

# Mental Health and Sports Performance Satisfaction of Aminuddin Baki College Athletes At Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia

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## Abstract

The purpose of this study was to assess the level of mental health and sports performance satisfaction of athletes at Kolej Aminuddin Baki, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, as well as to investigate the relationship between mental health and sports performance satisfaction. The subjects of this study are a total of 120 athletes in years one through five. The Athlete's Subjective Performance Scale (ASPS) questionnaire is used to assess sports performance satisfaction, and the Mental Health Continuum Short Form (MHC-SF) questionnaire is used to assess mental health, which looks at three aspects: emotional, psychological, and social well-being. The study's findings indicate that the level of mental health is very high ( $M=4.92$ ,  $SD=0.24$ ) sports performance satisfaction is also very high ( $M=9.22$ ,  $SD=0.38$ ). There are no significant differences in mental health between gender and age ( $p>0.05$ ). Pearson's Correlation discovered a significant positive relationship between mental health and sports performance satisfaction ( $p<0.05$ ). *Depending on the individual and the unique mental health challenge, different mental health issues have different effects on an athlete's performance satisfaction. However, it is concluded that issues with mental health have a significant impact on sports performance satisfaction. A few methods have been proposed to improve mental health such as therapy and counselling, lifestyle changes, stress management, and social support.*

**Keywords:** Mental Health, Sports, Performance, Satisfaction, Sports, Athletes, College.

## Introduction

Issues with mental health are increasing in prevalence among college students. According to recent data (Lipson et al. 2018), the percentage of college students having a mental health diagnosis rose from 21.9% in 2007 to 35.5% in 2017. Student-athletes may be at a higher risk for mental health problems than their professional counterparts. Student-athletes have to deal with extra stressors, such as competition and an athletic lifestyle that athletes do not

survive (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005), on top of the developmental problems they already encounter, such as independence and uncertainty in college. Athletes need strong mental performance so that they can focus on the game for long stretches of time.

The ability to focus one's mind is a key factor in athletic performance (Kuan & Roy, 2007) and motional influences can be disruptive to one's performance and reliability (Hagtvet & Hanin, 2007). Athletes who are able to keep their emotions under check will always give their best performance. *Mental strength is a set of dispositions and worldviews that determine how an individual reacts to stress and adversity in pursuit of their objectives (Nicholls et al. 2009). Confidence, dedication, taking on difficult tasks, and handling pressure are all examples of mental toughness (Clough et al., 2002).*

*Four factors—technical, tactical, physical, and psychological—contribute to an athlete's level of performance at their peak (Hamirson, 2006). Most coaches, experts, and athletes agree that athletes find psychological training at the pinnacle of their training pyramid to be the most challenging. Stress has a major effect on mental health, thus it's important to analyse athletes' mental health in light of interpersonal aspects that help them cope with stress. The presence of a social network reduces the negative effects of stress (Lu et al. 2016; Wenzel et al., 2010). Health-related metrics of social support perception, reception, network, and quality are available (Gurung et al., 2001).*

*Depression and anxiety are less likely to occur in college students who have strong social support networks (Merianos et al., 2013). In addition, collegiate athletes who report higher levels of social support experience fewer signs of depression (Armstrong & Oomen-Early, 2009). Female collegiate athletes are more likely to suffer from depression if they do not receive social support from teammates (Hagiwara et al., 2017). Many psychological factors in today's sports culture contribute to an athlete's success or failure. One of the psychological aspects that affect sports performance is one's mental wellness. Golby and Sheard (2004) argue that mental toughness is a key factor in reaching one's athletic potential. This is because many studies on psychological resilience have been undertaken by scientists in various parts of the world. Success, it turns out, depends on how well each individual performs. It exemplifies attempts to evaluate the effectiveness of existing strategic plans and to update them, as well as to create novel approaches to enhancing performance.*

*Sports performance is defined as "a process established by the organisation to ensure that all athletes are aware of the level of performance expected of them in that role, and any individual objectives that must be met within the context of the organization's overall goals." (Cruickshank et al., 2013) The best performances come from players who are both physically and emotionally prepared. However, mental health is just one of many factors that can weigh on and hinder an athlete's performance. Student-athletes may be impacted by both physical and mental aspects, with the former including things like injury. There are a number of psychological elements that might contribute to tension and a decrease in sports performance. In order to do well during the game, players need to focus and concentrate intently on what they're doing.*

