

Mental Health Trends In Canada

By Devika Purushothaman

Summary

Objective

Analyze and highlight key insights on mental health trends in Canada and the impact of COVID-19 pandemic on Canadian mental health, especially the impact on marginalized communities

Framework

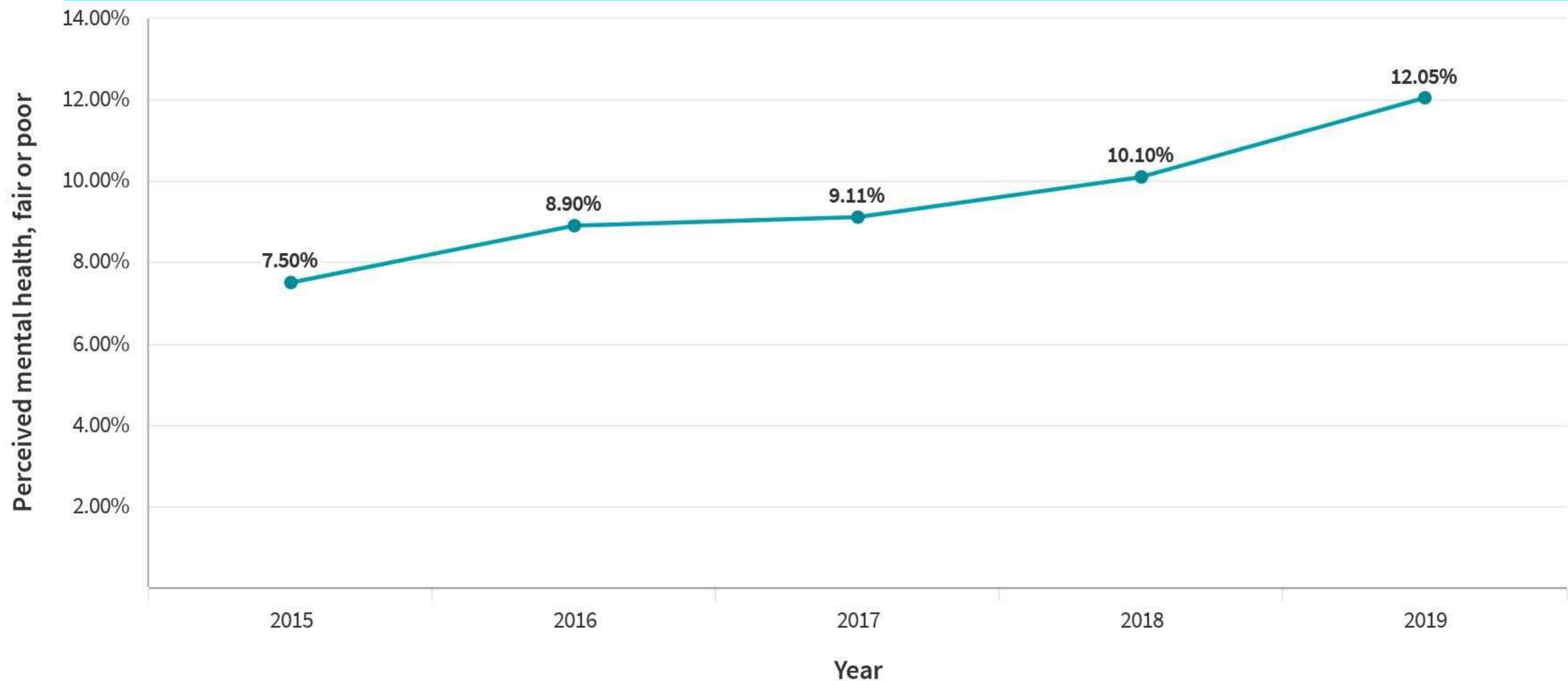
Stages include familiarization of the data, identifying the theme, coding and analyzing, and interpretation of the results

Approach

Descriptive statistics were examined overall and separately for individual groups with fair or poor perceived mental health based on data published by Statistics Canada. Analysis were performed using CAMH survey results conducted on 50 Canadians during the months of May 2020 and June 2020

