

**THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DEPRESSION AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT
OF ZAKAT RECIPIENTS AMONG STUDENTS IN UNIVERSITY
OF TECHNOLOGY MALAYSIA**

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ABSTACT

The purpose of this study was to determine the level of depression of zakat recipients among students in University of Technology Malaysia (UTM), Johor and to determine if there is a relationship between depression and academic achievement of Zakat recipients among UTM students, Johor. The study was conducted at UTM Islamic Centre with seventy-seven zakat recipients serving as respondents of the study using random sampling technique. A survey with quantitative approach using a questionnaire was used for the study. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to process the data to find out the relationship between depression and academic achievement of zakat recipients among the students. The results showed that most of the respondents had a normal level of depression, sixty-two out of seventy-seven respondents representing 80.5 percent. The remaining 6 respondents were mildly and moderately depressed representing 7.8 percent each and 3 respondents were severely depressed representing 3.9 percent out of 100 percent. The research findings also showed that there is a positive significant relationship [correlation coefficient ($r=0.247$)] between depression and academic achievement of zakat recipients among students in University of Technology Malaysia (UTM).

Keywords: Depression, Academic Achievement, Zakat Recipient

HUBUNGAN ANTARA KEMURUNGAN DENGAN PENCAPAIAN AKADEMIK ANTARA PENERIMA ZAKAT DI KALANGAN PELAJAR UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MALAYSIA

ABSTRAK

Kajian ini bertujuan untuk mengenal pasti tahap kemurungan serta menentukan sama ada terdapat hubungan antara kemurungan dengan pencapaian akademik penerima zakat dalam kalangan pelajar di Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM). Kajian ini dijalankan di Pusat Islam UTM yang melibatkan 77 orang penerima zakat sebagai responden kajian menggunakan teknik persampelan rawak. Kajian ini kajian tinjauan dengan pendekatan kuantitatif menggunakan soal selidik. Data telah diproses menggunakan statistik deskriptif dan inferensi untuk menentukan hubungan antara kemurungan dengan pencapaian akademik penerima zakat di kalangan pelajar. Hasil analisis deskriptif mendapati bahawa tahap kemurungan responden majoriti berada pada tahap normal iaitu seramai 62 orang dari 77 responden yang mewakili 80.5 peratus. Sementara itu, seramai 6 responden berada di tahap kemurungan yang rendah dan sederhana teruk mewakili 7.8 peratus untuk kedua-dua kategori dan 3 orang responden yang berada ditahap kemurungan yang sangat teruk mewakili 3.9 peratus daripada 100 peratus. Hasil kajian ini juga mendapati terdapat hubungan positif yang signifikan [pekali korelasi ($r=0.247$)] antara kemurungan dengan pencapaian akademik penerima zakat dalam kalangan pelajar di Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM)

Kata Kunci: Kemurungan, Pencapaian akademik, Penerima zakat

INTRODUCTION

Academic achievement is important in producing diligent, knowledgeable, skilful, and competent students. Academic achievement levels can be measured by assessing various factors such as exams, quizzes, presentations, assignments, projects, and practical assessments. According to Winkel (1996), academic achievement is a learning process experienced by students that leads to changes in knowledge, understanding, application, performance analysis and evaluation. Academic performance is a term that indicates the success rate in achieving a goal through multiple attempts that are optimally performed by a taught person. Suryabrata (1993) explains that academic performance is the result of an evaluation study of a process usually expressed in terms of quantitative (numbers) specifically designed for the evaluation process, such as the lessons, courses, test scores and so on.

Academic achievement has long-term effects on socio-economic standards, and lack of education is a determinant of unemployment (Krein & Beller, 1988). Poverty in families is usually associated with a scarcity of resources in the form of time and money. This scarcity affects parents' investment in their children's development and learning, especially in their children's schooling. In low-income households, mental health may deteriorate. There are cases where students lack necessities due to structural problems such as broken families, loss of

parents or in a minority of cases, burdened by the aftermath of war. Some are then forced to live without social, emotional, and physical support. (Parish & Cloud, 2006).

