

# Teamsports and Mental Well-Being: Analysis of Demographic Factors

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## Abstract

Concern regarding university students' experiencing mental health problems has grown widely. Based on the positive effects of teamsports participation in dealing with mental health problems, this study aims to investigate the relatedness of teamsports and mental well-being among university students. A total of 217 respondents have participated in this study. The current study adopted a quantitative approach using the survey for collecting data. The data was analyzed using SPSS 25. Analyses involved frequency, percentage, score level, t-test and ANOVA. The reliability test results of Mental Wellbeing Scale ( $\alpha = 0.90$ ) considered as good. The level of mental wellbeing found to be high among the majority participants (83.9%). There were significant differences of well-being based on gender and factor that influenced the students to involve in teamsports. However, there were no significant differences of well-being based on the ethnic of the students and the frequency of the use of the sports center ( $F(6,210) = 1.882, p > 0.05$ ). In conclusion, this study further adds to the knowledge of mental well-being and teamsports among students.

**Keywords:** *teamsports, mental well-being, student, demographic*

## Introduction

Many studies associating sports participation and mental health have been conducted particularly among students. Results from the studies showed that teamsports involvement can lower depression and suicidality, reduce stress and depression's risk; and eventually improve mental and social well-being<sup>9,13</sup>. It is suggested that social nature participation through team-based sport can improve health compared to individual activities; notwithstanding increasing of personal development and self-awareness<sup>9</sup>. Besides, teamsports participation also contributed to psychosocial health, self-esteem development, sense of belonging<sup>3</sup>, life happiness<sup>15</sup> and emotional well-being<sup>16</sup>.

Comparing gender participation in sport, studies have shown that girls were less likely to involve in sport than boys. A study from western population suggested that Black ethnicity participated in sport more than White and Asian<sup>14</sup>. It was also believed that teamsports can influence girls to participate due to gender-based factor<sup>2,14</sup>. Nevertheless, studies in Asia particularly in Malaysia regarding the involvement of the gender-based factor is still lacking. Therefore, this study attempts to investigate the relatedness of teamsports and mental well-being focusing on the demographic factors among university students.

## Method

### Participants

The participants in this study were university students at the University Utara Malaysia (UUM). In order to be eligible to participate in this study, the individual must have used at least one teamsports facilities provided at the sport center in the university.

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**Materials**

There are three sections of this questionnaire. The first section required the participants to complete several questions about their personal information, such as gender, age and race. The second section of this questionnaire asked the participants about the usage of teamsports facilities at the sport center. There are two main focuses in this section; the frequency to involve in teamsports activities and the main factor they were involved in teamsports activities. The last section contained questions about the participants’ well-being, which was measured by the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale (WEMWBS)<sup>17</sup>. The WEMWBS consisted of 14 items covering the well-being issues such as subjective and psychological well-being as well as satisfaction with life. This scale has been widely used and validated in many countries such as Japanese, Brazil and Chinese. In the present study, the Malay version of the WEMWBS<sup>10</sup> was used as the Cronbach alpha for this version was high at .90. For each item, the participants are required to indicate their agreement on the statements that best describe their experiences in the last two weeks on a five-point scale ranging from none of the time (1) to all of the time (5). The range score of the WEMWBS is from 14 to 70, with higher scores indicated higher levels of mental well-being<sup>17</sup>.

**Procedure**

Data for the present study were collected between September to November 2019. The researcher distributed

the questionnaire packs around the teamsports facilities in sport center, UUM. The participants were asked to complete the questionnaire on the spot before handing it over to the researcher when it was ready. Overall, 300 sets of questionnaires were distributed to the participants.

**Data Analysis**

Statistical Package for Social Sciences version 25 was used to conduct all the analyses. The descriptive analyses were performed to evaluate the socio-demographic variables such as age, gender, race; and the frequency of teamsports involvement and factors of involvement in teamsports activities. Moreover, the effects of social-demography variables, frequency and factors of involvement in teamsports activities on well-being were also tested using t-test and analysis of variance (ANOVA).

