

UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA

**THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN
MINDFUL EATING AND MENTAL
WELL-BEING AMONG SPORTS
SCIENCE STUDENTS IN UITM
SARAWAK**

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ABSTRACT

Mindful eating was hypothesized to be being aware in the present moment when one was eating, paying close attention to the senses, including physical and emotional sensations, which might be profoundly changed by psychological factors. Mental well-being refers to people who believe in gaining meaningful control over their daily lives; thus, people who are physically active have higher life satisfaction. However, nowadays, eating mindlessly and poor mental well-being are on the rise, setting a bad example for the community especially in promoting a healthy lifestyle. Thus, the objective of this study was to examine the relationship between mindful eating and mental well-being among sports science students in UiTM Sarawak. A descriptive cross-sectional study design was used, and 240 total students from the Faculty of Sports Science and Recreation at UiTM Sarawak were selected as respondents for this study. The data collection was conducted in June 2023 via Google Forms. The Mindful Eating Questionnaire was used to measure mindfulness, while mental well-being was measured through the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-Being Scale. The findings showed that mental well-being was found to be significantly correlated with mindful eating domains awareness and distraction. However, there was no significant relationship between mental well-being with disinhibition, external cues and emotional response. These findings show that mindful eating may be an interesting topic to investigate further since there are not straightforward and complex relationships between mindful eating and mental well-being. It is recommended to measure the scope of mindfulness' knowledge in eating along with the food categories that impact the capacity of mindful eating and mental well-being.

Keywords: Mental well-being, Mindful eating, Sports science students

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

In January 2020, people around the world panicked when the World Health Organization (WHO) announced that a major wave of devastating news about coronavirus disease 2 (SARS-CoV-2), also commonly referred as COVID-19, had begun to spread, and was having a negative impact on the world. The Prime Minister of Malaysia, Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin, enforced the implementation of the Movement Control Order (MCO) nationwide, by restricting movement and closing educational institutions nationwide. Under the Prevention and Control of Infectious Diseases Act of 1988 (Act), numerous regulations were enacted to prevent and contain the spread of COVID-19. Even today, COVID-19 is still circulating freely without knowing when it will be over because this pandemic has changed and damaged not only the economic system but also the social life, education system, and health system, causing the situation the world is facing to make everyone worry and increase the anxiety level, which can trigger mental well-being problems. It has been found that the stress that occurs due to irregularities and changes in diet, lack of physical activity during the day, and the inability to adapt to different processes in people with limited practises during the period of COVID-19 can increase the likelihood of osteoporosis, depression, cardiovascular disease, and especially obesity (Yuce & Muz, 2021).

On the other hand, the pandemic COVID-19 has significantly affected all aspects of society, not only in terms of its impact on physical health but also on mental well-being. The COVID-19 pandemic is associated with emotions such as fear, sadness, despair, anxiety, loneliness, and a chronic feeling of suffocation (Cornett, 2020), which can lead to mental disorders. For this reason, university students report high levels of perceived stress and cognitive distress. Uncontrolled stress can trigger depression, which can become problematic due to anxiety. More than 80% of university students experience high levels of stress and mental health problems (Cachon-Zagalz et al., 2020; Pelletier et al., 2021). The measurement of health perception, defined as an assessment of a person's health, includes the evaluation of biological dimensions of health as well