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Anxiety Management: Lifestyle Choices vs. Medication

I started taking medication for anxiety last year after years of trying to manage it on my own. After around three months, I began to feel the effects of the medication in my daily life. I was able to handle my busy schedule without feeling overwhelmed. It was easier for me to communicate my feelings to friends and family without thinking I was overreacting. I didn’t take mistakes made as signs that I wasn’t enough. But these changes me brought up a pressing question for me. Why couldn’t I do this on my own? This is what drove me to investigate anxiety for this project.

The dataset I chose looks at both symptoms and factors. I used the symptom variables, severity and heart rate. I wanted to see how the severity and increase in heart rate correlated so I could understand how the severity was being measured. For severity, I split the data into high (level 6 and above) and low (5 and below). I would have liked to include sweating and dizziness to the symptoms analysis but because they are not very quantitative datapoints it was hard to work them in. The factors variable that was most quantitative was caffeine intake, so I included this in the analysis. Because Medication is a Boolean variable, I had a hard time working this into the analysis. My workaround for this was to split the data based on if medication was taken or not as I did with the severity. I also worked a lot with the alcohol variable as this is one factor that is highly discussed regarding anxiety management.

Across the board of my analysis, I did not get very close at all to seeing the change in severity based on medication or other lifestyle choices despite there being a large amount of data. I was also not able to see much regarding what made the anxiety attacks severe. One regression analysis was done with the dependent variable set to severity and the symptoms as the independent variables and there wasn’t strong relationship there. Even both scatterplots showed little relationship between alcohol and severity as well as heart rate and severity.

I believe to strengthen this research I would need a better way to test my analysis. One issue I faced during this was knowing when to use a sample of the population to create a model and then know how to test it against the population. I also struggle with adjusting the graphs. For instance, the Alcohol Consumption CDF plot would have benefitted from more drastic color differences between the low and high severity to show the deviations. I understand how to take the code provided and work a dataset into it but I believe if I dug into the code and understood how it was built I could do a better job of making adjustments when needed. I also would like to understand better how to read the results of both the hypothesis test and regression analysis.

Works Cited

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