

THE UNDERSTANDING OF THE DEPRESSION AND ANXIETY ISSUES AMONG THE UITM REMBAU STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

The enforcement of the movement control order that started in 2020 has affected student's lives in many ways including learning methods, task or assignment submission, group discussion and presentation that were changed into online form. Therefore, students felt exhausted and stressed out with the online learning situation which led to changes in their behavior due to the time spent mostly on their gadgets such as smart phones and laptops. This study identified UiTM Rembau students' understanding on depression and anxiety issues. The approach used is quantitative study through an online survey that has been distributed to 141 respondents. Data obtained were analyzed by using SPSS version 23.0 and Microsoft 2019 Excel Spreadsheet Software. According to the findings, a mean of 3.58 with the understanding of depression and anxiety disorders can lead to a prolonged sadness disorder, which can cause fatigue, lack of energy, irritation, and a loss of interest in everyday activities among students.

Keywords: Understanding, depression, anxiety

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Mental illness is a disease that becomes a silent killer (Hidaka B.H, 2012). In 2020, depression has become the second killer among the teenagers (A. 2018). In addition, World Health Organization (WHO) in 2018 has chosen the theme of mental health issue based on Young Generation in the World Change. Most university students are facing difficulties in their lives and experiencing

depression because of stress, peer pressure, surrounding factors and family problem (Shamsuddin, 2013). Thus, teenagers tend to choose a way out to release the pressure through social media resulting in a percentage of 7% to 9% (Blanco C. et al., 2008). A total of 4.3% of the global disease is from depression while a study by the Ministry of Health (KKM) recorded those individuals 16 years old and above faced a prevalence of mental health problems of 29.2% equivalent to 4.2 million people. Therefore, it probably drives home the idea that 1 in 2 Malaysians are experiencing issues related to mental health problems. As a result, the prevalence of mental health problems is high for the age category between 16 to 19 years and the low-income group.

So, the objective of this study is to identify UiTM Rembau students' understanding of depression and anxiety issues.

1.1 Scope and Limitations of the Study

There are three faculties in UiTM Rembau which include; the Faculty of Information Management, Faculty of Communication and Media Studies and Faculty of Business Management. This study focused only on first semester students which consists of 141 students from a total of 238 students in UiTM Rembau. The reason for choosing them is because they were new students who were experiencing the campus live via Online Distance Learning (ODL). These first semester students did not have the experience of studying on campus because they were stationed at home throughout the Movement Control Order (MCO).

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review will be divided into the definition, types, sign and depression factor, the definition of anxiety, the causes, and effects on the students.

2.1 Definition of Depression

Depression or episode of confusion is a major depression which is a common disease, but it can affect behavior (MMHA & Mohamed Hatta, 2020). According to the Ministry of Health Malaysia (2012), depression is an emotional disorder that will cause prolonged sadness, fatigue, lack of energy as well as irritability. Depression has affected 300 million people and there has been an increase of 18% from 2005 to

2015. According to Mohamed Hatta (2020), society needs to distinguish depression from mood fluctuations and emotional responses in daily behavior.

Depression is a psychiatric condition that affects people of all ages, including men and women, kids, teenagers, adults, and even older folks. It entails a protracted feeling of melancholy, melancholy, frustration, hopelessness, and loss of desire for living life as it was. Life seemed devoid and lonely. Depression is a reflection of a person's gloomy state and the situation of one's fibrous thoughts. It is a behavior that shows one's emotions and feelings at a time of deep sadness and frustration oneself (Norhayati Ya'acob, 2013).

2.2 Types of Depression

There are two types of depression that are usually faced by students according to the National Mental Health Institute (2012) which are:

1. Persistent depressive disorder
People who suffer from the persistent depressive disorder will experience the feeling of depression for two years and will experience major depression.
2. Psychotic Depression
People who suffer from psychotic depression will experience false delusional or hallucinogenic hearing disorders and psychotic depression also occurs among individuals with dysthymia (Ferlis et al., 2015).

2.3 Sign of Depression

According to the Ministry of Health Malaysia (2021), the early signs of depression that can contribute to suicide in students' behavior include:

- a) Loss of Interest: An early sign of a depressed person is a loss of interest in things they previously loved to do.
- b) Often feeling lonely: Individuals who often feel lonely, feeling alone and feel they are useless even though they are surrounded by family members.
- c) Loss of Energy: Feeling tired frequently and feeling a loss of energy.

