Research Article

The Relationship between Emotional Stability and Student Engagement among Universiti Malaysia Kelantan Students

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ABSTRACT

Emotional stability is one of the important indicators of mental health. Positive attitudes and a deep awareness of the benefits of consistent physical activity on one's health may also result from quality engagement. However, on the other hand, student engagement has a negative impact and one of which is emotional instability. The objective of this study is to identify the relationships between optimism, calm, tolerance, autonomy, empathy, and student engagement. This study was conducted using a quantitative research approach. A total of 371 respondents have participated in this study which involved active undergraduate students at Universiti Malaysia Kelantan namely City Campus, Bachok Campus, and Jeli Campus. Furthermore, the most significant factor is optimism which achieved the highest value. Implications and recommendations were provided for future researchers in line with the study.

Keywords: Optimism, Calm, Tolerance, Autonomy, Empathy, Student Engagement

INTRODUCTION

This chapter will discuss the relationship between emotional stability and student engagement among Universiti Malaysia Kelantan students. This chapter begins with an introduction to chapter 1 and then explains the background of the study. Furthermore, chapter 1 also discusses about problem statement and why this research must be conducted. Besides, chapter 1 also explains and discusses the research objective and research question. Next, this chapter will continue with the significance of the study and the definition of the term. Lastly, chapter 1 will end with the summary or conclusion of the topic which is the relationship between emotional stability and student engagement among students in Universiti Malaysia Kelantan.

Previous studies have shown that student engagement is related to performance improvement (Manlunas, 2021). Intrinsically engaged students are motivated to invest in learning, attend

classes, and participate in learning activities. They are curious, ask questions, and enjoy learning challenges. Active and dedicated students are enthusiastic about their studies, and it is very important to make them successful. Good performance will further increase the marketability among employers to hire students. Finally, student engagement was also influenced by emotional stability. Stable emotions will result in a successful and great performance. Students who have an attitude of optimism, and high tolerance are students who have no problem involving themselves in various activities.

The restrictions imposed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic have created difficulties and hardships in the daily lives of human beings, especially students. One of the important foundations in health that should be considered is the mental as well as emotional well-being of students. Stress is undoubtedly the most significant obstacle to a student's overall performance as students will experience more stress than ever before. Unstable emotions will have a profound effect on oneself as the student will lose focus on his or her involvement as a student. Previous studies have stated that calm students are individuals who are not confronted with high and extreme emotions and passions. Instead, they exhibit calmness and display a stress-free character. Stress in the academic context challenges students in the way they deal with and handle it daily. Each student handles different kinds of stress that were caused by different factors such as personal factors, financial difficulties, and low grades. Emotional stability is also a major factor in developing management skills in various fields for students in higher education. These emotions, if controlled, can be a useful asset in a student's development and engagement.

In this study, researchers use several methods such as data collection procedures, research instruments, and data analysis to obtain information from respondents related to emotional stability and student engagement among students of Universiti Malaysia Kelantan. The sampling snowball method was used to obtain information from respondents from the three UMK campuses, namely City Campus, Bachok Campus, and Jeli Campus. The results of data analysis collected from 371 respondents on the administered survey are discussed in this study. Satisfied Pilot study results from 30 respondents have made the researchers decided to continue the study with the actual study. It was found that UMK students are emotionally calm, and this will further increase student engagement.

Finally, the researcher has discussed and explained the results of the analysis in the past which will be discussed further in the final chapter namely the objectives of the study, research questions, and hypotheses. Since this is the last chapter of the report, implications, limitations, and recommendations for future study are also included. Finally, at the end of this chapter, the researchers will conclude this study. There are five objectives of this research:

1. To identify the relationship between optimism and student engagement among Universiti Malaysia Kelantan students.
2. To determine the relationship between calm and student engagement among Universiti Malaysia Kelantan students.
3. To determine the relationship between tolerance and student engagement among Universiti Malaysia Kelantan students.
4. To identify the relationship between autonomy and student engagement among

Universiti Malaysia Kelantan students.
5. To examine the relationship between empathy and student engagement among Universiti Malaysia Kelantan students.