Perceived mental health of Canadians from 2015-2019

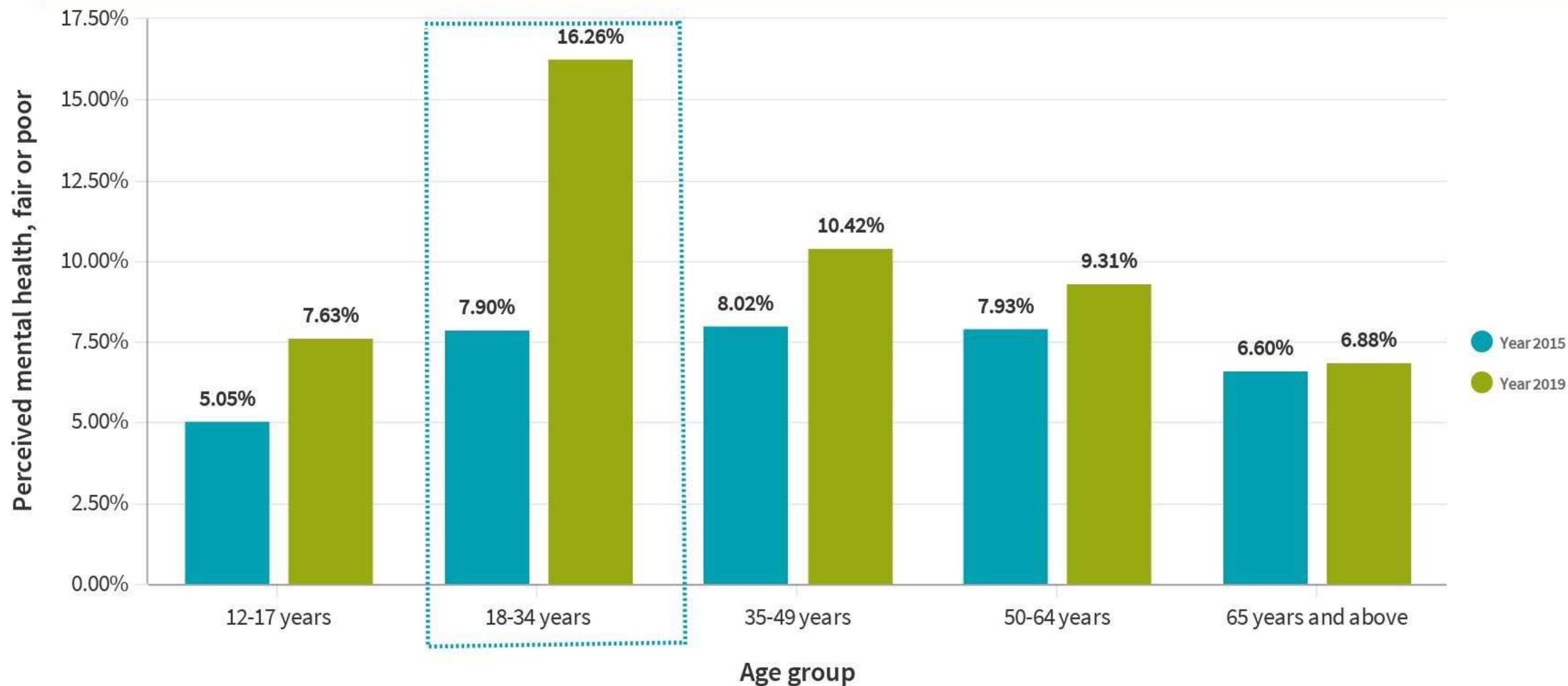
Increasing trend showing fair or poor mental health as perceived by Canadians above the age of 12 years in the period 2015 to 2019 [1]



* Perceived mental health is an important indicator of overall well-being and provides a general indication of the population experiencing some form of mental or emotional distress [2]

Perceived mental health of Canadians by age group

Comparison between the percentage of Canadians that perceive to have fair or poor mental health in the year 2015 and the year 2019 by age [1]