Worldpoverty.org illustrates that currently half of the world's population of more than 1.3 billion people live in extreme poverty (refugee). In Malaysia, 0.6% of the population lives below the national poverty line (refugee). In general, children growing up in poverty are vulnerable and at higher risk of poor health, learning and behavioural difficulties, poor academic performance and are often exposed to violence and exploitation. All of this contributes to widening inequalities within the urban poor and other urban subgroups. In addition, students in poverty have potentially long-term effects on their cognitive, physical, and emotional development, as well as on their health.

OBJECTIVE

The purpose of this study is to determine the relationship between depression, and academic achievement among zakat recipient's students in UTM. Followings are the objectives proposed for this study:

- i) To identify the level of depression of zakat recipients among students in UTM.
- ii) To determine whether there is a relationship between depression and academic achievement of zakat recipients among students in UTM.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Many studies deal with depression, anxiety, and stress among students. Writing the last study on Zakat has a place among scholars. The focus of writing in these areas shows that zakat is an economic contribution for Muslims and many concern those who have received zakat assistance (asnaf). Wahid et al (2009) discuss the significant role of zakat institutions in leading and distributing zakat efficiently. The zakat institution is an entity being intermediary between the payer and the recipient of zakat.

Tay et al (2008) found that several known factors are certainly related to the success and retention of minority students in the centre of higher education in the United States. In their study, there are thirteen variables as indicators of university experiences that affect the GPA of university students. It is found that students who enter university and have sufficient financial resources can improve academic performance and persistence in classes. This is because students can focus entirely on classes without financial problems. Financial support for students is also important to ensure that students graduate with pride and ease.

A study by Alon, (2007), on the effectiveness of financial aid encourages black and Hispanic students to stay and graduate from selected colleges and universities in the United States. His study aims to explore whether the amount of money has a large impact on increasing the number of students who graduate. His study found that support in the form of grants and scholarships has a positive impact on student graduation. In addition, the results show that the amount of financial support can reduce the difference in graduation rates between white students and minority groups.

A study by Ahmad, et al (2015) aimed to assess trends in mental health problems among children and adolescents aged 5 to 15 years in Malaysia from 1996 to 2011. From this study, mental health problems among children and adolescents aged 5 to 15 years showed an increasing trend from 13.0% in 1996 to 19.4% in 2006 and 20.0% in 2011. In 2011, male children and adolescents and those living in less affluent families were significantly associated with mental health problems. The findings show that although mental health problems are increasing among children and adolescents in Malaysia, the rate of increase has decreased over the past five years. Socially and economically disadvantaged groups were most affected by mental health problems. Another study by Turashvili and Japaridze (2012) shows that the main of this study was to identify the degree of mental health of students in the Georgian context and investigate the relationship of depression, anxiety, stress, and coping strategies with students' academic performance. From this study, it was found that the students would have prominent levels of depression and low levels of mental health and academic performance. It is because, most of the families of students, due to the social situation in Georgia, have exceptionally low incomes and pay high tuition fees for education.

The government grant funds an outrageously small percentage of the total fee and is not available to all students. This means that most students have average levels of emotional wellbeing, depression, and average self-assessed academic performance. The research also found that the students who have a medium or outstanding academic level have a high emotional well-being index, sense of purpose in life and personal growth scale. But the students who carry avoidance coping strategy have a prominent level of depression.

Makki Abadi et al (2013) studied the relationship between mental health and academic performance in students. Among 18,465 statistical populations, 320 individuals were selected through Morgan Table using stratified random sampling method. This research method used descriptive correlations and mental health questionnaires using face validity and Cronbach's alpha reliability. The results showed that there is a significant and positive relationship between spiritual mental health and academic performance of students of economics, management, and humanities.

