

A CROSS-SECTIONAL STUDY ON HELP-SEEKING BEHAVIOUR AMONG LOW SOCIOECONOMIC POPULATION IN AN URBAN AREA

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INTRODUCTION

This study is aimed to examine the **help-seeking behaviour among the low socioeconomic population in Malaysia (B40 community)**, the residents of Projek Perumahan Rakyat (PPR) Sri Pantai, a low-cost housing project supported by the Malaysian government.

This study is **significant due to the rising prevalence of mental health problems during the COVID-19 pandemic and the association between mental health problems and lower socioeconomic status.**

This is of utmost importance as **a positive help-seeking behaviour is necessary in the provisions of support & interventions to ensure the well-being of individuals.**

OBJECTIVE

- To investigate the **sociodemographic factors associated with help-seeking behaviour.**
- To **compare the pattern of help-seeking behaviour before and during the COVID-19 pandemic.**

METHODOLOGY

Ethical Consideration

- This study was approved by the Human Ethics Committee of Taylor's University (Ethics Approval Number: HEC 2019/058)

Study Design & Population

- B40 community, PPR Sri Pantai, Malaysia
- 524 participants

Study Tool

- General Help-Seeking Questionnaire (GHSQ) translated into Bahasa Melayu

Sampling & Data Collection

- Cross-Sectional study
- Convenience sampling

Data Collection

- Online administration via Google forms/ phone calls/ interview

Data Analysis

- Descriptive statistics: Frequency (n) and percentage (%)
- Sociodemographic association: Chi-Square test

