

The background of the entire cover is an abstract, high-energy image. It features a blurred figure of a person, likely a runner, in motion. The figure is overlaid with vibrant, streaky light trails in shades of teal, blue, and orange, creating a sense of speed and dynamic movement. The overall composition is energetic and modern.

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

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UNRAVELING THE CONNECTION BETWEEN INTERNET ADDICTION AND MENTAL HEALTH AMONG STUDENT-ATHLETES POPULATION

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I. INTRODUCTION

This study investigates the link between internet addiction and mental health among student-athletes from UiTM Negeri Sembilan. There is limited research exploring this relationship in athletic populations and there is a need to examine these variables [1]. Hence, the present study aims to address this gap by identifying internet addiction levels, mental health status, and their interrelationship. Findings will contribute to understanding how digital behavior links with mental health within this unique population, offering practical implications for managing internet use among student-athletes.

II. METHODS

A quantitative research design was employed to examine internet addiction and mental health among 93 student-athletes at UiTM Negeri Sembilan. Data were collected via an online survey distributed through Google Forms. The present study used the Internet Addiction Test (IAT) [2] to measure the level of Internet addiction of the respondents, and the level of mental health was assessed using the Depression, Anxiety, and Stress Scale (DASS-21) [3]. These instruments were used to measure the studied variables among the target population. Pearson correlation analysis was conducted to determine the relationship between internet addiction and mental health.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Level of Internet Addiction

The internet addiction score among student-athletes was at a mild addiction level (45.5 ± 14.6). While internet usage is noticeable, it remains manageable, potentially due to the athletes' structured routines. However, the high variability in scores highlights a subgroup with higher dependency, warranting further investigation into individual differences.

B. Level of Mental Health

Mental health findings revealed moderate depression (14.1 ± 10.4), severe anxiety (16.4 ± 9.9), and mild stress (16.2 ± 9.51). Anxiety emerged as the most significant concern, surpassing depression and stress. These results suggest the need for targeted interventions addressing anxiety, which may impact academic and athletic performance.

C. Relationship between internet addiction and mental health

A significant positive relationship was identified between internet addiction and mental health (depression: $r = 0.497$, anxiety: $r = 0.480$, stress: $r = 0.476$; $p < 0.001$). These findings indicate that higher internet addiction correlates with increased mental health levels, underscoring the need for strategies to balance internet use and mitigate its effects.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

This study highlights the link between internet addiction behavior and mental health levels, particularly among student-athletes. A significant relationship found between internet addiction and mental health variables underscores the need for balanced internet usage strategies and targeted mental health interventions to support student-athletes' well-being and overall performance.

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