

Introduction

Stigma, discrimination and prejudice against mental disorders are very important challenges in psychiatry. Most people in Türkiye refrain from being informed and getting help for their disorders because of these reasons. The beginning of psychiatry as a medical speciality is dated to the middle of the nineteenth century and the knowledge about it growing every day.. Knowledge of the community regarding mental health problems has a remarkable impact on the help-seeking path, the attitude and prevention of stigma and discrimination. This study aims to investigate the knowledge, attitude and awareness of the society toward psychiatry.

Method

This study was conducted on individuals who live in Istanbul/Turkey and voluntarily answer a questionnaire prepared by a specialist on the basis of previous studies. The first 7 questions of the questionnaire are used for obtaining sociodemographic data. The second part of the questionnaire contains 20 questions about the knowledge, attitude and awareness and was applied using the "nonprobability sampling" method over 335 individuals. The last part of the questionnaire, some situations that every person may encounter in daily life are described to analyze how the participants would react to.

Results

99.4% of the participants defined a psychiatrist (Table 2) and 76.4% defined a psychologist correctly, while only 66.4% distinguished the difference between them (Table 2,3,4). Healthcare workers ($p=0.000$) and younger subjects (between the ages of 18-35) ($p=0.013$) answered this question more correctly in comparison with the others. 85.6% of the participants stated that they would use psychiatric medications if necessary but 68.3% of them mentioned that they would prefer to be treated by verbal psychotherapeutic techniques (Table 5,6). The respondents gave the highest marks (98.5%) to the statement "I would take her/him to a psychiatrist/psychologist" to a question where Schizophrenia defined, which is followed by Major Depression (97.6%) and Panic Attack (88.9%) (Table 8). Participants with bachelor's/master's degree ($p=0.025$), youngage ($p=0.028$) and a healthcare job ($p<0.001$) got higher marks than the other participants.

Table 2. Question 1: Who is a psychiatrist?

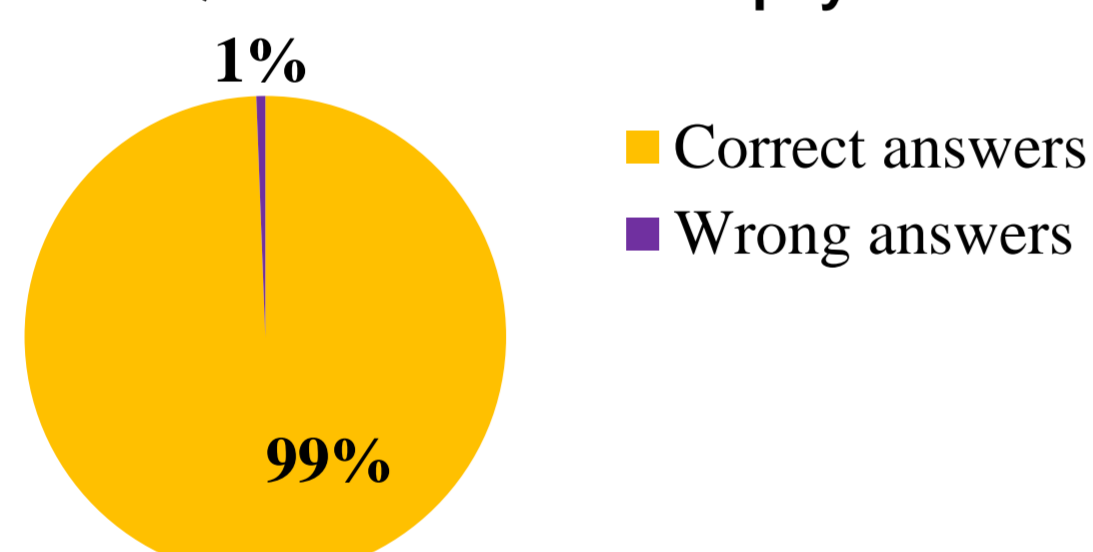


Table 3. Question 2: Who is a psychologist?