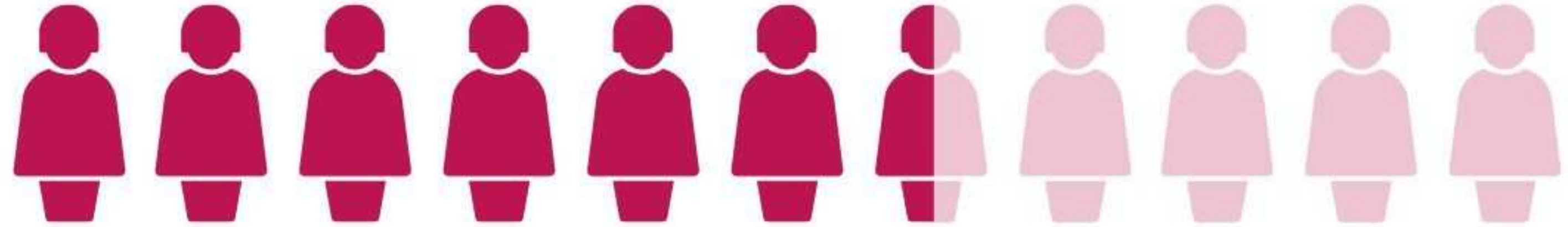


Perceived mental health of Canadian women

Increased perception of poor or fair mental health among Canadian women between the year 2015 and the year 2019 [1]

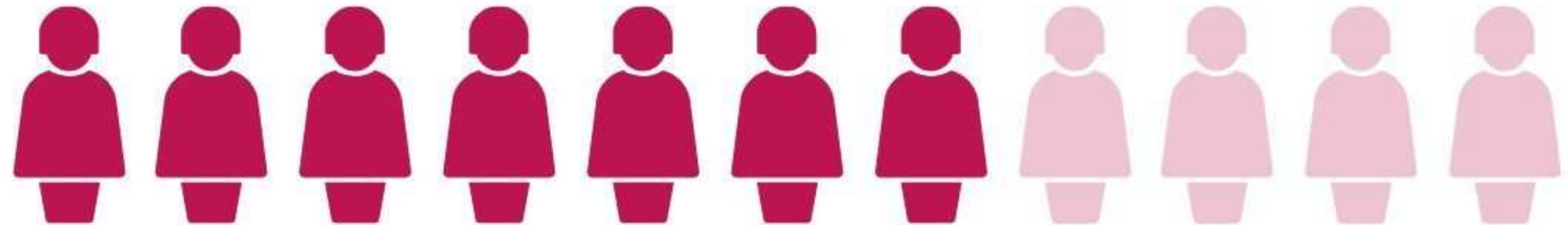
58%

Year 2015



62%

Year 2019



Perceived mental health among population groups

Indigenous population

Perception of fair or poor mental health among Indigenous population from year 2015 to year 2019 [2]



37%

Year 2015



46%

Year 2019

Increased by 9 percent point

Non-Indigenous population

Perception of fair or poor mental health among Non-Indigenous population from year 2015 to year 2019 [2]