Significance of the Study

Lecturers/Educators

The results of this study can be used by lecturers to know the relationship between emotional stability and student engagement at Universiti Malaysia Kelantan. Lecturers also play an important role in providing advice and guidance and counselling if students experience any problems. It is to reduce the stress faced by the students. The lecturer is also responsible as a shaper of the noble personality of the students during the teaching period. The lecturer is the mainstay of the teaching and learning process that takes place in the education system. When students can adapt to a pleasant learning environment, they are more likely to accept the knowledge imparted by lecturers. As a result, efficient learning occurs when students enjoy themselves while learning. Lecturers, students, and materials are the three aspects of learning that must be prioritized. There will be successful learning when the three aspects interact with one another. A lecturer's profession entails more than simply imparting knowledge to students.

University Students

Anxiety and terror set prohibit students from carrying out their responsibilities. But when students' emotions are stable, they can stay focused no matter how challenging things may be. University students are able to prevent their emotions by controlling themselves and remain in control. Students can also think and analyse situations better as well as allow students to easily find solutions. Emotional stability can keep university students from drowning in negative thoughts and on the other hand, can help them maintain an optimistic view and optimism for the future. The involvement of students in activities organised by the university is able to shape the personality of students as a whole. This can be highlighted through excellent co-curricular and academic management. Academic management plays a major role in the success of such engagements. The implementation of management is based on the objectives and abilities of students to improve the knowledge, skills, and values learned.

Parents

In the family institution, parents are the closest individuals to the children, and the development of the children is patterned from birth to adulthood. Parental involvement in the discussion, communication, and care was found to have a positive effect on student involvement in various aspects. Parents can increase a child's learning commitment and stimulate their interest by accompanying the child during their study time. Actions taken by parents can stabilize children's emotions and increase student engagement in various aspects such as lessons.

Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE)

Psychological support services from the Ministry of Higher Education are also provided for students to assist in the management of students' emotional and mental health. MOHE can also provide counsellor guidance, mental health care posters, videos, and emotional management tips through social media. MOHE can also provide various interesting activities to take advantage of students' free time. Various competitions such as e-sports, creative videos, casual preaching videos, and creative photography. With various initiatives and assistance from the Ministry of Higher Education as well as the management, students do not have to worry.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Student Engagement

Student engagement means when students are learning or being taught, they show a high level of attention, curiosity, enthusiasm, optimism, and passion, which extends to their motivation to learn and develop in their education (Lane & Smith, 2021). Emotional engagement means concentrating on the magnitude and character of positive and negative responses to teachers, classmates, academics, and school, (Lane & Smith, 2021). Students are more likely to achieve academically, create a deeper feeling of connection at school, and have a more positive sense of social-emotional well-being when students demonstrate high levels of behavioural, emotional, and cognitive engagement (Barkley & Major, 2020).

Emotional Stability

Emotional stability is essential for the growth and development of education and lecturers should educate students on how to manage, maintain and develop their emotions because emotions are present in all activities and are key drivers of cognition and behaviour, (Schonert-Reichl, 2017). Emotional stability is the ability to retain emotional balance in the face of adversity. Emotionally stable people are able to cope with little pressures and strains in everyday life without feeling upset, apprehensive, nervous, tense, or angry (Abdel-Fattah, 2020).

Optimism

Optimism is a positive mental state marked by optimism and confidence in one's ability to succeed and have a bright future. Optimists believe that good things will happen, whilst pessimists believe that bad things will happen. Optimistic attitudes are associated with a variety of advantages, including improved coping abilities, lower stress levels, improved physical health and greater goal tenacity (Jiang, Yue, Lu, Yu, & Zhu, 2016). People with the trait of optimism are always positive about everything that happens. Positive relationships between optimism and physical and mental well-being have been discovered in studies (Eagleton, 2019).