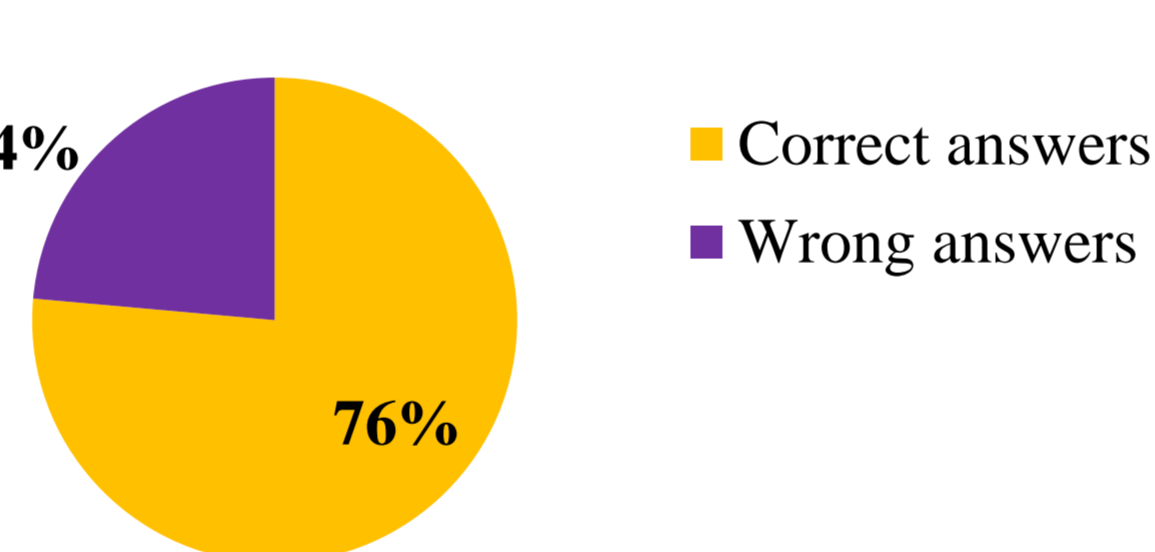


Table 4. Question 3: What is the difference between a psychiatrist and a psychologist?

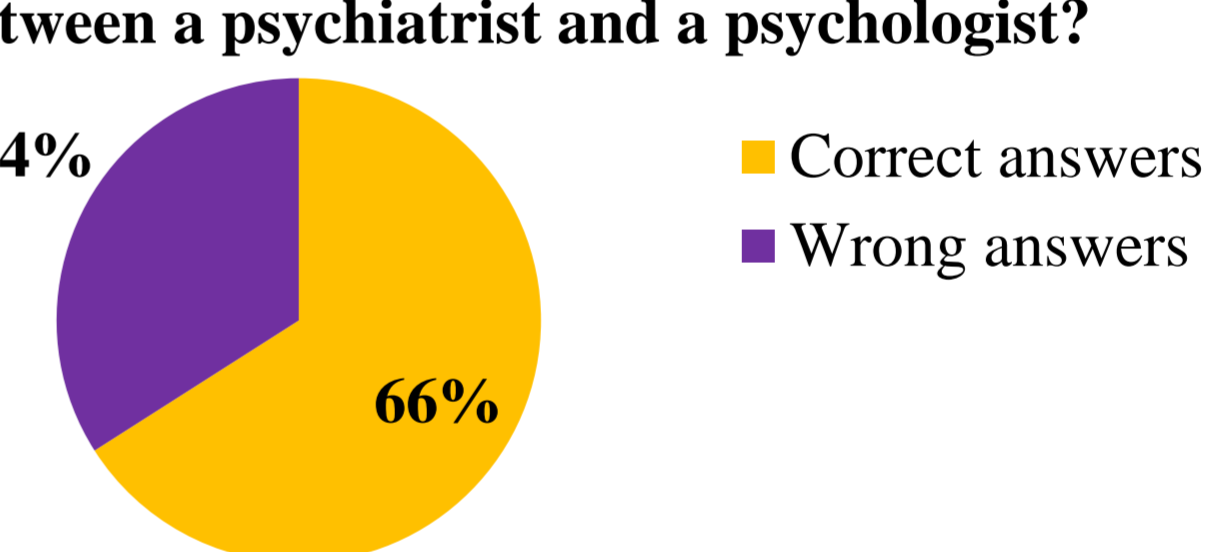


Table 5. Question 10: If a psychiatrist prescribed medicines for you, would you use them?