28%

Year 2015



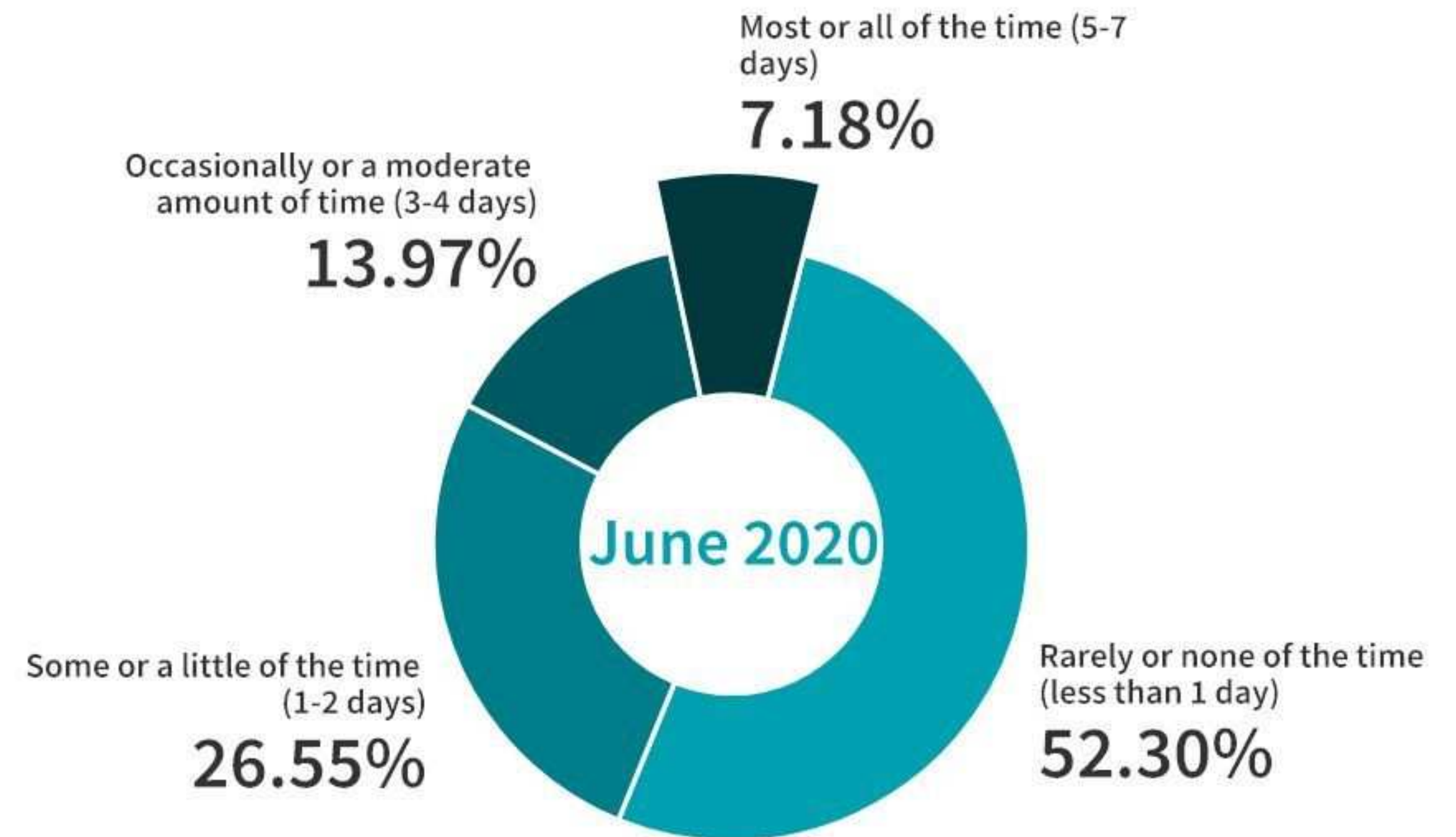
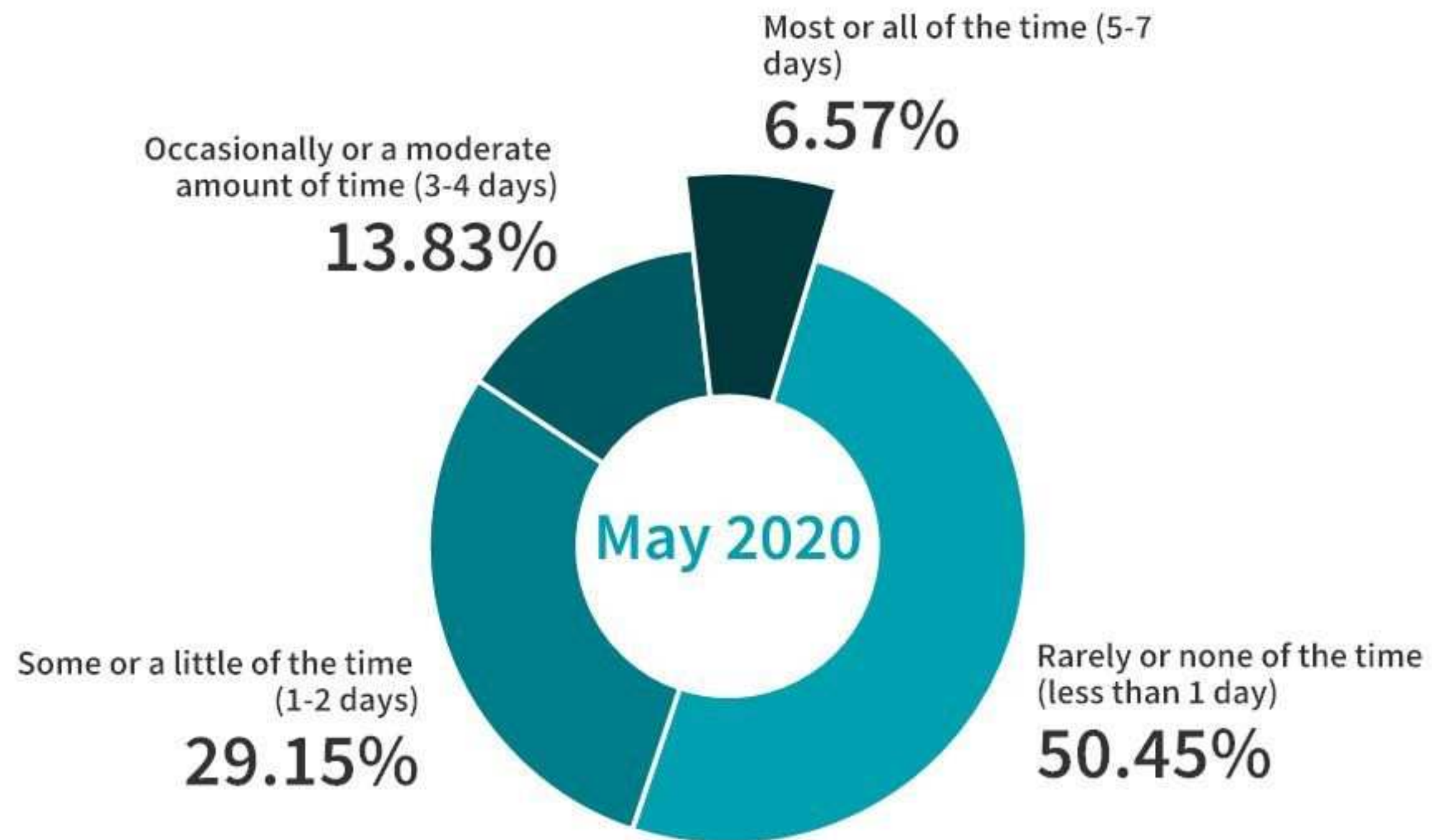
33%