Ahmad Hazuad and Dini Rahiah (2014) conducted a study on the relationship between depression, anxiety, and stress with personality traits in final year undergraduate students. In this study, a total of 113 students out of 170 final year students were interviewed and the result shows that some of the causes of depression, anxiety and stress among the subjects are interpersonal relationship problems, time management stress, academic tasks, environment, financial aspects, safety, family relationships and involvement in external activities. The result illustrates that the percentage of neuroscientists and extroverts among the final year students was moderate.

Depression is not exempted from involving form three students studied in Chinese national high school such as in the study done by Saenz et al (1999). This is a study that demonstrates the existence of significant differences in mean scores between genders and looks for relationships between depression and academic achievement. Using Beck's Depression Inventory and statistical analyses such as cross-table, t-test, Pearson, and One Way Anova, 182 responses were successfully obtained from randomly selected students to formulate these questions.

The results showed that there was no significant difference between depression and gender between male and female students, with the educational minimum of females ($X = 17.79$)

with mean male students ($X = 16.80$) was not significant at 95% confidence interval. To examine the relationship between depression level and academic achievement, crosstab analysis proved that 40.51% of the lower-grade students had clinical depression level compared to only 15.19% of those who had critical depression, $F = 3.862$; $p = 0.010$ ($p < 0.05$) for One Way Anova analysis, $r = -0.225$; $p = 0.002$ for Pearson correlation analysis, an inverse relationship, $r = -0.225$ for depression score with PMR achievement level. This study has shown that there is a significant relationship between the level of depression and the students' academic achievement. A study by Haslina (2014), aimed to identify the root causes and the effects on individuals with generalized anxiety disorder and to measure the effectiveness of the Islamic guidance in treating this disease via an Islamic guidance module. Respondents for this study are four university students. This study found that the main reason for the generalized anxiety disorder suffered by all the subjects of the study is due to severe academic issues like cognitive disturbance, social and family conflicts also contribute to this disorder. The Islamic guidance intervention has been proposed and it gives a positive impact on the four subjects.

Later, Ooi Yoon Phaik (2002) extended their analysis to explore the cause of stress among undergraduate students in University Teknologi Malaysia. The results showed that environmental factors contribute most to students' stress than academic, financial, family, social and intrapersonal factors. The overall stress level of students is also low, and the level of fears is that simple. Meanwhile, there is a significant relationship between stress and academic achievement and no significant difference in students' stress level by year of study, subjects taken and gender.

The research by Elias et al (2011) found that over 376 undergraduate students at a local university from different schools were randomly selected to study stress and academic achievement in different disciplinary areas. The results showed that undergraduate students have moderate levels of stress. Moreover, the study by Mouza (2015) aims to find out whether Greek undergraduate students had increased stress levels in 2013 compared to 2009 due to the economic crisis. The study found that in terms of frequency and severity, females, seniors, and students with low family income perceived higher levels of stress related to university and non-university activities for both years, noting that acuter stress was observed for 2013. Students living in the local city, away from their families, noticed higher levels of stress only for 2013. University activities were significantly associated with non-university activities in terms of frequency and severity in 2009 and 2013.

Definition Depression

Depression is a situation in which a person feels frustrated, sad, hopeless, discouraged, or has no interest in life (Trangle et al., 2016). Depression is an emotional disorder that causes feelings of sadness, lack of excitement and overwhelming disappointment about something and this can have a negative impact on a person's self. Long-term depression can have dire consequences for the individual.

In addition to the disturbing emotions, sufferers also have their physical functioning and social interaction disrupted. Medical treatment and psychotherapeutic and counselling help should be provided to sufferers as early as possible. Therefore, this study emphasises the concept of depression to determine the level of depression using the Depression, Anxiety, and Stress Scale (DASS-21).