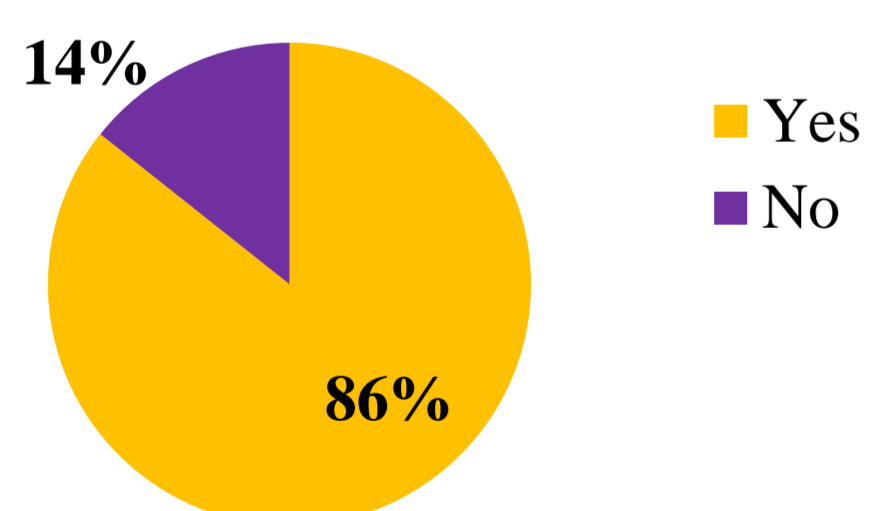


Table 6. Question 11: If you had a psychological disorder, how would you prefer to be treated?

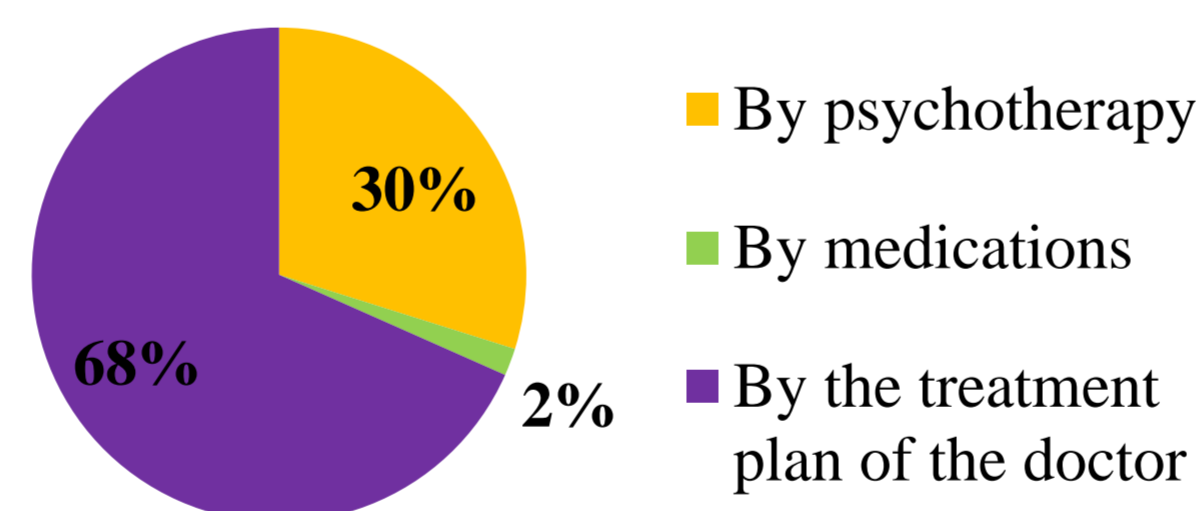


Table 7. Question 12: What would you do if your doctor consulted you to a psychiatrist?

