

Factors Affecting Stress Among First-Year Students Fakulti Hospitaliti, Pelancongan & Kesejahteraan (FHPK) At Universiti Malaysia Kelantan.

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ABSTRACT

Stress is a mental strain for actual people dealing with the environmental and societal factors that influence so many disorders. Young age is an important stage since young individuals are undergoing many changes at this age. Consequently, it's important to understand the causes of stress, which mainly include the following: academic, family issues, and peer pressure. Sometimes such stress can result in behavior, physical, and psychological problems. In addition, to ensure the contributing stress of each student is guaranteed the person must carry out a research method which is the factors that affect stress among first-year students of Fakulti Hospitaliti, Pelancongan dan Kesejahteraan (FHPK) at Universiti Malaysia Kelantan. This research is also done qualitatively. This method is crucial in determining what kind of observation should be used to obtain information on factors that affect stress among first-year students of Fakulti Hospitaliti, Pelancongan dan Kesejahteraan. The purpose of the research methodology is to data collection, processing, and analysis in an organized and effective manner to finish a study.

Keywords: Academic, Family Issues, Peer Pressure, Stress

INTRODUCTION

Elizabeth (2020) defines stress as any type of shift that results in tension in the body, mind, or emotions. Stress also refers to anything that stimulates the body to react with inquiry or reaction. Nevertheless, students who pursue higher education in Malaysia face a lot of responsibility and pressure since they must undergo the process of adapting to a new social and educational environment (Malarvili & Dhanapal, 2018). Therefore, if the issue persists, it can eventually result in stress-related illnesses like depression, anxiety, insomnia, loneliness, interpersonal and intrapersonal disputes, and other mental health issues.

Next, students who experience too much stress face physical problems such as sweating for no reason, headaches, fatigue, stomach aches, and difficulty or lack of sleep (Felman, 2020). Hence, these students also mentioned that they felt they needed to put their assessment on wait to participate in social, physical, and restorative activities that could promote their well-being and healthy self-growth. The students' inability to maintain a balance had a negative impact on their concentration towards their academic pursuits. Therefore, the primary goal of this study is to investigate the factors that affect stress levels in first-year students enrolled in the Faculty of Hospitality, Tourism, and Wellness (FHPK) at Universiti Malaysia Kelantan. There were three objectives of this research:

1. To investigate the relationship between academic factors with the stress faced among first-year students of Fakulti Hospitaliti, Pelancongan and Kesejahteraan (FHPK) at Universiti Malaysia Kelantan.
2. To investigate the relationship between family issue factors with the stress faced among first-year students of Fakulti Hospitaliti, Pelancongan and Kesejahteraan (FHPK) at Universiti Malaysia Kelantan.
3. To investigate the relationship between peer pressure factors with the stress faced among first-year students of Fakulti Hospitaliti, Pelancongan and Kesejahteraan (FHPK) at Universiti Malaysia Kelantan.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Malaysian Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE)

The Malaysian Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE) can identify the stress factors faced by students who have just entered University. Therefore, the MOHE must seriously consider the stressors that Malaysian Higher Education Institutions' students face, and it must develop thoughtful initiatives, like awareness campaigns. This is crucial to reduce the signs of stress in first-year university students.

Faculty at Universiti Malaysia Kelantan

This study also helps the faculty at each campus of Universiti Malaysia Kelantan to find out that academic factors, family problems, and peer pressure affect the stress faced by first-year students who live in residential colleges.

Counseling Department

This study can help the counseling department to identify students who experience stress during their stay at the residential college at Universiti Malaysia Kelantan. Hence, the counseling department should conduct awareness campaigns periodically by providing counseling services for those who experience stress during their studies at Universiti Malaysia Kelantan.

