

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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PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND MENTAL HEALTH AMONG UNIVERSITY STUDENTS: A QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS OF GENDER DIFFERENCES AND IMPLICATIONS FOR DEPRESSION, ANXIETY, AND STRESS

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I. INTRODUCTION

Mental health issues, such as depression, anxiety, and stress, are significant global challenges, particularly among university students coping with academic pressures [1]. Physical activity has been widely recognized as an effective intervention, improving mental well-being and reducing psychological distress, making it crucial for enhancing students’ quality of life [2]. This study investigates physical activity levels, mental health status, gender-based differences, and the impact of physical activity towards mental health.

II. METHODS

This study employed a quantitative, non-experimental design using a structured questionnaire to collect data from 333 randomly selected FSR students [3]. The International Physical Activity Questionnaire-Short Form (IPAQ-7) measured physical activity levels, while the Depression Anxiety and Stress Scale (DASS-21) assessed mental health status [4]. Descriptive statistics were applied to assess activity levels and mental health, while regression and t-tests analyzed impact and gender differences [5].

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Impact of Physical Activity on Mental Health

TABLE I
IMPACT OF PHYSICAL ACTIVITY ON MENTAL HEALTH.

	β eta	t	Sig.
Physical Activity	.569	13.5	**<.001

**p<0.05; r² = .335; Sig. = .001

Table 1 reported a significant positive impact of physical activity towards mental health, with $\beta = 0.569$ and $p < 0.001$. Approximately 33.5% of the variance in mental health scores was explained by physical activity. This finding highlights the importance of physical activity in alleviating stress and enhancing emotional resilience among students [6].

B. Gender-Based Differences in Mental Health

TABLE II
GENDER-BASED DIFFERENCES IN MENTAL HEALTH.

Variable	Group	N	t	df	Sig.
Mental Health	Male	171	-.0450	331	.964
	Female	162			

Based on Table II, an independent t-test indicated no significant differences in mental health scores between male and female students ($t = -0.045$, $p = 0.964$) (Table 2). This suggests that gender does not significantly influence the mental health benefits of physical activity [7].

IV. CONCLUSIONS

The study highlights the significant positive impact of physical activity on mental health, explaining 33.5% of the variance. Gender differences were statistically insignificant, suggesting equal benefits across genders. These findings underscore the importance of promoting physical activity to enhance mental health among university students.

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