- d) Lack of self-confidence: Lack of self-confidence and does not give themselves opportunities and their own space.
- e) Significant weight loss: Experiencing a huge amount of weight loss.
- f) Thinking that dying is better than living: Keep mentioning that death is better than being alive or always write about death in social applications.
- g) Finding it hard to make decisions: There is a discussion involving decision-making, but these individuals will not be able to make a decision.
- h) Difficult to sleep: Having difficulty in sleeping which resulting an ineffective lifestyle.

2.4 Definition of Anxiety

Anxiety disorder is persistent anxiety, but this anxiety occurs excessively by a person. According to the Ministry of Health Malaysia (2020), anxiety can be interpreted as a perception of the environment that evokes deep fear towards a person for no convincing reasons. Norwazni (2020) stated that this chronic and complex fear will cause mental and nervous disorders with unrealistic responses. As a result, this feeling will make an individual feel uneasy and thus, affecting one's daily routine.

2.5 Types of Anxiety

There are six types of anxiety according to (Fitria L. 2020) which include:

- a) Anxiety disorders: The individuals will experience extreme anxiety even for a small reason.
- b) Panic attack: The individuals will feel sudden fear and panic within minutes.
- c) Obsessive disorders: The individuals will experience unreasonable behavior which shows repetitive behavior and purely think of the rituals.
- d) Post-traumatic stress disorders: The individuals who experience prolonged trauma and have nightmares frequently.
- e) Social Anxiety Disorder: The individuals who feel restless when dealing with the members of communities because they experience exaggerated embarrassment resulting in a lack of self-confidence.

- f) Specific Phobia: Individuals who experience a phobia of something to the point of not being able to think of anything other than what is inside the mind.

2.5 Signs of Anxiety

There are 10 types of anxiety according to Zanariah A. and Zainun A. (2020), Fitria. L and Ifdil (2020) which include:

- a) In excessive worry: These symptoms usually last for about six months
- b) Very frequent sleep problem: Naturally, humans need adequate rest and sleep but individuals with anxiety will have difficulties falling asleep or their sleep is often disturbed
- c) Feeling of fear for no reason: Individuals that have the feeling of fear without reasonable reason.
- d) Muscle cramps: Individuals with anxiety will experience muscle cramps and have panic attacks unconsciously.
- e) Chronic indigestion: The digestive system is disturbed, and the individuals will experience diarrhea, cramps pr excessive gas and which will make the stomach uncomfortable.
- f) Experiencing rapid nervousness: The individuals who experience nervousness even though they are not committing an offense towards the extent of sweating and fainting
- g) Feeling shy and separating themselves from others: a new environment will make the individuals separate themselves from others and alienate themselves.
- h) Having a panic attack: A panic attack will make the heart beat faster (palpitation) and excessive sweating.
- i) Reflected trauma: There are individuals who are having severe trauma. If they having Post-Traumatic Syndrome Disorder (PTSD), it is not a sign of anxiety but if the signs are persistent, they need to refer to a specialist.
- j) Overemphasis on perfection (perfectionist): Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD) means that individuals who are too concerned with perfection without any blemishes on something they had done. These individuals will feel anxious about imperfect assignments and will spend a long time completing and keep repeating them.

2.6 Relationship between Depression and Anxiety among Students

According to research on the connection between depression and anxiety in medical students by Ruyue et al., 2020, Chinese medical students from Chongqing Medical and Pharmaceutical College had a high prevalence of depression (57.5%). Numerous earlier studies have shown that medical students have significant rates of depression, and some have even reported considerably greater rates. On the contrary, many other previous studies demonstrated lower rates of depression ranging of 15 to 24% in USA, 30.6% in Cameroon, 29.5% in Turkey.

2.7 Effects of Depressions and Anxiety among Students

The effects of depression and anxiety among students are liver disease, diabetes, cancer and Parkinson's (KKM,2021) associated with acute infectious diseases (Arria AM, O. G. (2009). Besides that, students will also experience declining focus and memory because patients with anxiety will adversely affect students' academic achievement. Patients with depression will feel extremely tired and there will be a change in behavior where they probably act violently (Blandina Bernal-Morales, Juan Francisco Rodríguez-Landa & Frank Pulido-Criollo, 2015).