Family Institutions

Family is the closest person to every university student (Stacy, 2020). As such, family institutions play an important role in providing moral support for children so that they can overcome stress problems throughout their studies at the university level.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Stress

First-year university students frequently experience stress. According to Garrett et al. (2017), female undergraduate students are more stressed than their male peers, and several academic majors such as engineering and medicine are also linked to higher stress levels. Stress can have a variety of severe effects on undergraduate students, including inadequate academic performance, health issues, increased depression,

increased alcohol, drug, and use of stimulants, a low sense of value, and suicide thoughts.

Besides that, students who experience too much stress face physical problems such as sweating for no reason, headaches, fatigue, stomach aches, and difficulty or lack of sleep (Felman, 2020). Hence, these students also mentioned that they felt they needed to put their assessment on wait to participate in social, physical, and restorative activities that could promote their well-being and healthy self-growth. This lack of balance affected their ability to focus on their studies. Furthermore, undergraduate students experience higher rates of depression, anxiety, and stress, as reported by Choon et al. in 2015. This can be linked to various factors such as the immense volume of material they need to grasp within limited time frames, unexpected alterations in their study routines, concerns about their performance and the possibility of failure in exams, and the lack of allocated time for clinical postings..

Academic

In a study conducted by Johari and Ahmad (2019), it was found that stress among college students primarily arises from academic factors, which serve as the main contributors. There are also a number of other elements, including social and physical aspects. Similarly, Irshad et al. (2015) stated that students often experience pressure related to their workload, relationships with friends, family, and professors. This pressure stems from the need to consistently produce good results and complete assignments punctually without any shortcomings. In addition, a study in South Africa found that to overcome academic pressure is to use prohibited substances that students tend to use (Olufunke, 2017). Nevertheless, the use of alcohol also often happens to some students because it is a way for students to reduce stress when studying (Metzger et al., 2017). Students frequently employ this technique because they believe it will help them cope with the pressure of studying, especially those with high levels of stress who may experience low energy, loss of appetite, headaches, insomnia, or digestive issues because of the academic pressure they are under (Malarvili & Dhanapal, 2018).

According to Mofatteh (2021) studied the effects of excessive academic pressure on mental health, including depression, anxiety, and suicide ideation. Apart from that, the educational system may also play a role in increasing stress levels. Overcrowding in lecture halls, insufficient resources and facilities, long hours, and rote learning expectations are some of the sources of stress in the educational system (Deb et al., 2015). This is because these causes are one of the things that students often experience, especially first-year students who have not yet been able to adapt to the system, thus having a big impact on the students. Academic pressure consequently becomes one of the factors that university students, particularly first-year students who must adjust to new circumstances, encounter when they are stressed.

Family Issues

The term "stress" is frequently used to describe situations that make students feel anxious and frustrated because they are beyond the capacity for effective coping. According to Spinelli et al. (2020), there is strong evidence that family issues have an impact on stress levels. Researchers discovered that most stressed-out students came from families that have divorced. Parental separation can occur for a number of reasons, including poor communication and financial difficulties. When these issues arise, the marriage becomes stressed and separated, which has a significant effect on their children. Apart from that, according to Pedersen (2022), since it is generally recognized that both levels of stress may negatively impact children's well-being, researchers

looked at both individual parents' stress and dyadic perceptions of stress. However, (Haimi & Lerner 2016) found that 19 family conflict occurrences may exacerbate parents' psychological issues, including stress on an individual and dyadic level, with a negative impact on children's emotional and behavioral health as a result.

In addition, researchers look at the difficulties that students confront when they have family members who abuse alcohol and or drugs. Ólafsdóttir et al., (2018) proved that there is a direct link between family relationship addiction and disturbance, as well as important psycho-social and physical repercussions on family members like depression, anxiety, and stress. The emotional, physical, and social needs of the children may be neglected as a result of the depression of a parent who cohabits with a partner who uses drugs or alcohol, which heightens family conflict and anxiety. Besides that, the sadness of the parent who shares a home with a partner who has a substance use disorder (SUD) may result in the emotional, physical, and social neglect of the family's children, which increases anxiety and tension in the household. However, according to Lassonde (2022), children who observe parental conflict, illness, and financial difficulty as the source of the subpar living conditions the family must endure generally have a traumatic family experience with adverse psycho social impacts.

