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**EXTENDED  
ABSTRACT**

# The Relationship Between Academic Stress Towards Social Engagement and Mental Health Among UPM students (University Putra Malaysia)

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Students are currently under increasing pressure to meet high academic expectations, which can negatively affect their social engagement and mental health. Many students face stress from heavy workloads, exams, and the fear of failure. Research shows academic stress can lead to mental health problems such as anxiety, emotional imbalance, and burnout [1]. Furthermore, it can also reduce students' interest or ability to engage in social activities, which may further increase feelings of isolation [2]. Understanding how academic stress affects both mental health and social engagement is important for universities to develop effective support systems that promote a healthier and more balanced academic experience.

## II. METHODS

This quantitative descriptive study investigated the relationship between UPM students' academic stress, social engagement, and mental health. Data were gathered from 84 students using a questionnaire, the Academic Stress scale, Social Engagement survey, and Mental Health assessment. Analysis of subgroups was made possible through demographic data, while statistical analysis evaluated relationships between factors by using Jamovi. This approach made it possible to fully understand academic stress and how it relates to students' social engagement and mental health.

## III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

TABLE I  
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF ACADEMIC STRESS

	Relating to other people	Personal factor	Academic factors	Environmental factors
N	84	84	84	84
Mean	3.84	3.94	3.88	3.87
Standard deviation	0.93	0.99	0.92	0.95

Personal factors were the most significant academic stressors among UPM students ( $M = 3.94$ ,  $SD = 0.99$ ), and academic and environmental factors followed closely. Based on Table 1, though stress was reported across all domains, individual and academic factors contributed most

significantly, showing how personal expectations and academic workload dominate student stress experiences.

TABLE II  
RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ACADEMIC STRESS AND SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT

Student's social Engagement	Relating to other people	Personal factor	Academic factors	Environmental factors
Spearman's rho	-0.0447	-0.088	-0.117	-0.081
df	82	82	82	82
p-value	0.669	0.425	0.291	0.462

Based on Table 2, Social engagement showed no significant correlation with any academic stress domain, as the  $p$ -values were more than 0.05. Spearman's analyses confirmed a non-significant relationship across personal, academic, environmental, and relating to other people-related factors. Thus, social activity levels did not appear to buffer or worsen stress. Students' engagement in social life was largely independent of the academic stress they encountered.

TABLE III  
RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ACADEMIC STRESS AND MENTAL HEALTH

Mental Health	Relating to other people	Personal factor	Academic factors	Environmental factors
Spearman's rho	0.510	0.381	0.415	0.398
df	82	82	82	82
p-value	<0.001	<0.001	<0.001	<0.001

Based on Table 3, mental health was very significantly correlated with all academic stress factors. The strongest factor was stress from relating to other people's factors ( $r = 0.510$ ), followed by academic, environmental, and personal stress. Students under greater stress in any domain reported more problems, underscoring stress as a major determinant of students' mental health.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

According to this survey, the main sources of stress for UPM students are personal and academic factors, which have a major impact on their mental health but not their social engagement. Improving students' mental health involves dealing with academic stress. Moreover, to reduce stress and improve students' academic experiences, universities should place a high priority on active mental health care and time-management techniques.

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