*However, players can be distracted by their own thoughts and emotions, which can have a severe impact on their ability to focus and, by extension, their performance. The quality of sleep is a physiological element that might affect immunity, metabolism, and cognitive function (Dolezal, 2017). In addition, players' performance during games was negatively impacted by their lack of sleep since it negatively impacted their mood and mental stability (Afriani et al., 2015). Several factors, such as an athlete's personality and the amount of social support they receive, have been shown to affect an athlete's mental health and performance.*

*The purpose of this research is to examine the relationship between Kolej Aminuddin Baki Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (KABUKM) athletes' mental health and their sports performance satisfaction. The effects of mental health on athletic performance satisfaction under pressure have been the focus of this study.*

## Methodology

This study is quantitative research with a descriptive study carried out to collect respondent demographic data and an inferential study to compare respondent demographic characteristics. The study population was 170 athletes at KABUKM and the sample studied was 120 people based on Krejcie and Morgan (1970). The Athlete's Subjective Performance Scale (ASPS; Nahum et al., 2016) is used to assess athletic performance, whereas the Mental Health Continuum Short Form (MHC-SF; Keyes et al., 2008) is used to assess mental health.

There are 14 MHC-SF questions, with three reflecting hedonic well-being, six reflecting psychological well-being, and five reflecting social well-being (when combined, eudemonic well-being). The questionnaires employed a 6-point Likert scale, with 0 being "never" and 5 being "every day." The items are added up to produce a total score ranging from 0 to 70. Subscale scores for emotional (hedonic) well-being vary from 0 to 15, 0 to 25 for social well-being and 0 to 30 for psychological well-being. In international investigations, the MHC-SF has demonstrated excellent internal consistency ( $>.80$ ) and discriminant validity in teenagers and adults (Keyes et al., 2008; Lamers et al., 2011; Westerhof & Keyes, 2009).

Six different aspects of an athlete's perception of his own performance on the team are measured by the ASPS. Subjective efficacy was calculated by tallying responses on a 10-point Likert scale, where 1 indicates extreme dissatisfaction and 10 indicates complete satisfaction. The scale distinguished between general performance, team contribution, and individual talent as the three most important aspects of sports performance.

Parametric tests were used to investigate the data, and SPSS Version 27 was used to perform statistical analyses on the collected information. In practice, the internal consistency test had an alpha range of 0.75 to 0.85. If an item's alpha value is greater than 0.60, it can be considered to have a high degree of reliability (Sekaran, 2003). One-way ANOVA and the t-test were used to examine the results. Within an hour of the start of the first game, data was collected from respondents. Both the skewness and kurtosis of the data fall within a typical range of 0.344 and -0.460, respectively.

## Result and Discussion

### Demographics

A total of 120 athletes from KABUKM who participated in the Inter-College Sports Championship were surveyed. There were 120 athletes who filled out the survey, and their demographic information is broken down by gender in Table 1. Of the total responses, 59 were females (49.5%) and 61 were males (50.8%). Table 1 also displays the demographic profile of the respondents based on age, with 11 respondents being under 20 years old. Of the total responders, 64 respondents are between the ages of 21 and 23. The next breakdown shows that 45 respondents were between the ages of 24 and 27. 11 respondents were in the first year, 18 respondents were in year 2, and 26 respondents were in year 3. The largest number of respondents were 63 people in their fourth year of studies but only 2 respondents from year 5.

Table 1

*Frequencies and percentage of study respondents*

		N	%
Gender	Male	61	50.8
	Female	59	49.2
Age	Below 20 years	11	9.2
	21-23	64	53.3
	24-27	45	37.5
Years of study	1	11	9.2%
	2	18	15.0%
	3	26	21.7%
	4	63	52.5
	5	2	1.7

**Mental Health And Sports Performance Satisfaction Level Of KABUKM Athletes.**

Table 2 shows that the athletes of KABUKM have a very high level of mental health ( $M=4.91$ ,  $SD=0.24$ ). At the same time, the athletes of KABUKM sports performance satisfaction level are very high ( $M=9.22$ ,  $SD=0.38$ ).

Table 2

*Descriptive statistics of study variables.*

Variable	N	M	SD	Level
Mental Health	120	4.91	0.24	Very High
Performance Satisfaction	120	9.22	0.38	Very High

**Gender Differences in Mental Health And Sports Performance Satisfaction**

Table 3 demonstrates that there is no statistically significant difference between male and female KABUKM athletes' mental health ( $p>0.05$ ,  $p=0.680$ ), based on the results of a one-way t-test. No statistically significant difference also in athletic performance satisfaction between male and female KABUKM athletes was found using a one-way t-test ( $p>0.05$ ,  $p=0.680$ ).