RESULTS

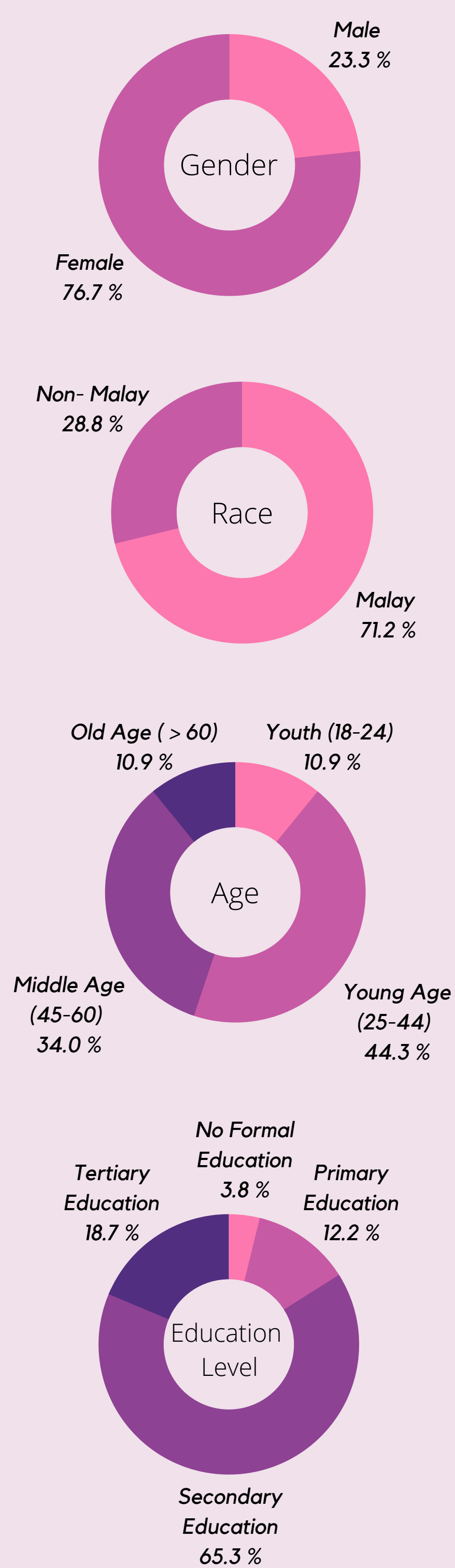


Figure 1: Sociodemographic Characteristics of the Respondents

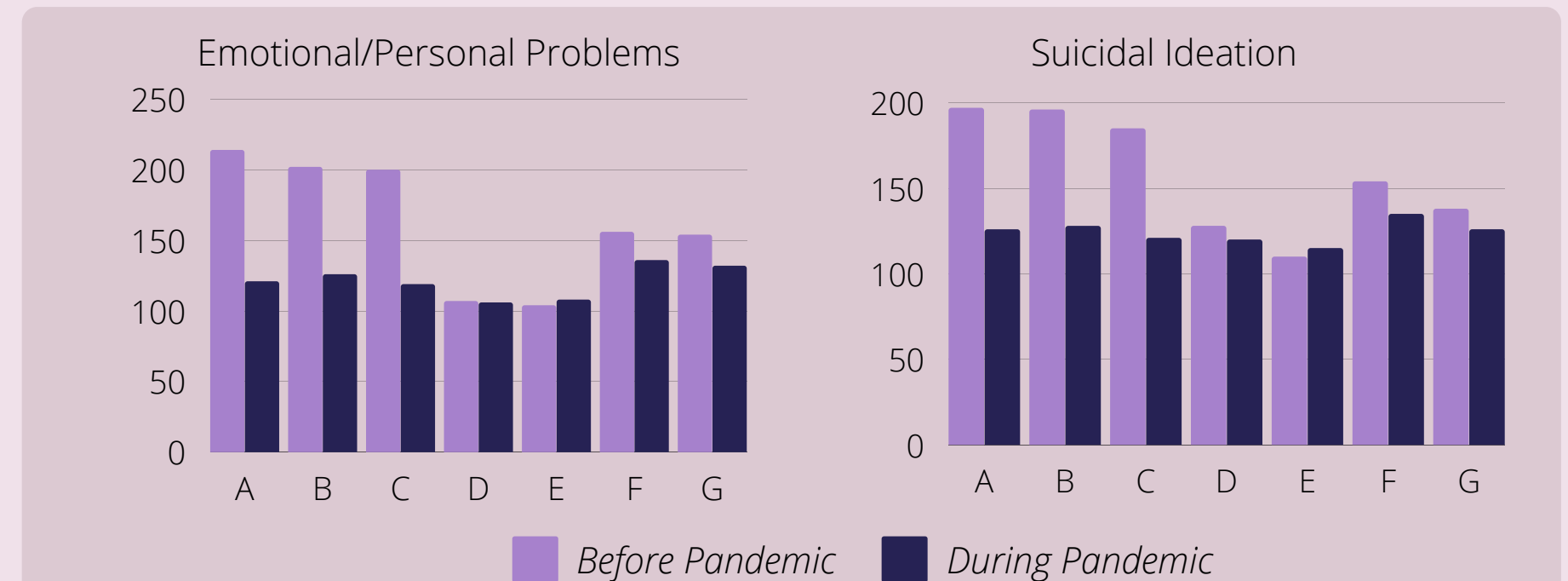


Figure 2: Comparison of pattern of help-seeking behaviour before and during the pandemic