Peer Pressure

According to Khanagha et al. (2021), Peer pressure is the process by which a social group exerts influence over an individual. Peer pressure is a social dynamic that people have encountered, and it is a result of the daily interactions that students have with other people. Students experience peer pressure to fit in with the group of peers they hang out with (Dhull & Beniwal, 2017). However, there are situations when students' peers are the cause of their stress. They might exert pressure on them to do things they don't want to, such as shoplifting, smoking cigarettes or alcohol, impersonating someone else while driving, and more. Hence, students may be teased by a peer to imitate their actions. Furthermore, sometimes peers would not even speak to the students. Instead, they may pressure them by labeling them as outcasts or ignoring them. This behavior also caused stress among the students. Glass (2020) stated that when someone ignores someone, they experience a variety of conflicting feelings. They might experience a variety of emotions at once, including sadness, loneliness, guilt, and anger. Naturally, such an emotional crisis might hurt their mental health. It also can cause emotional trauma to first-year students and leads to stress.

Research Hypothesis

The literature review highlighted independent variables like academic, family issues, and peer pressure affecting stress among first-year students of Fakulti Hospitaliti, Pelancongan & Kesejahteraan (FHPK) at Universiti Malaysia Kelantan. Based on the literature discussed, the hypotheses of this study were summarized in the following manner:

H₁ There is a significant relationship between academic factors with the stress faced among first-year students of Fakulti Hospitaliti, Pelancongan & Kesejahteraan (FHPK) at Universiti Malaysia Kelantan.

H₂ There is a significant relationship between family issue factors with the stress faced among first-year students of Fakulti Hospitaliti, Pelancongan & Kesejahteraan (FHPK) at Universiti Malaysia Kelantan.

H₃ There is a significant relationship between peer pressure factors with the stress faced among first-year students of Fakulti Hospitaliti, Pelancongan & Kesejahteraan (FHPK) at Universiti Malaysia Kelantan.

Research Framework

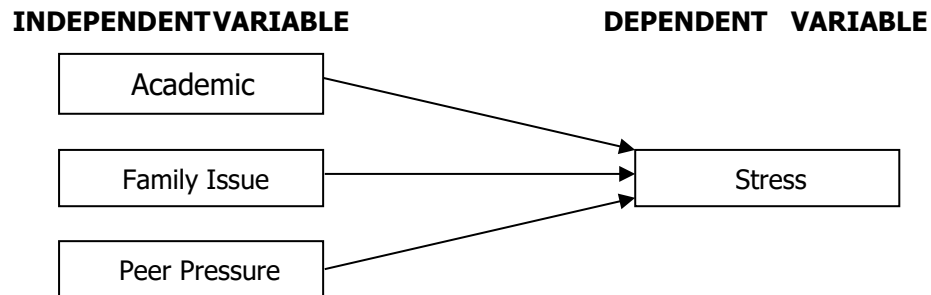


Figure 1 Research Framework

Figure 1 displays the study's research framework, emphasizing the independent variable (IV) and dependent variable (DV). The study focuses on first-year students at Universiti Malaysia Kelantan's Fakulti Hospitaliti, Pelancongan & Kesejahteraan (FHPK), and investigates the elements that influence stress. Academic factors, familial issues, and peer pressure are the three key independent variables. The stress experienced by FHPK first-year students is the dependent variable. The graph depicts the association between these variables and the pupils' stress levels. It emphasizes the relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable, providing insights into the interplay between the factors that influence stress levels in first-year students from the FHPK group at Universiti Malaysia Kelantan.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study used a quantitative research approach to collect significant data. Since quantitative surveys use closed-ended questions, the results can easily be turned into numbers, statistics, graphs, and charts (Thakur 2021).