Theories related to Depression

In the past, the mental health of people suffering from depression, anxiety, and stress was not emphasised. When it comes to this setting, people are not associated with the psychological field, although there are studies that have been done. Originally, psychologists assumed that human behaviour is influenced by instinct, followed by the behavioural theory that humans cause their behaviour by the impression of learning because they are considered as machines and their minds are empty. Recognising that the human brain functions and determines behaviour, the theories investigating the way human thoughts run in the mind eventually play a role. The following will examine the cognitive and behavioural theories of depression in humans. Beck's Cognitive Depression Theory (1967) is the theory used to identify depression in parents who have children with special needs. Most signs of depression are attributed to negative attitudes and thoughts about their signs and symptoms of depression, which can cause conflict and psychological distress. This theory assumes that depression is perpetuated and may be due to how a person thinks about themselves and processes their personal information. Beck (1976) listed three factors that lead to a person experiencing depression. They are self-injury, self-pity, and compassion towards others. According to Beck (1976), self-injury involves blaming a person for doing something wrong. When this feeling of guilt is present, she tends to continue to criticise herself and hate herself. Such an attitude convinces them as evil and useless. If the selfish feelings of guilt persist, it leads to the person becoming disturbed and feeling weepy, silent, or grieving, which indirectly leads to depression.

In this cognitive theory, Beck (1967) highlighted three of the most important assumptions in a person suffering from depression, firstly, the negative attitude towards oneself (when one is depressed, one believes that one is useless, that there is a lack and worthlessness), secondly, the negative attitude towards the surrounding society (when one is depressed, one is not satisfied with the present situation in his life and feels that the surrounding community is pressuring him and making unreasonable demands on him) and thirdly, negative attitude towards the future (when one is depressed, he is pessimistic about his ability to achieve what he wants).

Based on the above explanations on depression theories, this suggests that Beck's cognitive theory is appropriate for this study as previous studies have mentioned that students are depressed when they live in a family with low socio-economic status. This leads to a student blaming themselves for living in poverty, which indirectly leads to low academic achievement.

Concept of Depression

Depression is a common experience experienced by all people who sometimes feel tired, unhappy, or sad. Often the reason is obvious, such as feeling empty, frustrated, or losing something or someone important to you. Such sadness and grief are normal and a temporary reaction to the pressures of life. However, if depression persists at any given time, whether due to an event or for no reason, then the person may be suffering from clinical depression, an illness that needs to be treated and can be treated effectively. Moreover, it is not a personal weakness or a condition that can be expected to go away with time.

There are common causes of depression, such as genetic factors, stressful events, lack of social support, physical illness, personality, gender differences, and adolescence. As for genetic factors, some depression runs in families, suggesting a genetic or hereditary factor in the

prevalence of major depressive disorder. However, it can also occur in people who do not have a family history of depression. Whether it is hereditary or not, major depressive disorder is often associated with too much or too little of certain chemicals in the brain. In addition, life events also contribute to the development of depression. It is normal to feel down when a certain depressing event occurs, but we are usually able to calm our feelings about what happened and accept it over time. Events such as the death of a loved one, divorce, job loss, retirement, or moving to a new home can trigger depression. Environment also plays a role. If we are alone and socially isolated, have more anxiety, or are physically weakened, then we become depressed more easily. In milder cases, women may have persistent depression after childbirth, for example, because they are not fully supported by their families.

Depression is common, followed by physical illness, especially life-threatening illness such as cancer and heart disease, a painful and chronic illness such as arthritis, bronchitis, or stroke. There is depression that can accompany infections such as the flu. In addition, personality can also play a role in depression. Although anyone can become depressed under certain circumstances, some of us are more susceptible than others because of our personal or past experiences. It seems that women are more likely to be depressed than men. This may be because men do not want to admit their feelings, they hide them, they show them in an aggressive way, or they relieve themselves by consuming alcohol. It may also mean that women have more stress because of their jobs, while also having childcare responsibilities.