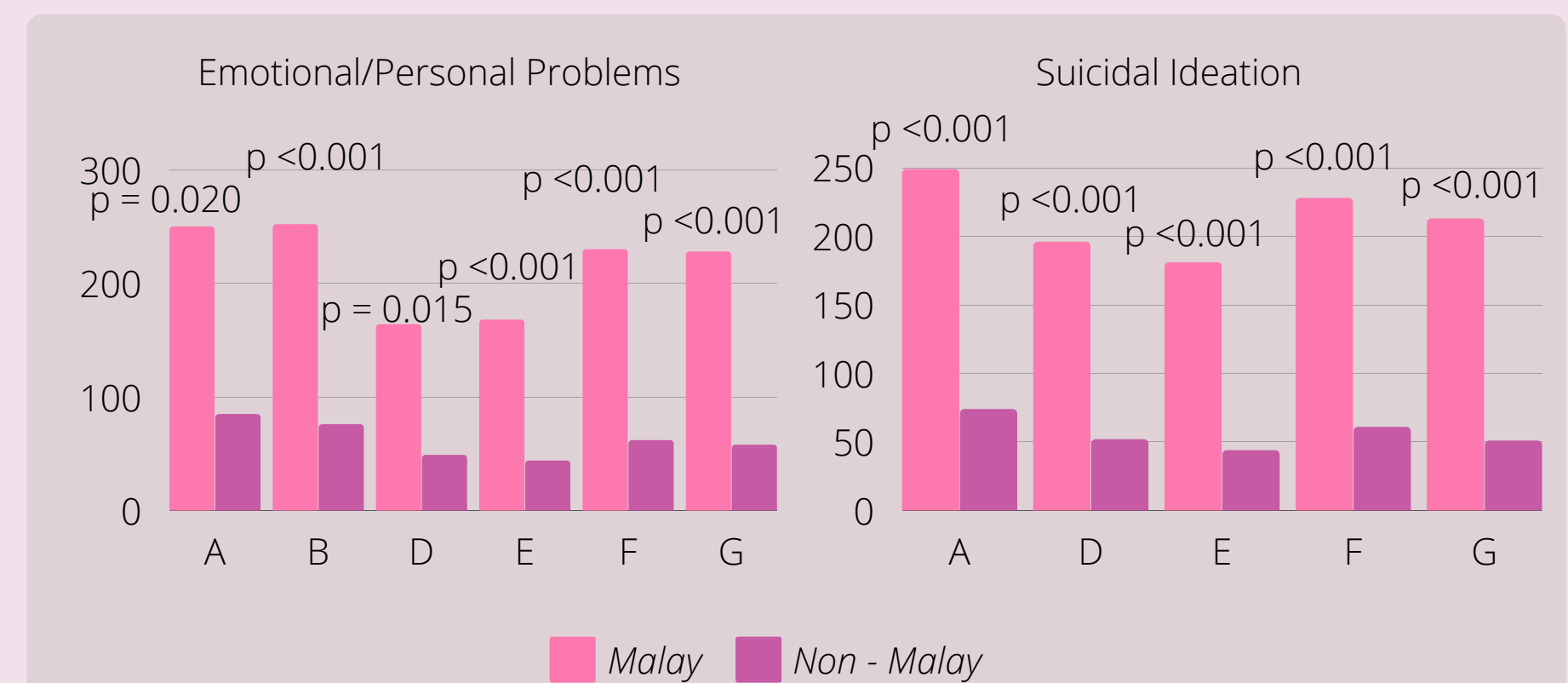


Figure 3: Association between help-seeking behaviour & race

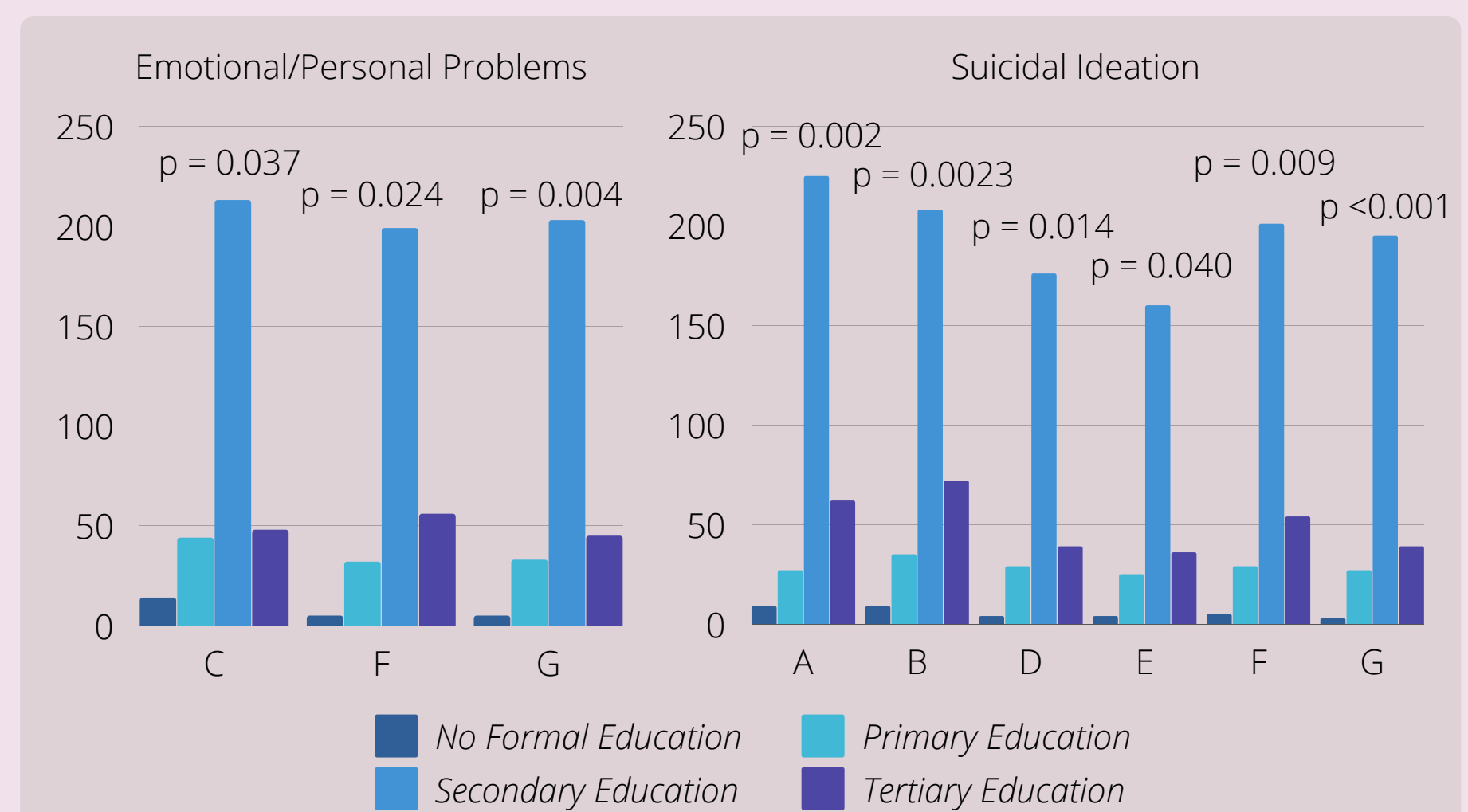


Figure 4: Association between help-seeking behaviour & education level

Note(s):

- For Figures 2, 3 & 4, the alphabets represents the below.
A : Intimate partner
B : Friend
C : Other family member/ Relative
D : Mental Health Professional
E : Phone helpline
F : Doctor/ GP
G : Religious leader
- Results shown in Figure 3 & 4 are significant.

Scan the QR code below for more results!



RECOMMENDATIONS

- This data can be used as a reference to influence educational institutions and public health professionals to help spread awareness to students and to the B40 community on understanding the help-seeking process and its importance.
- Future research on help-seeking behaviour should further investigate other factors such as predisposing stigma, need for mental health awareness and individual's perspective on suicidal ideation and emotional or personal problems

CONCLUSION

- Majority of respondents were willing to seek help when facing personal/emotional problems and suicidal ideation.
- There was a **higher number of participants during the pandemic when compared to before the pandemic.**
- Statistically **significant association** was found between **help-seeking behaviour and gender, race, age and education level.**
- Intimate partner** was the most preferred source of help **before the pandemic while doctors/GP were favoured more during the pandemic.**
- This study presents essential data to the NGOs and government so that effective actions can be taken to improve and aid the mental health of the community during these unprecedented times.

REFERENCES



Scan the QR code for references!