Data Collection

In this study, the primary approach for gathering data is through the use of a questionnaire. The researcher opted to utilize Google Forms as the platform for distributing the questionnaire due to its convenience and efficiency in reaching a larger number of participants in a shorter period. Specifically, the questionnaire was targeted at first-year students of FHPK at Universiti Malaysia Kelantan. The aim of the questionnaire was to gain insights into the stress experiences encountered by these students.

Sampling

The researchers used non-probability sampling techniques, which means that instead of selecting samples randomly, the researcher chose samples based on their own judgment and assessment. Additionally, convenience sampling was also a component of the non-probability sampling strategy that the researchers employed for this study.

Therefore, convenience sampling is the practice of selecting 260 respondents from the population among first-year students of FHPK Universiti Malaysia Kelantan only. This is because the samples are convenient for the researchers.

Data Analysis

This study utilizes descriptive statistics to analyze the data and understand its fundamental characteristics. Gupta et al. (2019) state that descriptive statistics offer simple explanations of the sample and measurements. However, in this study, the researchers also employ Pearson's Correlation, which examines the relationship between independent and dependent variables. Additionally, Cronbach's alpha is used to assess the accuracy of the questionnaire findings and the quality of the output. Both dependent and independent variables are investigated using Cronbach's alpha coefficient. The data analysis was conducted using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 26.0.

FINDINGS

Demographic Analysis

Table 1 Demographic Analysis

Demographic Profile	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	98	37.7
Female	162	62.3
Age		
18 – 21 years old	205	78.8
22 – 24 years old	49	18.8
25 years old and above	6	2.3
Marital Status		
Single	253	97.3
Married	7	2.7
Ethnicity		
Malay	154	59.2
Chinese	38	14.6
Indian	55	21.2
Other	13	5.0
Course		
SAH	69	26.5
SAP	95	36.5
SAS	96	36.9
Stress Level		
Never	32	12.3
Seldom	120	46.2
Frequent	88	33.8
Very Often	20	7.7

Table 1 indicates the frequency of demographic analysis, with 162 female respondents (62.3%) outnumbering male respondents (98 with 37.7%). In terms of age, 18 - 21 year old accounted for 205 respondents, accounting for 78.8% of the total. 49 respondents (18.8%) represented respondents who were between the ages of 22 to 24. Furthermore, respondents aged 25 and up reported 6 people (2.3%). According on the statistics on respondents' marital status, the majority of single respondents (97.3%) and 7 married respondents (2.7%) answered this questionnaire. Next, the majority of Malays responded to this survey, with a total of 154 people (59.2%), followed by

Indians 55 people (21.2%). Meanwhile, the Chinese showed 38 respondents answering this survey with 14.6% of and other races as many as 13 respondents (5.0%). For respondent data from the costs found in the FHPK shows a total of 69 respondents from the Ijazah Sarjana Muda (Hospitaliti) Dengan Kepujian (SAH) course shows 69 respondents (26.5%), the Ijazah Sarjana Muda Pelancongan) Dengan Kepujian (SAP) course shows 95 respondents (36.5%) and lastly from the Ijazah Sarjana Muda (Kesejahteraan) Dengan Kepujian (SAS) course showed a total of 96 respondents with 376.9%. The number of first-year students who reported experiencing stress ranged from 32 respondents (12.3%) to 120 respondents (46.2%), from 88 respondents (33.8%) to 20 respondents (7.7%), and from never to 120 to often to often.

Descriptive Analysis

Table 2 Descriptive Analysis.