**Results**

**Reliability**

Reliability test of the Mental Wellbeing Scale found high and considered as good ( $\alpha = 0.90$ ).

**The Level of Well-Being**

In terms of the level of well-being among respondents, the majority of respondents with the total of 182 (83.9%) were in high level and only 35 respondents (16.2%) showed a moderate level of well-being.

**Table 1: Demographic data**

Demographic information		Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	123	56.7
	Female	94	43.3
Age	17-20 years old	13	6.0
	21-25 years old	200	92.2
	26-30 years old	3	1.4
	31-35 years old	1	0.5

**Cont... Table 1: Demographic data**

Ethnicity	Malay	171	78.8	
	Chinese	30	13.8	
	Indian	6	2.8	
	Bumiputra	7	3.2	
Frequency use of Sport center	International	3	1.4	
	Everyday	43	19.8	
	Twice a week	28	12.9	
	3-4 times a week	68	31.3	
	Once a week	16	7.4	
	Once every two weeks	9	4.1	
	Once a month	26	12.0	
	Once a semester	27	12.5	
	Factors influence to use the sport center	Passion	117	53.9
		Talent	20	9.2
Social		25	11.5	
Friend influence		25	11.5	
Release stress		27	12.4	
Others		27	12.4	
		3	1.4	

The total of 217 students have participated in this study. Majority respondents with a total of 123 students were males (56.7%) and 94 students were female (43.3%). Majority respondents age ranged between 21 to 25 years old (200 respondents) and only 13 respondents that age around 17 to 20 years old. Respondents in this study also divided into four ethnic groups which are 172 Malay (78.8 %), 30 Chinese (13.8%), 6 Indian (2.8%) and 10 respondents (4.6%) from Bumiputra and international students.

The majority of the respondents with the total of 68 students (31.3%) use the sports center 3-4 times a week. There are also 43 respondents (19.8%) use the sports center every day and 28 respondents use the sports center twice a week. Only nine respondents (4.1%) use the sports center once every two week and the rest of the respondents come to the sports center once a month or once a semester.

In this study, the majority of the respondents with a total of 117 students (53.9%) use the sports center because of their passion in sport. There are also 27 respondents (12.4%) who use the sports center to release their stress. There are also 25 respondents (11.5%) who use the sports center as a platform to socialize and be influenced by their friends. Only three (1.4%) respondents have the other reason while using the sport center.

**Table 2: The differences of well-being level based on the Gender**

Element	Types of Gender	N	mean	df	t-test	Sig.
Well-being	Male	123	52.58	214	-2.695	0.008
	Female	94	55.19			

Results from the t-test analysis concluded that there is a significant difference in the level of well-being among respondents based on the gender  $t(217) = -2.695, p < 0.05$ . The mean values indicated that female respondents have a high level of well-being compared to male respondents.

**Table 3: The Differences of well-being level based on the Ethnicity**

Well-being	df	Sum of Square	Mean Square	F	Sig
Between Groups	5	179.919	44.980	0.872	0.481
Within Group	212	10931.851	51.565		
Total	217	11111.770			

Results indicated that there are no significant differences of well-being based on the ethnic group ( $F(4,212) = 0.872, p > 0.05$ ).

**Table 4: The Differences of well-being level based on the factor influence to use sport center**

Well-being	df	Sum of Square	Mean Square	F	Sig
Between Groups	6	791.803	158.361	3.238	0.008
Within Group	211	10319.967	48.910		
Total	217	11111.770			

Results indicated that there are significant differences of well-being based on the factor influence the use of sport center ( $F(5,211) = 3.238, p < 0.05$ ).

**Table 5: The differences of well-being level based on the frequency the use of sport center**

Well-being	df	Sum of Square	Mean Square	F	Sig
Between Groups	7	555.928	92.665	1.882	0.085
Within Group	210	10288.031	49.225		
Total	217	10843.958			

Results indicated that there are no significant differences of well-being based on the frequency of the use of the sports center ( $F(6,210) = 1.882, p > 0.05$ ).