Table 3

*Comparison of gender among respondents*

Variable		t-value	SD	p
Mental Health	Male	0.143	118	0.68
	Female			
Performance	Male	-0.548	118	0.58
	Female			

**Age Differences in Mental Health and Sports Performance Satisfaction**

There is no statistically significant variation in mental health by age, as seen in Table 4. This is demonstrated by a one-way ANOVA test yielding a significant value [ $F(2) = 1.84$ ,  $p = .16$ ], which is larger than the predetermined significance level ( $p>0.05$ ). As can be shown in Table 4, there is also no statistically significant difference in athletic performance satisfaction between different ages. One-way ANOVA confirms this finding, with a significance level [ $F(2) 0.972$ ,  $p = .38$ ] above the assumed level of significance ( $p>0.05$ ).

Table 4

*Comparison of age among respondents*

Variable		df	F	Significant
Mental Health	Age	2	1.84	0.16
Performance Satisfaction	Age	2	0.972	0.38

**The Relationship Between Mental Health On Sports Performance Of Aminuddin Baki College Athletes**

Table 5 shows that there is a statistically significant relationship between an individual's level of emotional, social, and psychological well-being and their sports performance satisfaction (Mental Health=0.757, emotional well-being=0.723, social well-being=0.733, and psychological well-being=0.817). Athletes at Aminuddin Baki College benefit from a good association between mental health (emotional, social, and psychological well-being) and athletic performance satisfaction.

Table 5

*Correlation of variables among respondents*

		Sports Performance Satisfaction
Emotional Well-being	Pearson correlation	.723** .001
Social Well-Being	Significant (2-way)	.733** .000
Psychological Well-Being		.817** .001
Mental Health		.757** .001
	N	120

\*\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-way).

The results showed that the participants had very high levels of mental health and athletic performance satisfaction. One of the best indicators of future success for athletes is the absence of mental health issues that would otherwise get in the way of them giving their all-in competition. Emotions account for individual differences in both performance and consistency (Hagtvét & Hanin, 2007). Competitive success is mostly determined by an athlete's mental fortitude, hence it's important for them to retain emotional stability (Kuan & Roy, 2007). Differential effects of age and gender on mental health were found ( $p > 0.05$ ). An interesting paradox emerges from studies of gender and mental health in old age: women have poorer mental health than men do across the lifespan, as measured by symptoms of anxiety and depression, and this continues into old age (Kiely et al., 2019). However, there are several scenarios in which the hazards of excess mortality and suicide are greatly amplified for older men. Importantly, studies have shown that there are hardly any differences between the sexes when it comes to depression in old age.

Adult depression and anxiety are more common in women, while substance abuse and antisocial behaviour are more common in men. Depression and anxiety disorders are more common in women than men because of both biological and hereditary causes. Depression, eating disorders, and suicide ideation and behaviour are far more common among adolescent

girls than among boys. Teenage boys are more prone to experience anger problems, partake in risky behaviours, and take their own lives than their female counterparts. Girls in their teens are more prone to experience internalised symptoms than guys their age, who are more likely to engage in externally focused behaviours. Mood swings have been linked to hormonal shifts during the menstrual cycle, according to some research. Gender differences, according to social constructionist theories, are not inherent to people but are reproduced by their relationships with others. Instead of innate differences in role identities or personality traits, cultural concepts of femininity and masculinity shape the way men and women think and behave.

Mental wellness has been found to have a significant favourable effect on athletic performance in correlation studies. Athletes often struggle with their mental health because of the sport's harsh atmosphere, demanding lifestyle needs, intense competition, pressure to be flawless, and the weight of societal stigmas. Being emotionally healthy means you can handle the ups and downs of life with grace. Considerations for maintaining emotional wellness include learning effective stress management techniques, increasing one's level of EQ, engaging in regular mindfulness practice, keeping a mood journal, accepting and embracing one's full range of feelings, engaging in pleasurable activities, and seeking out social support. Respect, kindness, and equality for all individuals, regardless of their religion, caste, gender, ethnicity, age, or profession, are essential components of social harmony.

A clear constructive protocol for consistently addressing behaviour concerns is provided by Social Harmony, giving coaches simple, effective tools for dealing with conflict on a daily basis. The programme also encourages faculty members to collaborate and share ideas with one another. Putting students first is vital to maintaining social harmony in today's interconnected world and information society. These values include but are not limited to love, peace, justice, freedom, equality, brotherhood, cooperation, nonviolence, tolerance, humanism, and many others. Social harmony in a team is achieved when each member makes connections with others, works through conflicts, contributes to the group, and strives to keep the peace within themselves.