Year 2019

Increased by 5 percent point

Perceived mental health of Canadians during the pandemic

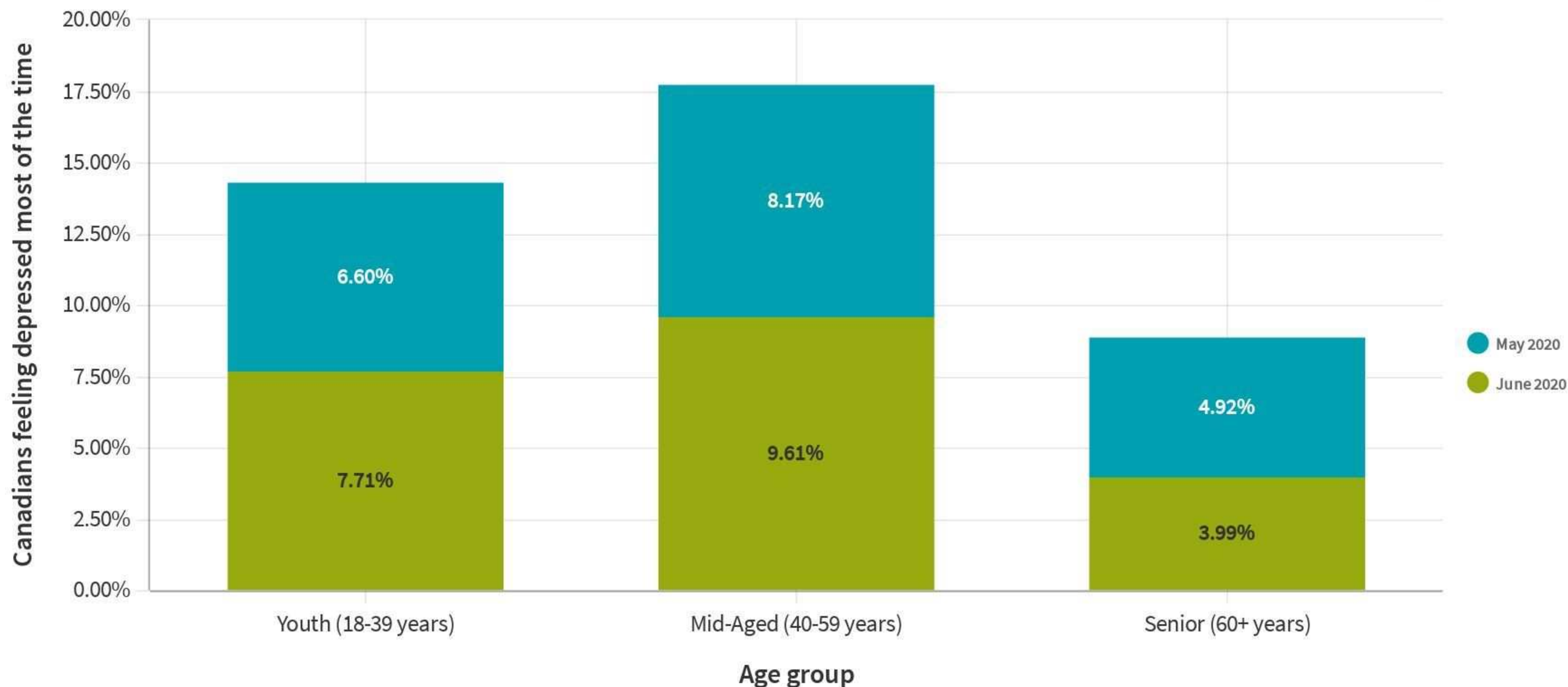
Canadians answer the question: In the past 7-days, how often have you felt depressed ?



