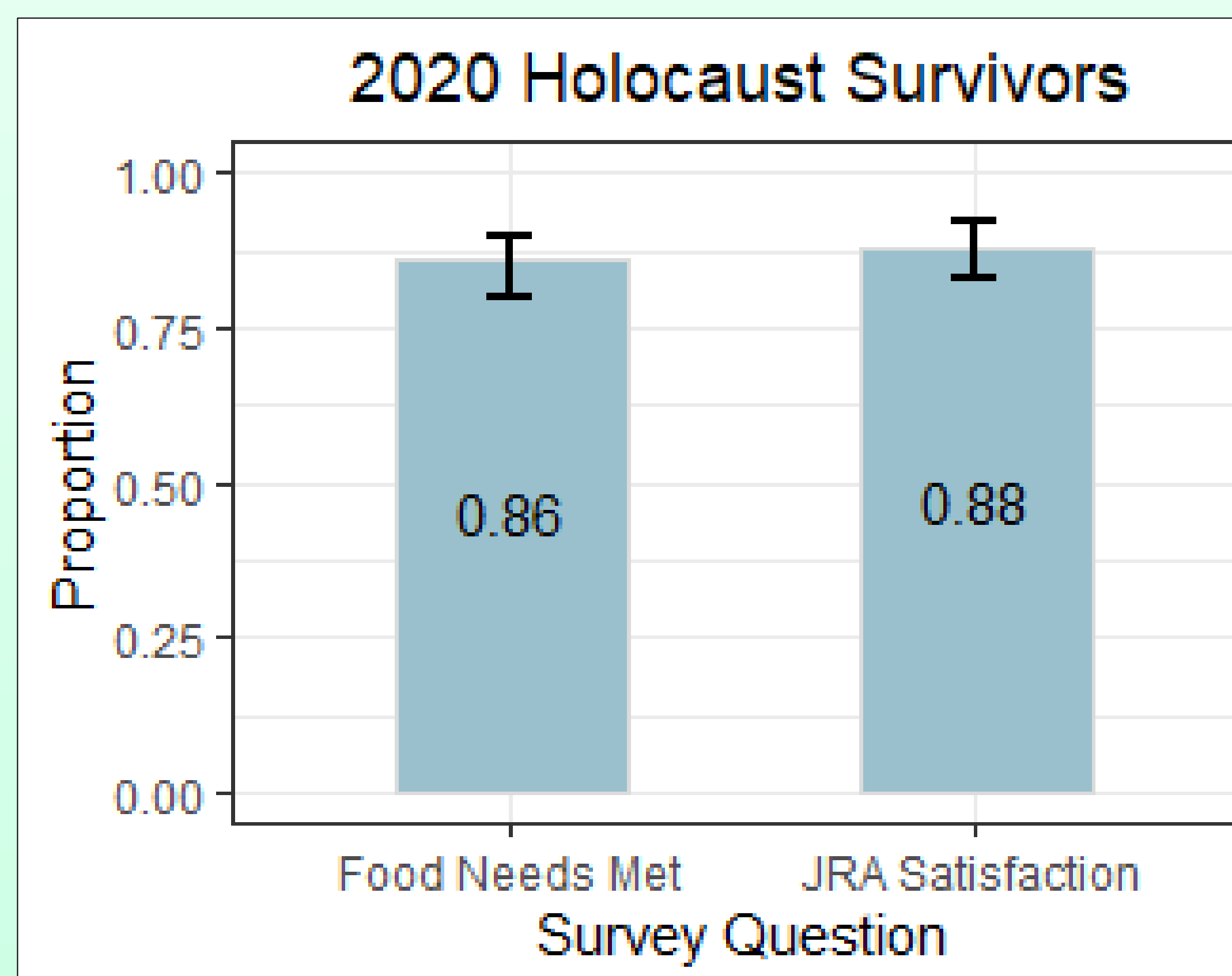
Before any data analysis, all the incoming 2022 surveys had to be accounted for and entered into the JRA database. This was accomplished over the course of several weeks by student volunteers. Once the 2022 surveys were entered into the database and organized, the Holocaust survivors responses were isolated by filtering out whether respondents responded “yes” or “no”, when asked whether they identified as a Holocaust survivor. For both 2020 and 2022, any respondent who entered “yes” to this question was put in a separate database for further analysis.

Once Holocaust survivor responses were filtered out for both 2020 and 2022, a numerical variable system was assigned for the responses. For both survey years, there was a question asking how satisfied respondents are overall with the JRA. For this question, there were 5 possible responses: “Very satisfied,” “Satisfied,” “Neutral,” “Somewhat dissatisfied,” and “Dissatisfied.” “Very satisfied” or “Satisfied” responses were given a value of 1, and all other responses were marked with a 0.

After designating values to the satisfaction responses, a proportion graph was made for 2020 and 2022, visualizing the percentage of food needs met versus overall JRA satisfaction for each year. Basic demographic details for both 2020 and 2022 Holocaust populations were collected.

Results

In 2020, 207 respondents identified as Holocaust survivors. In 2022, 167 respondents identified as Holocaust survivors, which is a 19% decrease from 2020. For both 2020 and 2022, the average age for a Holocaust survivor respondent is 80. By comparing responses proportionally, there is an 8% decrease in overall JRA satisfaction from 2020 to 2022, and a 2% decrease in food needs being met in the population. In 2020, 2% of respondents do not feel food secure but are satisfied with the JRA. In 2022, 4% of respondents do not feel food secure but are satisfied with the JRA.



Conclusion

There is a disparity between overall JRA satisfaction and whether food needs are being met within the Holocaust survivor population. This disparity may not necessarily be tied to the actual food items provided by the JRA, but rather the overall experience. The 2020 surveys were sent out shortly before the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown, and the 2022 surveys were filled out during the pandemic. Due to pandemic restrictions, the JRA had to change the method of delivery for their clients. Instead of going to the front door and delivering the food directly to residents, the packages were dropped off at the doorstep. For many Holocaust survivors, the JRA volunteers are an opportunity for them to interact with other people. This more impersonal method of food delivery likely enhanced feelings of isolation already felt due to the lockdown. It is imperative that there is focus on the mental wellbeing of Holocaust survivors.

About the JRA

The Jewish Relief Agency has been in operation since 2000. Originally founded to provide support to the local Philadelphia Jewish community, the nonprofit has since then been able to serve 3,200 households of all faiths monthly. In the words of cofounder Marc Erlbaum: “The two biggest lessons I’ve learned in the past 17 years from JRA are 1) if you want to try to help someone, don’t think about it too much, just do it, it may surprise you how far a single good deed can go, and 2) people’s appetite for giving is incredible – give them a chance to act upon their inherent generosity and you’ll be surprised at how enthusiastically they’ll respond.”