Calm

Calm is a mental state of calmness that is devoid of agitation, excitement, or disruption. Being in a state of serenity, quiet, or peace is also referred to calm (Adolphs & Anderson, 2018). Calmness is most easily detected during a state of relaxation for the average person, although it may also be found during much more alert and aware states (Huberty et al., 2019). Calmness is a charger for mental intelligence. Staying calm is tough but it matures us. It allows us to consider both the good and bad aspects and select the best option (Heikkilä et al., 2018).

Tolerance

Tolerance is partly considered different. Some people consider that tolerance is an interpersonal virtue that takes into account the current state of society and some people consider that some society is neglected (Aziz, 2020). It discusses that this concept of tolerance is unfair between two parties as powerful groups allow less powerful groups to determine the differences in beliefs and lifestyles (Forst, 2017). It discusses that this concept of tolerance is unfair between two parties as powerful groups allow less powerful groups in determining differences in beliefs and lifestyles (Forst, 2017).

Autonomy

It is widely understood that autonomy is the state in which a person can decide the creation, expression, and execution of thoughts, ideas, and actions for himself or herself (Frischmann, 2018). However, autonomy is also meant as a mixture between human support, personal rights, and responsibilities by looking at a person from a short-term perspective and a long-term perspective (Güldenpfennig, Mayer, Panek, & Fitzpatrick, 2019). According to Lamanna and Byrne (2018), autonomy refers to the internal process of evaluating all possible decisions, goals, and values for the individual.

Empathy

According to Batson (2017), empathy is an important attitude that demonstrates the ability of a person to understand the inner feelings of others by responding in a caring way to the individual. Empathy is defined as a cognitive trait that is understanding someone and conveying something to help someone by involving feelings of concern (Hojat, DeSantis, & Gonnella, 2017). An individual with high-level of empathy uses the information to alleviate the suffering of others and prevent themselves from harmful behaviour while behaviourists with low levels of empathy are unable to understand the notice and cannot use the information to guide their behaviour (Murphy & Lilienfeld, 2019).

Research Hypothesis

Based on the literature review that has been explored, the hypothesis of this study are outlined as follows: -

H1　There is a relationship between optimism and student engagement among Universiti Malaysia Kelantan students.

H2　There is a relationship between calm and student engagement among Universiti

Malaysia Kelantan students.

H3   There is a relationship between tolerance and student engagement among Universiti Malaysia Kelantan students.

H4   There is a relationship between autonomy and student engagement among Universiti Malaysia Kelantan students.

H5   There is a relationship between empathy and student engagement among Universiti Malaysia Kelantan students.