Variables	Items	Mean Score (M)	Standard Deviation (SD)
Stress	I find it hard to keep calm.	3.17	1.279
	I tend to overreact to a situation.	2.94	1.197
	I think I am too nervous.	3.02	1.195
	I get restless easily.	3.12	1.235
	I find it hard to relax.	2.97	1.225
	I cannot accept anything that stops me from continuing what I'm doing.	2.99	1.149
	I am easily offended.	3.14	1.147
	I feel loaded down with responsibility.	3.18	1.171
	I'm easily feel discouraged.	3.16	1.133
	I have not enough time for myself.	3.14	1.197
Academic	I have a financial problem because of the expenses of the university	3.36	1.255
	I find it difficult to juggle time between study and social activity.	3.04	1.100
	I feel nervous about delivering the class presentation.	3.47	1.144
	I feel stressed as the submission deadline neared.	3.33	1.121
	I feel stressed to sit for the examination.	3.27	1.107
	I find it difficult to juggle time between study and society involvement.	3.15	1.088
	I lost interest in courses.	2.95	1.145
	I feel burdened by academic workloads.	3.24	1.144
	I feel stressed dealing with a difficult subject.	3.41	1.110
	I feel difficult in managing my academic problem.	3.20	1.086
Family Issue	My families are not supportive.	1.84	1.106
	I had trouble with my siblings.	1.97	1.074
	My parents frequently argue at home.	1.84	1.048
	My parents regularly make comparisons to other people.	2.08	1.098
	I have been arguing more with my parents.	1.94	1.078
	My family and I have financial difficulties.	2.30	1.193
	My parents expecting too much of me.	2.52	1.284
	I feel so bad if I don't measure up to my parent's expectations.	2.94	1.439
	I am treated like a helpless person by my family.	1.92	1.055
I never had the freedom to choose in my life because my parents always made decisions for me.	1.96	1.039	
Peer Pressure	I have friends that influence how I think.	3.45	1.292
	I make decisions based on peer pressure.	3.09	1.350
	I follow what my peers are telling me to do.	2.98	1.300
	I experience stress because my peers avoid me.	3.17	1.321
	I miss home because of my peer's pressure.	3.12	1.336

My friends pressure me to act in a harmful way.	2.92	1.428
I am stressed out because one of my friends convinced me to skip class.	2.81	1.375
I act differently when I am with my friends than when I'm at home.	3.22	1.318
I am stressed out because my friend talks behind me and betrays me.	3.22	1.343
I am anxious because I let a friend to steal my work, and I'm concerned that my lecturer will find out.	3.22	1.312

Table 2 presents a descriptive analysis of the stress variable. It reveals that the item "I have friends that influence how I think" received the highest mean score (M=3.18, SD=1.171), indicating a significant impact on stress levels. Conversely, the item "I tend to overreact to a situation" received the lowest mean score (M=2.94, SD=1.197), suggesting a relatively lower influence on stress. Regarding the independent variable of academic factors, the item "I feel stressed dealing with a difficult subject" obtained the highest mean score (M=3.41, SD=1.110), indicating a substantial impact on stress related to academics. On the other hand, the item "I lost interest in courses" received the lowest mean score (M=2.95, SD=1.145), suggesting a relatively lesser impact on academic stress. For family issues, the item "I feel so bad if I don't measure up to my parent's expectations" received the highest mean score (M=2.94, SD=1.439), indicating a significant impact on stress related to family expectations. However, the items "My families are not supportive" (M=1.84, SD=1.106) and "My parents frequently argue at home" (M=1.84, SD=1.048) received the lowest mean scores, indicating a relatively lower impact on stress within the family context. Lastly, in terms of peer pressure, the item "I have friends that influence how I think" obtained the highest mean score (M=3.45, SD=1.292), suggesting a strong influence on stress levels. On the other hand, the statement "I feel stressed because a friend persuaded me to miss class" had the lowest average rating (M=2.81, SD=1.375), suggesting that it had a relatively minor effect on stress resulting from peer influence.

Reliability Analysis

Table 3 Reliability Analysis

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	No. of Items
Academic	.920	10
Family issues	.903	10
Peer pressure	.954	10
Stress	.922	10

Table 3 showed the results of the reliability analysis based on the independent variable and dependent variable which include academic (0.920), family issues (0.903), peer pressure (0.954), and stress (0.922). According to Cronbach's Alpha coefficient scale, all these variables show excellent coefficient and the questionnaire were reliable to use.

