INTERNATIONAL GRADUATE COLLOQUIUM

i-SPEAK 2026

SPORTS AND PHYSICAL EXERCISE ASSEMBLY OF KNOWLEDGE SHARING



SERIES 1. 2026

COLLOQUIUM PROCEEDINGS

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Malaysia, 10 February 2026

eISBN 978-629-7989-01-3

Exploring the Impact of Outdoor Recreation Participant Motives on Mental Health Among FSR Students at UiTM Seremban 3

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Keywords: *Outdoor Recreation Participation Motives, Mental Health, Student*

I. Introduction

The purpose of this study is to explore the motivational factors behind outdoor recreation participation and their impact on mental health outcomes (stress, anxiety, depression) among FSR students at UiTM Seremban 3. This study is designed to investigate if engagement in outdoor recreation contributes to improved mental health and to identify the primary drivers of participation. The findings will provide valuable insight for university counsellors and camp organizers to design effective programs that address student mental health through structured outdoor recreation.

II. Methods

The population for this study consists of 157 students from the Faculty of Sports Science and Recreation (FSR) at UiTM Seremban 3 who participated in the Outdoor Recreation Final Camp.

III. Results and Discussion

A. Outdoor Recreation Participation Motives

The finding reveal that students possess strong motivation for engaging in outdoor recreation across all the measured categories. The most prominent driver was found to be Enjoy Nature ($M = 4.73$, $SD = 0.360$), which indicates that the natural surroundings are the main reason students participate. Additionally, factors such as physical Fitness, escape pressure, achievement/stimulation, and similar and new people all recorded high mean values, showing that students have multiple reasons for taking part in these activities.

B. Mental Health Level of FSR Students

The results show that while the most students (92.4%) have normal stress levels, the trends for anxiety and depression are more concerning. The largest group of students fell into the Moderate category for both Anxiety (45.2%) and Depression (45.2%). This indicates that although students are not highly stressed, many are experiencing moderate psychological challenges that should be addressed.

C. Relationship Between Outdoor Recreation Participation Motives and Stress, Anxiety, and Depression Levels

The analysis showed no significant relationship between outdoor recreation participation motives and mental health ($r = 0.04$, $p > 0.05$). This indicates that while students are strongly motivated to participate in outdoor activities, these motives alone do not determine their levels of stress, anxiety and depression.

TABLE I
INDEPENDENT T-TEST FOR GENDER TOWARDS MENTAL HEALTH

Variable	Group	N	Mean (M)	t	DF	p
Mental health	female	42	1.23 (0.794)	-1.19	154	.624
	male	114	1.37 (0.506)			

TABLE II
CORRELATION MATRIX

Variable		Mental health
Outdoor recreation participation motives	Pearson's r	0.04
	P – value	0.62
	N	157

IV. Conclusion

This study confirms that outdoor recreation is a valuable non-clinical tool for improving student mental health. While students are primarily motivated by nature and escaping pressure, the presence of moderate anxiety and depression suggests a need for more structured programs.as no gender differences were found, these benefits are universal, and the university should integrate outdoor recreation into its support strategy for students.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The author expresses deepest gratitude to Allah SWT for the strength to complete this research. Sincere appreciation is extended to the supervisor, Muhammad Wafi A.Rahman, for his invaluable guidance, and to the Faculty of Sport Science and Recreation (FSR) at UiTM for their academic support. Special thanks to beloved parents and family for their endless love and sacrifices. Finally, the author acknowledges their own resilience and growth, as this thesis serves as a tribute to personal discipline and a promise kept to the future.

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