EP020

Ministry of Health Malaysia
Institute for Health Behavioural Research

FROM USER TO RESPONDENT PERSONAS : A LEARNING EXPERIENCE IN BEHAVIOURAL SCIENCE FOR ENHANCING NATIONAL MENTAL HEALTH SURVEY PARTICIPATION



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INTRODUCTION

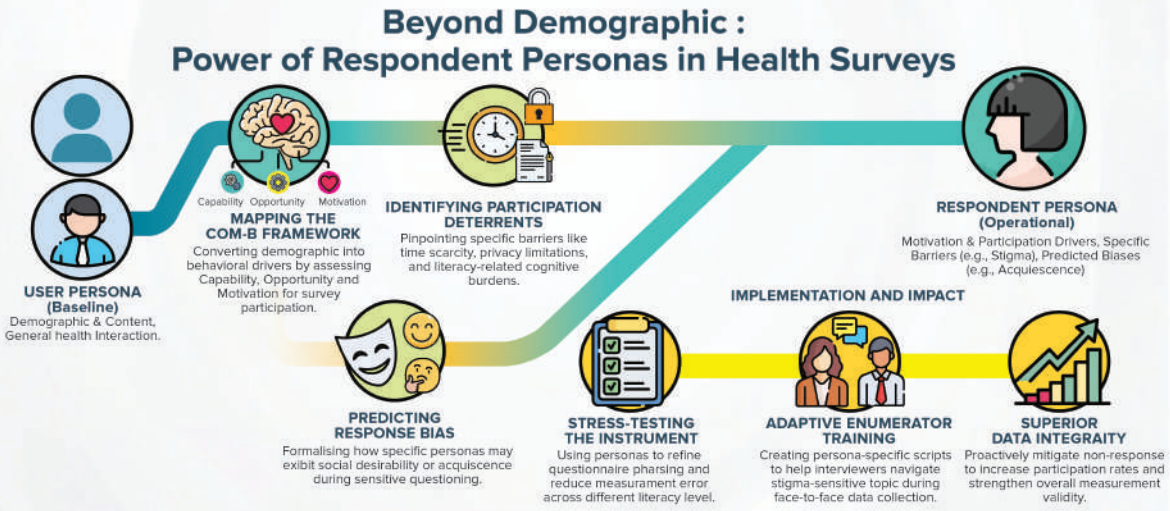
Population-level mental health surveys often face nonresponse, participation bias, and measurement error, especially when measuring stigma-sensitive topics such as mental health literacy. These issues are shaped by behavioural determinants that conventional survey frameworks frequently overlook.

OBJECTIVE

This poster aims to share the experience and provide insights into operationalising user persona frameworks into respondent personas, to enhance understanding and effectively address the behavioural drivers influencing participation in the Malaysia Mental Health Literacy Survey 2025 (MyMHL) (NMRR ID-25-01521-NAO).

MATERIALS & METHODS

Respondent personas were developed using user persona frameworks grounded in the COM-B model to identify barriers such as stigma avoidance, time constraints, and cognitive burden. With a 35% non-response rate, field insights informed persona-driven adaptations. Enumerators were trained to apply these personas in real time, tailoring communication, consent, and engagement strategies to respondents' motivations and constraints.



The team adapted user personas into respondent personas to anticipate how different population groups interpret and respond to survey items, improving data quality. After instrument validation, these personas guided field implementation by informing tailored recruitment strategies and consent approaches based on identified motivators and barriers (e.g., time and privacy constraints). They were also integrated into enumerator training, enabling adaptive, stigma sensitive communication during face-to-face data collection. This approach provides a structured framework to address non-response, support participant engagement, and strengthen overall data quality

CONCLUSION

- This learning experience demonstrates that integrating respondent personas into survey implementation offers a practical and behaviourally informed approach to improving participation and response validity in large-scale mental health surveys.
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Take-Home Message

Transforming user personas into respondent personas operationalises behavioural theory to improve participantion and data quality in nationwide surveys

Acknowledgement

We would like to express our gratitude to the Director-General of Health and Deputy Director-General of Health (Research and Technical Support) Malaysia for allowing this presentation. We would also like to express appreciation for all the support from all parties that have contributed directly or indirectly for this study.

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1st National Conference on Behavioural Sciences in Health 2026
Mainstreaming Behavioural Sciences for Better Health
6-7 May 2026 | National Institutes of Health

This poster was presented at 1st National Conference on Behavioural Science in Health 2026 (BSC 26)