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ABSTRACT

Exploring Optimism and Mental Health Among Sports Students

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I. INTRODUCTION

Sports students are among the population who face many demands of academic responsibilities, athletics, and daily life commitments. Balancing all these demands and commitments places sports students under pressure that can affect their mental health negatively. Therefore, a way to cope with these mental health issues among these students is to consider their optimism factor. Recognizing this optimism is vital for interventions to enhance the mental health of these students, the present study aims to investigate further the interplay between optimism and mental health among FSR UiTM S3 students. By exploring this relationship, the research aims to inform targeted interventions to support students' well-being and success.

II. METHODS

A total of 73 randomly selected FSR UiTM Seremban 3 students participated in the present study. Optimism was measured using the Revised Life Orientation Scale (LOT-R) arranged by [1], and the Depression Anxiety Stress Scales (DASS-21) was used to assess the mental health level [2]. These instruments used to measure the studied variables among the target population. Pearson correlation analysis was conducted to determine the relationship between optimism and mental health.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Level of Optimism

The optimism score of the respondents was at a moderate level (2.91 ± 0.55). Most participants fell within this category, with no notable differences across gender, age, or academic program. This suggests a balanced outlook among FSR UiTM Seremban 3 students, providing a foundation for examining its impact on mental health.

B. Level of Mental Health

Mental health findings revealed the mean and SD scores of anxieties (1.32 ± 0.77), stress (1.31 ± 0.80) and depression ($1.18 \pm 1.0.78$). The standard deviations were all quite similar, ranging between 0.77226 and 0.79670. Among these scores, anxiety had the highest mean at 1.32, slightly above depression and stress. Overall, these values suggested that the

students had stable mental health, though some signs of emotional distress were present.

C. Relationship Between Optimism and Mental Health

Pearson's analysis revealed a very weak positive correlation between optimism and all three mental health indicators, none of which were statistically significant. A weak correlation was observed between optimism and overall mental health ($r = 0.130$, $p = 0.273$), as well as with lower levels of depression ($r = 0.106$, $p = 0.370$) and stress ($r = 0.075$, $p = 0.526$). The correlation between optimism and anxiety produced a correlation coefficient of $r = 0.197$ with a p -value of 0.094. Among them, anxiety had the strongest though still minimal association with optimism. This suggests limited direct interplay, warranting further research with broader variables or larger sample sizes.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

This study highlights that FSR UiTM Seremban 3 students experienced moderate optimism and mild mental health symptoms. Although the relationship between optimism and mental health was minimal and statistically insignificant, these findings highlight the importance of continued mental health support while suggesting that optimism alone may not strongly influence emotional well-being in this student population. Future research should consider employing a larger sample size or exploring the relationship in greater depth to better understand its nature and strength.

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