Pearson Correlation Analysis

Table 4 Pearson Correlation Analysis

Hypothesis	P-Value	Result (Supported/ Not Supported)
H ₁ There is a significant relationship between academic factors with the stress faced among first-year students of Fakulti Hospitaliti, Pelancongan & Kesejahteraan (FHPK) at Universiti Malaysia Kelantan.	0.000	H ₁ is supported

H₂ There is a significant relationship between family issue factors with the stress faced among first-year students of Fakulti Hospitaliti, Pelancongan & Kesejahteraan (FHPK) at Universiti Malaysia Kelantan.	0.013	H2 is supported
H₃ There is a significant relationship between peer pressure factors with the stress faced among first-year students of Fakulti Hospitaliti, Pelancongan & Kesejahteraan (FHPK) at Universiti Malaysia Kelantan.	0.000	H3 is supported

Table 4 presents the results of a Pearson correlation analysis conducted to test specific hypotheses. The findings demonstrate the statistical significance of the hypotheses under investigation. Hypothesis 1 (H1) yielded a significant value of less than 0.05. When the p-value falls below this threshold, researchers accept the alternative hypothesis in favor of the null hypothesis. In this case, the p-value being less than 0.05 suggests a significant association, and therefore, the alternative hypothesis is supported. Similarly, Hypothesis 2 (H2) produced a significant value of 0.013, which is also below the 0.05 threshold. Consequently, researchers reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis, indicating a meaningful relationship between the variables. Furthermore, Hypothesis 3 (H3) exhibited a significant value of less than 0.05, indicating a highly significant association. With the p-value being less than 0.05, researchers accept the alternative hypothesis and reject the null hypothesis, suggesting a strong relationship between the variables. Ultimately, since all the hypotheses yielded p-values below 0.05, they are considered supported. The significance level of 0.05 is commonly used as a threshold in statistical analyses to determine the strength of evidence against the null hypothesis.

DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The discussion is to investigate the link between academic, family issues, and peer pressure elements and stress among first-year students at Fakulti Hospitaliti, Pelancongan, and Kesejahteraan (FHPK) at Universiti Malaysia Kelantan. The study's key findings reveal that academic, family issues and peer pressure had a significant association with stress in this study. Subsequently, previous research showed a significant relationship between academic, family, and peer pressure with stress.

The recommendation is to distribute the questionnaire physically or face to face to collect data. This is because it is simpler to persuade responders to spend the time to complete the questionnaire. Furthermore, respondents cannot give inaccurate information throughout the inquiry, such as gender, age, or race. In online and mobile surveys, the provision of incentives can lead to people falsifying their responses. This is because individuals might provide incorrect demographic information in order to complete the questionnaire quickly and receive the incentive.

Next the questions asked must use a language or reduce questions that are easier to understand. This is because the researcher has examined that there is a small number of respondents who do not understand the questions presented and choose not to answer. The questions that need to be submitted for future studies must be brief and related to a specific study. Third, reduce the number of respondents for the target population. This is because the researcher took a long time to find respondents due to the relatively large number. The target population should be changed from the entire first-year students to the student population for each course, for example, a study of first-year students from a wellness course. This helps researchers obtain and analyze data easily.

CONCLUSION

First-year students in the Fakulti Hospitaliti, Pelancongan & Kesejahteraan (FHPK) at Universiti Malaysia Kelantan often face challenges related to stress, which can have adverse effects on their well-being. However, these individuals can potentially overcome this issue by employing effective coping techniques. Stress is a common problem experienced by university students on a daily basis, stemming from various factors such as academic pressure, peer pressure, and family issues. The stressors associated with academic performance, maintaining peer relationships, and dealing with family problems can all contribute to the overall stress levels. It is crucial to address stress promptly, as untreated stress may escalate into more severe mental conditions like depression or anxiety disorders.

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