A survey conducted on 50 Canadians shows an increased sense of feeling depressed constantly during the COVID-19 pandemic in spite of the larger proportion of Canadians not having felt depressed in the past 7-days [3]

Perceived mental health during the pandemic by age group

Canadians answer the question: In the past 7-days, how often have you felt depressed ?



*Based on a survey conducted on 50 Canadians in the months of May 2020 and June 2020 [3]

Increased Canadians consulting health care professionals



- In 2019, 16% Canadians had seen or spoken to a healthcare professional about their mental health, up from 14% in 2015 [4]
- 11% males and 20% females have reported consulting a health care professional in 2019 compared with 10% males and 18% females in 2015 [4]
- In 2019, 27% of Indigenous population reported that they had consulted a health care professional to discuss their emotional well-being, an increase from the 23% in 2015 [4]

Insights: Mental health trends from 2015 to 2019

- ① An upward trend in fair to poor perceived mental health is seen among Canadians (above the age of twelve) in the period; The highest rate of increase is from year 2018 to year 2019
- ② Canadians between the age of 18 years and 34 years have the highest increase in perceived fair or poor mental health (8.36 percent point increase) in this period
- ③ While male Canadians have improved in their perception of mental health during the period, female Canadians perceive a decline in their mental health in the same period
- ④ Among Canadians, Indigenous population perceive a sharper decline in mental health as compared to Non-Indigenous population in the period

The pandemic and the need for mental health care



- COVID-19 pandemic has exerted more stress on the Canadian population, especially on Canadians between the age of 40 and 59 years
- Financial stress owing to the current economy, high unemployment rate, social distancing and change in lifestyle are some contributing factors for a dip in perceived mental health
- The need for mental health care among Canadians has increased from 2015 to 2019 indicating that Canadians are now realizing the importance of having excellent or good mental health
- Timely access to right mental health care resources for every Canadian must be top priority, particularly during these challenging times

Limitations : Existing research and datasets

- **COVID-19 datasets**

Owing to changes in the recent past, there exist insufficient amount of recorded and validated publicly accessible data

- **Marginalized community datasets**

Insufficient data and statistics on marginalized communities;
Lower frequency of data based on marginalized communities are published

- **Subjective nature of topic**

Definition and factors contributing to state of mental health are subjective and can be interpreted differently in different context

Future research projects



An analysis on how household income, business industry, and role in the organization affects mental health



Impact of family size, number of children below the age of 18 years in the household, and marital status on mental health can be analyzed



Impact of alcohol and cannabis consumption on state of mental health

References

- [1] Statistics Canada. Table 13-10-0096-03 Perceived mental health, by age group
- [2] <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/200806/dq200806a-eng.pdf>
- [3] CAMH survey on mental health during the pandemic (csv data file attached)
- [4] <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/200527/dq200527b-eng.pdf>