Suicidal symptoms are the most profound impact brought on by despair and anxiety. Mental health issues are one of the leading factors in suicide, and they can occur when a person lacks emotional control, behaves erratically, or has specific limits (Ariffin, U. M. M, 2022)

Therefore, people with mental illness especially students will have difficulties in carrying out daily social activities and may lose the ability to manage their own lives affecting their relationships with family members and members of the community around them if they are left without further treatment from the specialists.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

The methodology used for this research was quantitative studies. Questionnaires were distributed among the respondents from UiTM Rembau to identify their understanding on the issues of depression and anxiety. The questionnaire was constructed using a 4 score Likert scale format as in Table 1.

Table 1: Likert scale 4 scores

Likert scale	Score
Strongly agree	4
Agree	3
Disagree	2
Strongly disagree	1

Source: Ismail A.M. & Ali M.N.S 2020

The number of respondents in this study was 141 respondents. There were two sections in the survey form, namely Section A and Section B. Section A consisted of the demographics of the respondents while section B was to identify students' understanding of the issues of depression and anxiety. The results of the study were then analyzed using Statistical Package of the Social Science (SPSS) version 23.0 and the study was also be analyzed using the interpretation of the mean score as shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Mean score interpretation

Range	Level score min
1.00-2.33	Low
2.34-3.66	Moderate
3.67-5.00	High

Source: Ismail A.M. & Ali M.N.S 2020

4.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The data were collected and analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software and mean score interpretation. The main construct was divided into two parts: the demographic distribution of respondents and the student's understanding of anxiety and depression issues (UiTM Rembau).

4.1 Section A: Respondents' Demography

Table 3 is based on the demographic distribution of the respondents. It was classified into five items, namely gender, age, status, faculty, and location of those who agreed to fill out the questionnaire.

Table 3: Respondents’ demographic distribution

	Item	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1) Gender	Male	38	27
	Female	103	73
	<hr/>		
2) Age	18-19	138	97.9
	20-21	1	0.7
	Others	2	1.4
	<hr/>		
3) Status	Single	140	99.3
	Married	1	0.7
	<hr/>		
4) Faculty	Faculty of Communication and Media Studies (FKPM)	26	18.4
	Faculty of Business Management (FPP)	90	63.8
	Faculty of Information management (FPM)	26	18.4
	<hr/>		
5) Location	City	110	78
	Rural area	31	22
	<hr/>		

Source: Questionnaires 2021

The results of the questionnaire showed that a total of 141 respondents involving 38 (27%) male students and 103 (73%) female students, a total of 138 (97.9%) students aged from 18-19 years old, one (0.7%) student aged 20-21 years old and 2 (1.4%) students aged others. Next, the respondents’ status was divided into two; 140 (99.3%) single students and 1 (0.7%) married students. The respondents came from 3 different faculties in UiTM Rembau which are the Faculty of Business Management (FPP) with 90 (63.8%) students, followed by the Faculty of Communication and Media Studies (FKPM) and the Faculty of Information Management (FPM) which shares the same number of 26 (18.4%) respondents respectively. The next deviation is the respondents’ location.

4.2 Section B: Understanding of Depression and Anxiety Issues Among the Students

This section reported the understanding of the respondents towards the depression and anxiety issues among the students in UiTM Rembau using the Likert mean score method of four means broken down into seven statements including definitions of depression, and anxiety the signs of depression and

anxiety among the respondents throughout the ODL teaching and learning. Based on the analysis we concluded that the issues of depression and anxiety are related to each other.

Table 4: The Understanding of depression and anxiety issues among the students

No.	Statement	1 Strongly Disagree (%)	2 Disagree (%)	3 Agree (%)	4 Strongly Agree (%)	Mean
1.	Depression means a prolonged sadness disorder that can cause fatigue, lack of energy, irritability, and loss of interest to do daily activities.	1 (0.7)	1 (0.7)	53 (37.6)	86 (61)	3.58
2.	Anxiety disorder is a disease that causes a person to feel scared, depressed and uncomfortable for no apparent reason.	2 (1.4)	3 (2.1)	60 (42.6)	76 (53.9)	3.48

Source: Questionnaires 2021

According to Table 4, the level of respondents' understanding of the definitions of anxiety and depression has a moderate mean score based on Statement 1 (mean score = 3.58) and Statement 2 (mean score = 3.48). Generally, the respondents agreed and understood the definition of both depression and anxiety.