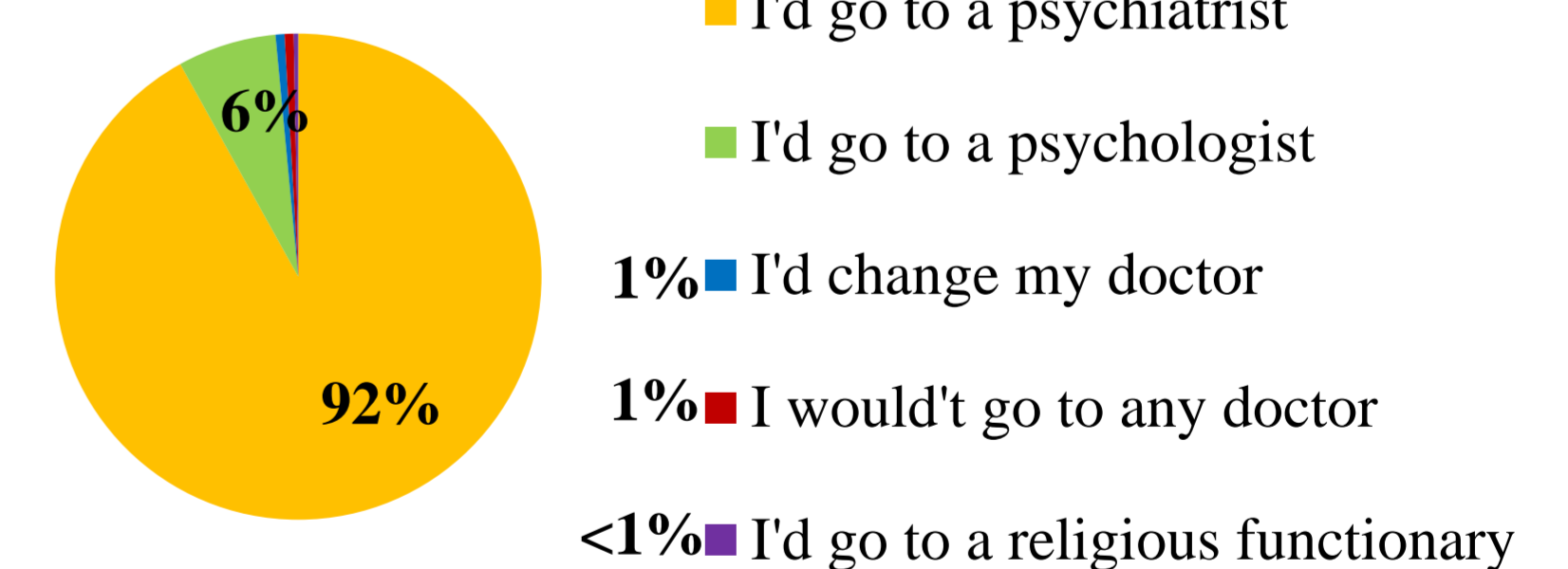


Table 8. Attitudes Toward Situations (5- Point Likert Scale)

Q1: People with mental health disorders should not walk around freely.	2,48
Q2: I can work with someone who has previously been diagnosed with a psychiatric disorder.	3,81
Q3: I can marry someone who has previously been diagnosed with a psychiatric disorder.	2,60
Q4: It does not bother me if my neighbor is diagnosed with a psychiatric disorder.	3,84
Q5: It would not bother me to learn that my friend has a psychiatric disorder.	4,04
Q6: If I had a house, I would rent it out to someone with a psychiatric disorder.	3,04
Q7: People with mental disorders become aggressive easily.	2,42
Q8: People with psychiatric problems can not make right decisions about their own lives.	2,87
Q9: All individuals who have been diagnosed with a psychiatric disorder are mentally ill.	1,36
Q10: If a family member was diagnosed with a psychiatric disorder, I would see her/him less often.	1,47

Conclusion

People know that psychiatrist are doctors with a medical degree but they do not account them as psychotherapists. They regard psychologists as treating by talking and psychiatrist as treating with drugs. According to the answers of the questions telling the symptoms of the disorders, people consider Schizophrenia and Depression as more associated with psychiatry than Panic Attack. All participants answered more than 50% of the questions correctly and most of them mentioned that people with psychiatric disorders should not be stigmatized.

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