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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

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Comparison of Stress Level Between Student-Athletes and Non-Student-Athletes in UiTM Seremban 3

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Keywords: *Stress Level, Perceived Stress, Student-Athlete, Non-Student-Athlete, UiTM*

I. Introduction

Stress is a psychological response that occurs when individuals perceive that environmental demands exceed their coping abilities. University students commonly experience stress due to academic workload, examinations, time constraints, and social responsibilities. Student-athletes may also encounter additional stressors, such as training commitments, competitions, performance expectations, injuries, and pressure from coaches.

Previous studies have reported mixed findings regarding stress levels between student-athletes and non-student-athletes. Some research suggests that sports participation serves as a protective factor against stress, while other studies indicate that dual academic-athletic roles increase psychological burden. Therefore, this study aimed to compare perceived stress levels between student-athletes and non-student-athletes in UiTM Seremban 3.

II. Methods

This study employed a descriptive survey design to compare perceived stress levels between student-athletes and non-student-athletes at Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) Seremban 3. A total of 350 respondents were selected through purposive sampling. Perceived stress was measured using the Malaysian Perceived Stress Scale (M-PSS-10). Data were analysed using descriptive statistics and an independent-samples t-test, with significance set at $p < 0.05$.

III. Results and Discussion

The overall mean perceived stress score among respondents was $M = 16.0$ ($SD = 3.99$), indicating a moderate level of perceived stress among students at University Teknologi MARA (UiTM) Seremban 3. Student-athletes recorded a mean stress score of $M = 14.6$ ($SD = 3.49$), whereas non-student-athletes recorded a higher mean score of $M = 18.8$ ($SD = 4.02$). However, the independent-samples t-test revealed that the difference in perceived stress levels between the two groups was not statistically significant ($p > 0.05$).

Although non-student-athletes demonstrated a higher mean stress score descriptively, the absence of statistical significance indicates that both groups experienced comparable levels of stress. This suggests that stress among university students may be influenced more by academic workload, personal responsibilities, and transitional life challenges than by athletic involvement alone. While student-athletes face additional sport-related demands such as training commitments and performance expectations, sports participation may also provide psychological benefits, including stress relief and social support. Therefore, involvement in competitive sports does not necessarily result in significantly higher or lower perceived stress levels compared with non-student-athletes.

Table I
Descriptive of Stress Level

	Athlete status	N	Mean	SD	SE	*p*
TOTAL	Non-Student Athlete	123	18.8	3.40	0.306	0.001
	Student Athlete	227	14.6	3.49	0.231	0.001

Table I shows the perceived stress scores for student-athletes and non-student-athletes. Student-athletes ($n = 227$) recorded a mean score of 14.6 ($SD = 3.49$), while non-student-athletes (n = 123) recorded a higher mean score of 18.8 ($SD = 4.02$). Although non-student-athletes recorded a higher mean score descriptively, the independent-samples t-test indicated that the difference in perceived stress levels between the two groups was not statistically significant ($p > 0.05$).

IV. Conclusions

This study concluded that there was no significant difference in perceived stress levels between student-athletes and non-student-athletes in UiTM Seremban 3. Both groups experienced moderate levels of stress. The findings suggest that stress management interventions should be implemented for all students, regardless of athletic status. Institutional support programmes focusing on mental health awareness, stress management strategies, and academic-life balance are recommended to enhance students' overall well-being and performance.

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