Research Framework

A research framework has been developed to investigate the relationship between emotional stability and student engagement among students at University Malaysia Kelantan. The dependent variable is student engagement, while the independent variables include emotional stability, optimism, calm, tolerance, autonomy, and empathy. Figure 1 below shows the research framework used for this study.
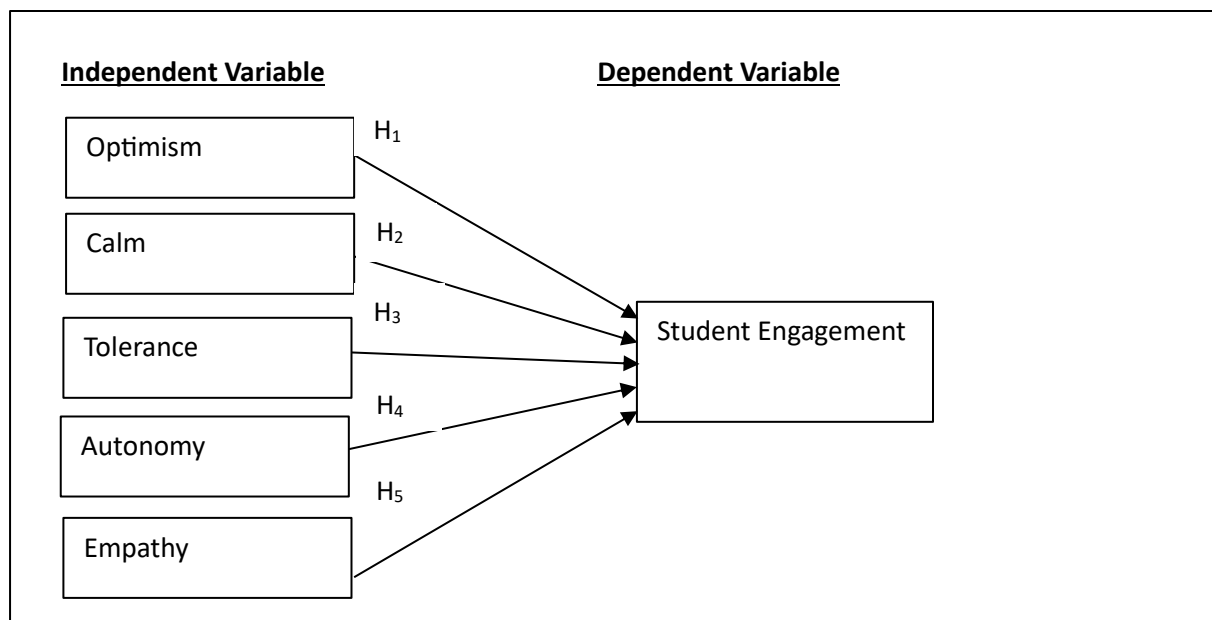

Figure 1: Research Framework

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This research used a quantitative method to gain data through a set of questionnaires. The questionnaires were designed in bilingual (English and Malay). The quantitative technique was attempting to measure the variables in the study and then look for a relationship between them. The questionnaire consisted of 3 sections, a total of 46 items. The first section which is the demographic profile is consisted of five multiple-choice questions. The second and third sections on independent variables and dependent variables included 41 items with a four-point Likert scale ranging from 1=strongly disagree to 4=strongly agree. The questions were adapted from previous studies titled The Effect of Duration of Social Media Usage on Emotional

Stability in Undergraduate Students. Therefore, the instrument is considered reliable (Setyawan, 2016).

Data Collection

Pilot testing was conducted among 30 students from Universiti Malaysia Kelantan, with students from City Campus, Bachok Campus, and Jeli Campus had participated in the pilot study to test the reliability of the instrument. The fieldwork was then proceeded by distributing questionnaires randomly to 371 target respondents who answered online survey questions via Google Forms. After all the questionnaires were answered by the respondent, the data is collected. This study uses the snowball technique through an online platform which would save the researcher's cost, time, and energy to get the data.

Sampling

This study used non-probability sampling, more specifically purposive sampling as a sampling method to collect the data The data is a straightforward probability sampling strategy. To obtain the most appropriate sample size for this study, the researchers used Krejcie and Morgan (1970) equation to determine the sample size.

$$= \frac{x^2 Np(1-p)}{e^2(N-1) + x^2 p(1-P)}$$

n = sample size
N = population size
e = the degree of accuracy expressed as proportion (0.05)
$x2$ = chi-square of degree of freedom 1 and confidence 95% (3.841)
p = proportion of population (if unknown, 0.5)

Table 1: The Number of Students in Universiti Malaysia Kelantan

Campus of Study	Number of Students
City Campus	6471
Bachok Campus	2648
Jeli Campus	2275

Source: Academic Administration Division of Universiti Malaysia Kelantan.

Data Analysis

SPSS version 26.0 was used to analyse the data namely descriptive analysis, reliability analysis, and Pearson correlation analysis. The collected data were analysed by using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) to show the relationships between the dependent variable and the independent variables as a set of statistical processes that helps the researchers in determining the best statistical technique to be used.