Table 5: The effects of depression and anxiety issues among the students

No.	Statement	1 Strongly Disagree (%)	2 Disagree (%)	3 Agree (%)	4 Strongly Agree (%)	Mean
1.	I found that through ODL Teaching and Learning sessions I experience the signs of depression and anxiety in myself.	28 (19.9)	54 (38.3)	40 (28.4)	19 (13.5)	2.35
2.	I felt that I am useless among my friends.	44 (31.2)	46 (32.6)	28 (19.9)	23 (16.3)	2.21
3.	My life makes me feel that I am meaningless	58 (41.1)	49 (34.8)	16 (11.3)	18 (12.8)	1.95
4.	Family issues make me even more depressed.	49 (34.8)	44 (31.2)	28 (19.9)	20 (14.2)	2.13
5.	I have no appetite for food and I always try to sleep because I have no desire to do any activity.	57 (40.4)	52 (36.9)	18 (12.8)	14 (9.9)	1.92

Source: Questionnaire 2021

Based on table 5, the respondents who were in ODL Teaching and Learning had a moderate mean score for Statement 3 (Mean score = 2.35). Most of the respondents disagreed that learning through ODL made them experience the signs of depression and anxiety in them. When depression and anxiety occurred, students' focus towards learning is disrupted, making it difficult for them to communicate and complete the tasks due to the failure in controlling their emotions (Rohana Hamzah et al., 2021). The findings probably drive home the idea that the respondents are able to follow the Teaching and Learning by ODL and able to control the level of depression and anxiety throughout the ODL lecture sessions.

Meanwhile, the respondents recorded a low mean score for Statement 4 (Mean score = 2.21), Statement 5 (Mean score = 1.95), Statement 6 (Mean score = 2.13) and Statement 7 (Mean score = 1.92), regarding the issues involving their own selves, and the relationships with the family and friends. This indicates that most respondents disagree that the issue of feeling useless among friends and family and the feeling of life is meaningless and only revolves in oneself had got to do with depression and anxiety. Furthermore, the respondents also disagree that they experienced the signs such as no appetite for food and always trying to sleep because there was no desire to do any activities involving ODL Teaching and Learning.

This study has segregated the findings into two sections which mentioned on demographic data of respondents and also the understanding of depression and anxiety issues amongst the students who participated in the survey questionnaire. The majority of respondents are female students compared to males. The ranged age of respondents is between 18 to 19 years old, with single marital status, and came from three different faculty in UiTM Rembau which are from Faculty of Communication and Media Studies with 18.4% of students, 63.8% students from the Faculty of Business Management and 18.4% of students from the faculty of Information Management. 78% of the respondents came from the city area and other 22% of them came from the rural area.

This study showed that in semester 1, students in UiTM Rembau understand that the definition of depression is prolonged sadness disorder that can cause fatigue, lack of energy, irritability, and loss of interest to do daily activities at a moderate level of 2.35 mean score. Here we can see that it has been mentioned earlier in the literature review that depression or episodes of confusion are major depression which is a common disease, but it can affect

behavior (MMHA & Mohamed Hatta 2020). Apart from depression, students also understand that anxiety also can cause a person to feel scared, depressed and feeling uncomfortable for no apparent reason with a 3.48 mean score. Anxiety also on the other hand will cause mental and nervous disorders with unrealistic responses Norwazni (2020). As a result, this feeling will make an individual feel uneasy and thus, affecting one's daily routine.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO) report, the top 10 causes of death in the world include committing suicide because of mental health problems and this is the second leading cause of death among individuals aged 15 to 29 years old (KKM, 2020). The National Mental Health Survey in 2017 indicated that one in five young people suffered depression and one in ten teenagers suffered emotional stress problems. Besides that, the study stated that one in young people or 10 percent of 5.5 million youngsters had experienced suicidal thoughts in their lives (Bernama, 2020).

This study found the effects of depression and anxiety issues amongst the students, which experienced signs of depression and anxiety during ODL with a 2.35 mean score.

5.0 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, it showed that students from UiTM Rembau have a clear understanding of depression and anxiety, and the effects of both conditions on their life. It also can be concluded that respondents are not affected by depression or anxiety based on the questionnaire instruments used in this study. The majority of students have not faced any personal issues such as family problems that can contribute to any act of depression and anxiety.

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