

Original Story Idea:

To produce a video package that highlights the low fertility rate in Singapore, discussing the challenges young couples trying to conceive face, as well as finding out how the ageing affects childbearing efforts in community where couples decide to marry and start their families at a later age. I decided to interview two talents working in the medical field in various capacities, capture footage of a pregnant young woman interacting with herself and the surroundings, young couples interacting and establishing shots of a famous monument in Singapore as I felt that the importance of the message in the interviews would be better illustrated on screen when it is interlaced with ascetic shots relevant to the news story. The image of a famous monument would help frame setting of the video in Singapore, the pregnant mother and couple would serve as images that young couples can relate to and the image of the mother stroking the crib will serve as a visual representation of the wants of young Singaporean couples trying to conceive and start families.

Origin of the story idea:

I happened upon an interesting statistic on Singapore's fertility rate being at an all time low in two decades when researching on data visualisation for my other journalism module and I found an article on The Economist that discussed on Singapore governments struggle to promote procreation while attempting to increase the nation's population. The main issue discussed in the article was the constant marriage rates in the country despite the dwindling fertility rate, and this made me curious on factors that might bring about these numbers.

Why is it of interest?

Singapore has the third lowest fertility rate in the world despite being a nation with some of the best healthcare services. Low fertility rates will result in low birth rates and this will put a huge dent in the governments plans to increase Singapore's population. If the current trends continue the elderly will make up almost half of the nation's population by the year 2050 and having an ageing workforce will significantly stifle the economy and growth. I felt that discussing the matters that have led to this low fertility rates alongside Singapore's views on fertility was something that warranted a discussion.

Potential sources:

Shariff Mohamad (Marketing and communications assistant at SingHealth)

Mohit Sharma (Reproductive endocrinology fellow at NUHS)

Limitations:

There were a few limitations I faced that I had little control over. I had to contact my pregnant neighbour to get some b-roll footage but she preferred to be anonymous hence I had to rework my initial shot-list to change the shots involving pregnancies to close up shots

that didn't reveal any identifiers. It took a while to find the ideal setting for my interview as I wanted the background to be similar to make the video package feel uniform, however this proved to be a challenge and I ended up filming them against solid colour walls and used the chroma key in premiere pro to achieve my desired background. Creating the video graphics of statistics and animated line graphs was something I had not done before and finding the best way to do it was a little time consuming. I also decided to use a voice over track for my video package and wanted a British accent for it as I was heavily influenced by the interview videos from Sky News and I had to wait a friend from the UK to come down to Singapore for a recent football tournament (ICC Singapore) to record the voice over.

Interview Techniques

For the footage, I used a mixture of med close up shot and mid shots to capture both the interviewees. I wanted the video to seem professional and I felt that neutral black backdrop in both interviews would display the sophistication I wanted and I used the chroma key effect in premiere pro to achieve the black background. I used a mixture of lavalier mics and shotgun mics to capture the audio depending on the surrounding sound levels. Both the interviews were shot in contrasting ways using both to camera and off camera shots. This was done so to ensure that both the videos included different type of interviewing techniques. A tripod was also used along with a basic led on-camera light to better showcase the interviewees.

Working YouTube Link: <https://youtu.be/hpwW8eeeS9Y>