FINDINGS

Demographic Analysis

Table 2: Demographic Analysis (n=371)

Characteristics	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	129	34.8
Female	242	65.2
Age		
19-21 Years Old	90	24.3
22-24 Years Old	243	65.5
25 Years and Above	38	10.2
Race		
Malay	276	74.4
Chinese	26	7.0
Indian	67	18.1
Others	2	0.6
Campus of study		
City Campus	211	56.9
Bachok Campus	100	27.0
Jeli Campus	60	16.2
Faculty of Study		
FKP	79	21.3
FHPK	113	30.5
FPV	12	3.2
JSD	15	4.0
FTKW	62	16.7
FAE	22	5.9
PBI	7	1.9
FIAT	27	7.3
FSB	16	4.3
FBKT	18	4.9

Out of 371 respondents, the majority of the respondents are females, which accounted for 65.2% of the total sample. In terms of the respondents' age, 24.3% of them are 19 to 21 years old, 65.5% are 22 to 24 years old and 10.2% of them are 25 years and above. Meanwhile, in terms of race, the majority are Malay with 74.4%, followed by "others" with 0.6%, Chinese with 7.0%, and Indian with 18.1%. As for the campus of study, out of 371 respondents, 56.9%, 27.0% and 16.2% of the respondents are from City campus, Bachok campus and Jeli campus, respectively. In terms of the faculty involvement, most of the respondents was from FHPK students, followed by FKP and FTKW, 30.5 %, 21.3% and 16.7%, respectively. There was

relatively lower participation from other faculties such as FPV, JSD, FAE, FIAT, FSB AND FBKT (3.2%,4.0%, 5.9%, 7.3%, 4.3% and 4.9%, respectively. PBI students were the least to be involved in this study, 1.9%).

Descriptive Analysis

Table 3: Descriptive Analysis

Variable	Items	Mean Score	Standard Deviation
Optimism	I am satisfied with myself	3.49	0.71
	I consider that obstacles in achieving a goal as positive challenges	3.49	0.56
	I dare to take risk to try new thing	3.39	0.64
	I feel like I always have good luck	3.22	0.85
	I do not need support from others to solve my problem	2.94	1.04
Calm	I am able to study well under pressure	3.33	0.79
	I can still feel calm even when the people around me are panic	3.10	0.88
	I can still feel calm even when I do not do my assignments	2.78	1.06
	I am not worried even if I have a lot of problems in my studies	2.73	1.06
	I have no problem to sleep at night because I am not worried about my future	2.81	1.07
Tolerance	I have a lot of friends	3.39	0.78
	I am ready to sacrifice my vacation time if I need to help a friend who needs my help	3.38	0.63
	I can tolerate if there is a sudden change occurs	3.32	0.67
	I do not easily get upset if I need to drive in congested road situation	3.22	0.80
	I will forgive those who have wronged me	3.40	0.68
Autonomy	In general, I can make my own decision without the help of other people's opinions	3.25	0.76
	I am brave and highly confident	3.29	0.79

	to study alone		
	I enjoy my freedom to express myself	3.44	0.66
	I have no problem in receiving instruction as long as it is clear	3.46	0.65
	I do not blame others when I fail in my studies	3.47	0.59
Empathy	I will give my seat in public transportation to those who are in needs	3.64	0.52
	When an accident happens in front of me, I will immediately help	3.42	0.62
	I am willing to listen to all problems faced by my friend	3.41	0.61
	I will motivate my friends when they feel down	3.49	0.58
	I will not avoid friends who like to ask for my help	3.43	0.61
Student Engagement	I do not get in trouble at university	3.23	0.88
	I pay attention in class	3.32	0.68
	I complete my assignments on time	3.45	0.68
	I like being at university	3.26	0.76
	My online class is a fun place to be	3.26	0.85
	I do not feel bored at university	3.23	0.78
	I check my assignment's mistakes	3.49	0.67
	I do my revision even when I do not have test	3.06	0.91
	I read the revision notes to find out more about the things I do at the university	3.14	0.89