A person's "psychological well-being" encompasses their emotional health and general functionality. People with higher levels of psychological well-being have been found to enjoy better physical health and a longer lifespan. Their standard of living is also likely to be greater. There are fewer societal issues when people are emotionally and mentally well. Prioritising one's mental health is associated with fewer health problems overall, greater satisfaction, and deeper connections with others. Join forces with others.

Anxiety and depression are invisible on imaging tests like an X-ray or MRI, but they can have the same limiting effects. However, these problems are frequently disregarded in the name of toughness. Athletes often present an inflated image to the public. They are heroes in the eyes of the public because of their reputation as competitors who will not back down from any challenge. An equal number of college athletes and non-athletes suffer from depression (Wolanin & Marks, 2016). The peculiar culture of athletics can operate as a pressure cooker, adding stress to an already stressful environment. To that, you may add the meticulous outlook of many of your rivals.

Although it can be a powerful motivator, it can also cause athletes to feel dissatisfied with their results no matter how good they are. In such a melting pot, maintaining equilibrium might be challenging. When they need help, many athletes will not proactively seek out mental health services. As an alternative, a third party, such as a coach or parent, may detect that "something seems off" and prompt them to open up. Athletes who exhibit symptoms



including trouble sleeping, irritation, low energy, or a change in diet should be evaluated for their mental health. So, how much of an impact can issues with a player's mental health have on their game? Even at its most fundamental level, if one's mind is already occupied with other things, it can only serve as a distraction. As the stakes go higher and the competitions get more meaningful, the pressure to perform optimally increases, and so do the potential distractions.

### Conclusion

Aminuddin Baki College Athletes should make it a priority to maintain a healthy mental state. Sometimes, a shift in an athlete's mental attitude is all it takes for them to have a dip in performance or a lower score. However, there are situations where an unfocused mind is extremely dangerous. The positive effects of exercise on one's state of mind are common knowledge. However, athletes are not immune to emotional struggles like depression and anxiety. The importance of mental fitness to optimal performance is common knowledge. Any shift in one's thought processes, emotional state, or behavioural patterns that have a detrimental effect on these areas is considered a mental disorder.

Athletes endure a particular set of stressors that have been related to mental illness, despite the fact that exercise and athletics have many positive benefits on mental health, such as increasing self-esteem, social support, and connectedness. Some examples include increased academic pressure, longer playing seasons, coach pressure to win, injuries, having one's identity tied to one's athletic performance, and being overweight or obese. The impact of mental health disorders on an athlete's performance varies from person to person and from mental health difficulty to mental health challenge. However, it's generally accepted that psychological difficulties significantly hinder athletic performance. Athlete performance can be hindered by mental and emotional issues such as stress, anxiety, depression, eating disorders, trauma, and substance abuse.

Numerous strategies have been devised and implemented to boost mental health. Cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT), dialectical behaviour therapy (DBT), and psychodynamic therapy are all types of treatment that can help people understand their thoughts, emotions, and behaviours. Therapy offers a safe and supportive environment in which to analyse and manage mental health issues. In some cases, a trained healthcare physician may prescribe medication to treat mental health conditions. Antidepressants, anti-anxiety medicines, and mood stabilisers can help lessen symptoms and improve overall well-being. It is vital to consult with a healthcare professional for an accurate diagnosis and prescription treatment.

Adopting a healthy lifestyle can aid in the improvement of mental health. Regular exercise, adequate sleep, a well-balanced diet, and abstaining from substances (such as alcohol and narcotics) can all help to improve mood and overall mental health. Learning strong stress management skills can have a significant impact on your mental health. Mindfulness meditation, deep breathing exercises, yoga, and engaging in hobbies or activities that bring you joy can all help you reduce stress. It is vital for mental health to create and maintain strong social connections. Spending time with friends and family, as well as participating in support groups, can provide a sense of belonging and support through difficult times. Self-care activities are critical for mental wellness. Setting aside time for leisure, pursuing hobbies, practising self-compassion, and participating in activities that promote personal growth and fulfilment are all instances of this.

Educating the public about mental health issues and working to reduce the associated stigma can improve people's ability to receive treatment. A more accepting and welcoming

community for those with mental health issues can be fostered through public awareness campaigns, community events, and educational initiatives. As the digital world has expanded, so too have digital mental health resources. Mobile apps, online therapy platforms, and virtual support networks provide individuals seeking mental health aid with access to information and support. It's important to talk to mental health professionals who can tailor their advice and recommendations to your unique situation and experiences.

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