

Background

This project is an investigation into the attitudes of Singapore youth towards mental illness. There has been an increasing awareness of mental illness as well as growing de-stigmatisation, and hence it is a relevant issue to focus on. Since the data is from a recent 2017 study, the investigation will evoke the reader to think about what progress society has made since then in terms of thinking of those with mental illnesses.

Problem statement

The problem is that even up till today and despite increasing awareness of mental illness and their effects on individuals, there are still prevalent negative attitudes towards those with mental illness among youth, a demographic which represents the future of Singapore. From the data visualisation, readers will understand that there are many negative associations that show the problem of the stigma attached with mental illness – for example, viewing people with such illnesses as undesirable to be around. By educating readers on such negative attitudes, my project will ideally achieve the effect of provoking them to think about what this reflects on Singapore's youth – namely what kind of values they uphold, and the need for greater empathy and compassion.

Data

Tables 1-5 from the paper Stigma among Singaporean youth: a cross-sectional study on adolescent attitudes towards serious mental illness and social tolerance in a multiethnic population (<https://bmjopen.bmj.com/content/bmjopen/7/10/e016432.full.pdf>).

Table 1 will be made into 3 separate donut charts in order to clearly break down the sociodemographics of the sample and give readers a context of the sociodemographic make-up from which the resulting data about youth attitudes was extracted.

After the 3 donut charts created from Table 1's data, readers will become further oriented with the topic focus, which is youth attitudes towards mental illness. In order to ease them into this topic,

Extracting data from Table 2, a simple bar chart with only 5 bars showing the top 5 common words associated with mental illness will be the next data visualisation readers will encounter on the web page.

Piggybacking off the introduction to the topic via the simple bar chart, readers will then encounter another bar chart with many more bars showing the popularity of certain opinions amongst the survey respondents such as those along the lines of "If I had a mentally ill relative, I wouldn't want anyone to know." This data visualisation will be extracted from Table 4 of the source paper and will be relatively easy to understand before the web page progresses to slightly more technical analysis of PCA.

At this point, the data visualisation will show radar charts of the PCA analyses from Table 3 and Table 5 of the source paper. The results are shown with radar charts and not the standard visualisations used for PCA in order for the average layman to understand the data.

Conclusion

The conclusion will summarise the existing findings from the data visualisations, then move on to prompting readers to think of how (youth) attitudes towards mental illness have evolved into the present day and how we as a society might move forward towards the goal of further de-stigmatisation of mental illness.

Request for reader feedback

After the data story comes to an end, readers will be then prompted for their feedback on what they think in order to facilitate potential future improvements (e.g. to the data visualisation) as well as to generate a sense of interaction with the web page or the feeling on readers' part of having their input heard.

Additional resources

Lastly, additional resources in the form of websites like the Singapore Association for Mental Health will be listed in a table format together with short descriptions of the respective resources. These will encourage the reader to become more informed about different mental illnesses or find support for themselves and loved ones.