Table 3 shows the mean and standard deviation for 25 statements under five independent variables and 9 statements under the dependent variable based on the survey involving 371 respondents. The highest mean value for optimism was obtained by question 2 with 3.49, where the respondents agreed that "I consider obstacles in achieving a goal as positive challenges". The lowest mean value belonged to question 5 with 2.94, where the respondents agreed that "I do not need support from others to solve my problem". Next, the highest mean value for calm was obtained by question 1 with 3.33, where the respondents agreed that "I am able to study well under pressure". The lowest mean value belongs to question 4 with 2.73, where the respondents agreed that "I am not worried even if I have a lot of problems in my studies".

Furthermore, the highest mean value for tolerance was obtained by question 5 with 3.40, where the respondents agreed that "I will forgive those who have wronged me". The lowest mean value belonged to question 4 with 3.22, where the respondents agreed that "I do not easily get upset if I need to drive in congested road situation". Besides, the highest mean value for autonomy was obtained by question 5 with 3.47, where the respondents agreed that "I do not blame others when I fail in my studies". The lowest mean value belongs to question 1 with 3.25, where the respondents agreed that "I can make my own decision without the help of other people's opinions". Lastly, the highest mean value for empathy was obtained by question 1 with 3.64, where the respondents agreed that "I will give my seat in public transportation to those who are in needs". The lowest mean value belonged to question 3 with 3.41, where the respondents agreed that "I am willing to listen to all problems faced by my friend". Next, the highest mean value for the dependent variable was obtained by question 7 with 3.49, where the respondents agreed that "I check my assignment's mistakes". The lowest mean value belongs to question 8 with 3.06, where the respondents agreed that "I do my revision even when I do not have a test".

Mean Score of Emotional Stability and Student Engagement

Table 4: Optimism, Calm, Tolerance, Autonomy, Empathy and Student Engagement among UMK students

Variables	Mean Score (SD)
Optimism	3.31 (0.59)
Calm	2.95 (0.81)
Tolerance	3.34 (0.53)
Autonomy	3.38 (0.52)
Empathy	3.48 (0.46)

Table 4 shows the mean and standard deviation for five independent variables. The mean for optimism, tolerance, autonomy and empathy in emotional stability was the highest among UMK students and the lowest mean for emotional stability among UMK students was calm The highest mean value for the independent variable was empathy with 3.48 and the lowest mean for the independent variable is calm with 2.95. Factors that lead to high empathy resulting in emotional stability are the influence of good friends and adequate religious upbringing from parents (MB Berryhill, C Harless, P Kean, 2018). The factor that led to low calm results in emotional stability was the use of auxiliary materials. Teaching is very uninteresting for them to stay focused in class (B Flunger, A Mayer, N Umbach, 2019).

Reliability Analysis

Table 5: Reliability Analysis

Variables	Number of Items (N)	Cronbach's Alpha
Student Engagement	9	0.885
Optimism	5	0.813

Calm	5	0.889
Tolerance	5	0.799
Autonomy	5	0.806
Empathy	5	0.836

Table 5 shows the reliability analysis of the student engagement and five variables. The reliability Cronbach's alpha coefficient value for student engagement also gained (0.885) which indicates that it is questionable. However, the reliability Cronbach's alpha for the independent variable are optimism (0.813), calm (0.889), tolerance (0.799), autonomy (0.806) and empathy (0.836) which scored the highest indicating a very excellent level of reliability. The questionnaires were very trustworthy, and responders understood each item well, as the Cronbach's alpha charge for the variable was greater than 0.7. As a result, the investigation can continue.