In the adolescent age group, depression is a normal accompaniment to the natural maturation process, the stress involved, the influence of sex hormones, and conflict with parental freedom. It can also be a reaction to a troubling event such as the death of a friend or family member, a breakup with a girlfriend or boyfriend, or failure in school. Teens who have low self-esteem, are critical of themselves, and cannot control negative events are especially at risk for becoming depressed when stressful events occur.

Some of the characteristic of depression, anxiety and stress are shown in the Table 1.0

Table 1.0: Characteristic of the Depression, Anxiety and Stress

Domain	Depression
Characteristics	Self-disparaging Dispirited, gloomy, blue, convinced that life has no meaning or value, Pessimistic about the future, Unable to experience enjoyment or satisfaction, Unable to become interested or involved Slow, lacking in initiative

METHODOLOGY

The population in this study was the respondent who were targeted are consist of 300 zakat recipients among students in UTM. From the total of these 300 sets of questionnaires distributed, only a total of 77 sets of questionnaires were successfully returned within a month and it is considered as an actual sample of respondent using random sampling technique. It was narrowed as sample of 2016/2017 academic year. In this study, the instrument used by the researcher to

collect the data is made up of a set of questionnaires. The study used a questionnaire as an instrument for collecting information according to the objectives of this study.

The method used was a survey research design in which questionnaires were used to collect data to describe the characteristics of the respondents (Mohd Najib, 1999). The results were obtained using a questionnaire distributed to seventy-seven students as respondents. The information obtained is analysed using quantitative data. The data obtained were collected and analysed using computer Statistical Package for Social Sciences, version 21.0, SPSS.

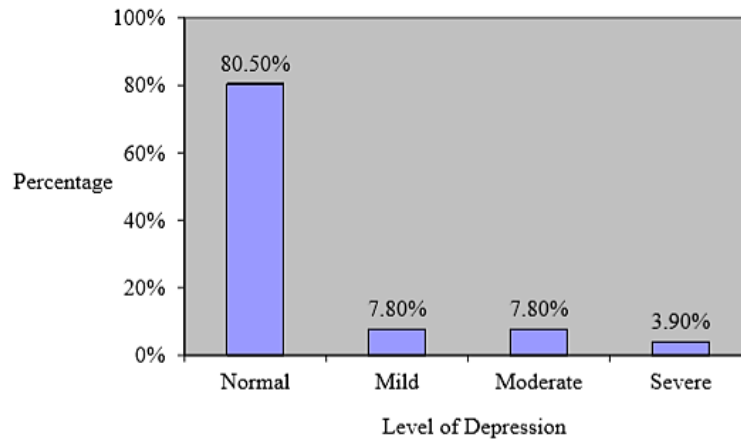
RESULT

Findings on Research Objectives 1: Level of Depression of Zakat Recipient among Students in UTM

Table 2.0: Level of Depression and percentages of Zakat Recipient among Students in UTM

Level of Depression	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Normal	62	80.5	80.5	80.5
Mild	6	7.8	7.8	88.3
Moderate	6	7.8	7.8	96.1
Severe	3	3.9	3.9	100
Total	77	100	100	

Table 2.0 shows the depression level and percentages of the respondents. The depression level is determined by items from the DASS-21 instrument in Part B of the questionnaire, which are reflected in questions 3, 5, 10, 13, 16, 17 and 21 of the questionnaires. The stress level is divided into four levels: normal, mild, moderate, and severe. From the table, most of the respondents had normal level of depression, sixty-two out of seventy-seven respondents, representing 80.5%. The remaining six respondents were mildly and moderately depressed, representing 7.8% each, and three respondents were severely depressed, representing 3.9% out of 100%. Graph 1.0 illustrates the percentage level of depression among zakat recipients among students



Graph 1.0: Percentage Level of Depression

Findings on Research Objectives 2: Relationship between Depression and Academic Achievement of Zakat Recipient among Students in UTM

