

Mental health and health-related quality of life during coronavirus pandemic: A Study among higher education academicians

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic has affected most people. In Malaysia, to reduce the spread, several interventions were implemented, which have also affected the higher education system, and impacted the academicians who are the pillar of the system. This study was conducted to evaluate mental health (MH) and health-related quality of life (HRQOL) during the pandemic among university academicians of various ages, nationalities, and mental illness history. **Materials and methods:** A cross-sectional survey was conducted using online MOS 36-Item Short-Form (SF-36). A total of 1482 UniKL academicians were invited to participate. Sample size was calculated using Raosoft, Inc. Software. Confidence level was set at 5%, hence a total of 306 participants were needed for the study. Data analysis was done using SPSS 21.0. **Results and conclusion:** A total of 265 academicians responded to the survey. In all HRQOL domains, male respondents outperformed females. Significant differences between two genders were found in physical functioning (PF), body pain (Bp), and vitality (Vt). Except for general health and PF, older respondents appeared to have better conditions for each HRQOL scale. There were substantial differences in MH between respondents > 40 years old, but not in HRQOL. No significant differences found between nationalities in terms of HRQOL and MH, except for role physical (RP). Foreign academicians appeared to have higher mean scores for each HRQOL and MH sections of SF-36, which indicated as having higher QOL, and in comparison, foreign academicians were found to have better physical and mental conditions. There were also differences among respondents with previous history of mental illness. Almost half of those who have had a mental illness in the past believed that the pandemic worsened their mental health. The pandemic did impact the academicians' mental health and HRQOL in various ways. More studies can be conducted to identify other possible factors that could have contributed to the issues.