Pearson Correlation Analysis

Table 6: Pearson Correlation Analysis

Independent Variables	P-Value	r-Value
Optimism	0.74	0.74
Calm	0.65	0.64
Tolerance	0.71	0.73
Autonomy	0.71	0.72
Empathy	0.55	0.60

Table 6 shows the Pearson Correlation analysis of student engagement and five variables. The Pearson Correlation for independent variables were optimism (0.74), calm (0.65), tolerance (0.71), autonomy (0.71) and empathy are (0.55). According to the results, the significant value of optimism, calm, tolerance, autonomy, and empathy was above 0.05 and the p-value was under 0.05. Thus, the alternative hypothesis is accepted, and the null hypothesis is refused. It shows there is a significant relationship between optimism, calm, tolerance, autonomy, empathy, and student engagement among students in Universiti Malaysia Kelantan. Thus, all the hypotheses (H1, H2, H3, H4 and H5) stated are accepted.

DISCUSSIONS

According to the results obtained, the emotional stability of UMK students is very good. The values of emotional stability such as optimism, empathy, tolerance, and autonomy from UMK students are exceptional. Meanwhile, the calm value obtained is low. This may be because UMK students are always stressed or restless when on campus. This may also be due to the attitude of UMK students who like to do last-minute assignments. As a result, student engagement will be affected.

This timely study answered five research objectives. Referring to the results of the study, the Emotional Stability of UMK students is in good condition because they are highly confident,

enthusiastic in any involvement, positive thinking, always improve themselves in assignments, and are calm in facing the challenges throughout the learning process. This emotional stability will have a positive effect on the academic performance of UMK students. The results of this study revealed that various factors can contribute to the excellent academic performance of UMK students. In most studies, students with high levels of emotional stability were preferred because they had more control over their emotions while learning. Due to deadlines, personal issues, and stress, students with low emotional stability may be more easily side-lined from their studies. Emotions are physical and instinctual, causing immediate physical responses to threats, rewards, and everything in between. Pupil dilation (eye-tracking), skin conductance (EDA/GSR), brain activity (EEG, fMRI), heart rate (ECG), and facial expression can all be used to objectively measure biological responses (R McDermott, 2019).

Moreover, if students experience this emotional instability, it is often associated with mental health problems because students involved will experience fatigue, depression, stress, chronic anxiety, and a lower quality of life. Emotional instability can also affect the academic performance of UMK students. Indirectly, the academic performance of UMK students is deteriorating due to lack of sleep, stress on assignments, and many more. Based on a previous study from Ahrberg et al. (2012) sleep quality is important because it can affect academic performance. Stress, chronic anxiety, and lack of sleep quality can negatively impact student engagement.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendation is that when students have enough time and money, future researchers may be able to collect data on different campuses based on the differences in the courses registered. This is because future research will be able to collect data from all campuses and use the resources available at universities to acquire information and analyse it efficiently. Because the amount of stress experienced changes depending on the type of learning that has been recorded. Data collection is important at university because it provides insight on where to invest time, money, and resources, evaluate the use of campus buildings, services, and facilities, monitor the success of classes and other campus programs, manage, and collect student applications and others (P Sahu, 2020).

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study has been conducted to discover the emotional stability and student engagement among Universiti Malaysia Kelantan students. Five independent variables, namely optimism, calm, tolerance, autonomy, and empathy have been chosen to examine their relationships with the dependent variable, which is the student engagement among Universiti Malaysia Kelantan students. The mean for optimism, tolerance, autonomy and empathy in emotional stability is the highest among UMK students and the lowest mean for emotional stability among UMK students is calm. The highest mean value for independent variable is empathy with 3.48 and the lowest mean for independent variable is calm with 2.95. The reliability Cronbach's alpha for independent variables are optimism (0.813), calm (0.889), tolerance (0.799), autonomy (0.806) and empathy (0.836) scored the highest which indicates a very excellent level of reliability. The significant value of optimism, calm, tolerance, autonomy

and empathy is above 0.05 and p-value is under 0.05. Thus, alternative hypotheses is accepted and the null hypothesis is refused. It shows that there is a significant relationship between optimism, calm, tolerance, autonomy, empathy and student engagement among students in Universiti Malaysia Kelantan.

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