## Discussion

The findings of this study showed that certain demographic factors (e.g., gender and factor influence) are strongly influencing psychological well-being. It has been proved that the more students come and play at the sport center, the better psychological well-being of the university students. As we could see in the result section, the majority of the university students who came to use the sports center at the university were male than female. It showed male students were a large group that used the university sports center throughout the year of 2019. It was not surprising since male tend to play sports which involve outdoor sports games. Most team sports are outdoor games such football, baseball, cricket, hockey, volleyball, softball and so forth. On the other hand, the female group prefers indoor sports games such as badminton, netball, squash, and bowling, and swimming<sup>8</sup>. In one study, females were more likely to watch the games with family and friends and they are not fully participating with the sports. Otherwise, male always actively participating in the sports while becoming a big fan of one particular team which may be the national team or international team<sup>7</sup>. For this finding, it may provide information to the top management and the sport center to facilitate activities which are more on indoor sport games at their own facility to encourage and promote more female students to participate in the sport events. Interestingly, although female students appeared to be in a small percentage, the result shows that they are having a good well-being level (See Table 5). Overall, the majority of participants reported a good level of psychological well-being, which made the use of the sports center facility exceptionally meaningful for university students to be in the state of healthy and feeling well, psychologically and physically (emotion, cognitive and psychomotor).

According to age results, most adolescent groups prefer to do sports at university sport centers. It makes more sense since the majority of the students at the university are in the early adolescent phase. However, there were a small percentage of students in the range between 26-35 years old. Additionally, the researcher believes that there was a small group of post-graduate students who were interested to participate in teamsports at the university sport center. At this point, the university has to pay attention to promote teamsports among postgraduate students because they have a tendency to distress due to advanced levels of study and difficulty to complete the research/ thesis which may take many

years<sup>11</sup>. Teamsports participation may offer them a decent coping strategy in daily life. Also, the university and sport center may engage and collaborate with graduate schools to nurture a healthy lifestyle among the postgraduate students.

According to ethnicity, Malay students are among the large group who engage in the team sport's activity. The result is totally expected as Malay race is a majority number in this country. It may not be surprising as in Malay community, there are many of the traditional game as a recreational that introduced the element of team sports which will promote the unity, social integration, and teamwork spirits<sup>1</sup>. This may influence the choice of the Malay students to play in the teamsports more than other races; compared to Chinese community in Malaysia who preferred indoor sports games like badminton, ping pong and basketball as their popular sports, especially for teenagers<sup>6</sup>.

Students reported in this study spending 3 to 4 times per week at the university sport center. According to a health study, individuals need to exercise at least 2 or 3 times per week in 30 minutes to shape our cognitive flexibility<sup>12</sup>. As we know, the students may experience anxiety and stress out due to a unique pressure in academic attainment. Usually, they are expected to get a good grade each semester and get a better job after the graduation<sup>4</sup>. At this stage, this innate pressure can cause intensity and anxiety for university students. Promoting the students to come and spend their time in teamsports at university sport centers could reduce the pressure and sustain the health levels for the students. On top of that, there are also several top reasons for university students to come and play the teamsports; (a) passion, (b) talent, (c) social and (d) friends influence. Undoubtedly, university life is a most cheerful moment in life where the students are actively learning on how to communicate with others, developing circle of friends, growing interest and value, and establishing a quality leadership for future responsibility<sup>5</sup>.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, overall results provided us with vast information regarding the use of university sports centers and psychological well-being which affect the demographic factors of university's students. From the results, it is obvious that the teamsports activity does affect the psychological wellbeing of the students. In addition, the results will help the university policy in

many ways in terms of encouraging the students to spend more time in teamsports activities at the center which may bring many benefits for all university's students. The university sport center also plays a role to develop a healthy lifestyle for all students in terms of hosting more sport events, activities and recreational activities.

**Conflict of Interest Statement:** The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

**Source of Funding:** This article was supported by Development and Ecosystem Research Grant Scheme (DECoR) UUM, Sintok, Kedah, Malaysia.

**Ethical Clearance:** Research committee approval was obtained.

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