Table 3.0: Correlations between Depression and academic achievement

	Depression	CGPA
Depression Pearson Correlation	1	.247*
Sig. (2-tailde)		.030
N	77	77
Academic Pearson Correlation	.2478*	1
Sig. (2-tailde)	.030	
N	77	77

Table 3.0 shows that the correlations between depression and academic achievement of Zakat recipients among students in UTM. The significant value is 0.030 which is less than the alpha value of 0.05. Thus, the null-hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between depression and academic achievement of Zakat recipients among students in UTM is rejected. So, there is a significant relationship between depression and academic achievement of Zakat recipients among students in UTM. The correlation coefficient of 0.247 indicates that the strength of the relationship is low.

DISCUSSION

Financial resources are an important asset for a student in learning. Money is needed to pay tuition fees, to meet the needs of study, and to boost the student's self-esteem. Financial constraints can lead to depression. In the study conducted by Mastura Mahfar et al. (2007) and Melissa Edora Sanu & Balan Rathakrishnan (2019), it was found that financial constraints are

one of the factors that lead to pressure among students. A financial problem is one of the causes for an individual to suspend further education. This situation is corroborated by the study of Lynne Coy-Ogan (2009) which found that financial factors are one of the problems for teachers to pursue further education. Katharine N. Widener (2017) and Melissa Edora Sanu & Balan Rathakrishnan (2019) also concluded in their study that students pursuing higher education deal with financial problems. The constant feeling and worry cause stress to oneself.

The first research question in this study is: What is the level of depression of Zakat recipients among students in UTM? The research objective 1 is to determine the level of depression of Zakat recipients among students in UTM.

This instrument highlights four levels of depression, namely normal, mild, moderate, and severe. Turasvili, T., & Japaridze, M. (2012) found that students would have high levels of depression and low levels of well-being and academic achievement. This is because most of the students' families have exceptionally low incomes due to the social situation in Georgia and must pay high tuition fees for education. Government grants fund only a small percentage of total fees and are not available to all students. This means that most students have moderate levels of emotional well-being, depression, and average self-rated academic performance. The study also found that the students who have medium or outstanding academic level have high index of emotional well-being, sense of life and personal growth of the scale. But the students who use avoidance strategies have high level of depression.

However, the results of this study show that most of the respondents are in the normal level of depression that sixty-two respondents obtained, both mild and moderate are 6 respondents obtained and severe is 3 respondents obtained out of 77 respondents. The findings agree with the findings of Yaacob and Rahman (1997) study that depression in adolescents is closely related to academic performance and problems in school. In this study, depression was found to have an inverse relationship with reading skills, mathematical achievement, and intelligence. Teens who suffer from depression are said to be slower thinkers and have difficulty interacting.

Although most of the respondents are at a normal level of depression, there are still six respondents with a moderate level and three out of seventy-seven respondents with a severe level of depression. This fact is very worrying because if a person is suffering from moderate level of depression, it should be considered as a serious case and the severe depression should be treated by a psychologist.

The research objective 2 is to determine whether there is a relationship between depression and academic achievement of zakat recipients among students in UTM, it was found that there is a positive significant relationship between depression and academic performance of Zakat recipients among students in UTM. The low relationship between depressions in relation to academic performance confirms a previous study by National Longitudinal Study from Adolescent Health, in which depression is not the factor affecting performance in the study (Maughan, 2013).

CONCLUSION

In summary, this study aims to determine the level of depression of zakat recipients among the students of UTM, Johor and whether there is a significant relationship between the depressions

of zakat recipients among the students of UTM, Johor. The results showed that most of the respondents had normal level of depression, sixty-two out of seventy-seven respondents (80.5%). The remaining six respondents were mildly and moderately depressed, representing 7.8% each, and three respondents were severely depressed, representing 3.9% out of 100%. The results also show that there is a positive low relationship between depression and academic achievement of Zakat recipients among UTM students.

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