

## **Developing Innovative Technology in Building Mental Health Resilience Among Private University Students Amid Covid-19 Pandemic**

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### **Abstract**

In this study, research is on developing innovative technology in building mental health resilience during the Covid-19 epidemic among private University students. As we know, suicidal cases, anxiety, and depression, for instance, have increased and this phenomenon has been proven very essential in the global arena. Therefore, the research on the National Health and Morbidity was done by the Ministry of Health Malaysia in 2015 towards 30,000 respondents has shown that 4.2 million people who are 16 years old (29.2% of the population) are having a lot of mental illnesses. This research also aims to develop innovative technology such as a hybrid application for mental health awareness. Therefore, collaborative ideas on how to develop a new module about mental health issues during this pandemic for private university students between the teachers, counselors, clergy, and spiritual practitioners should be given a priority. This research indirectly helps our private University students to cope with and come out with positive ways amid this Covid-19 pandemic situation.

**Key words:** mental health; resilience; hybrid application; pandemic; covid19

### **INTRODUCTION**

The arrival of research about mental health issues has been developed. Everyone has their psychological issue related to daily life. Therefore, the World Federation of Mental Health (WFMH) has determined the theme for Mental Health Day 2018 as 'Young People and the Mental Health in the Changing World'. This calls for us to identify what are the needs of parenting nowadays to develop good of health with positive minds as well as their resilience especially during pandemic. The suicidal cases, anxiety, and depression, for instance, have increased because of the internet influences. This phenomenon has been proven very essential in the global arena.

Research on the National Health and Morbidity was done by the Ministry of Health Malaysia in 2015 towards 30,000 respondents has shown that 4.2 million population which is among adults (29.2% of the population) are having a lot of mental illnesses. Since 2006, this percentage had increased to 11.2%. Research also found

that every 3 out of 10 adults nowadays are having mental health problems. (National Health and Morbidity Survey 2015).

The COVID-19 virus is the phenomenon which has been a very high risk to all of us during this pandemic situation. Therefore, the World Health Organization (WHO) had declared the COVID-19 virus disease, to be a Public Health Emergency of International Concern to all countries around the world in January 2020. This COVID-19 is getting worse when thousands of people were infected in March 2020, until it has been declared as a pandemic situation. This pandemic is not only affected the psychological well-being of parents and workers, but it also gives negative impacts such as mental illnesses to the thousands of people in this country. This article will be a discussion platform to develop an innovative application to help these parents to cope with and understand the level of their psychological well-being during this critical situation.

## **RESEARCH BACKGROUND**

Health is wealth; people always want to be healthy to live a happy life with their loved ones. A healthy lifestyle leads a person to be active and more resourceful. In recent decades, lifestyle has become prime focus to be considered as healthy living around the world what people doing for better life and it also makes other researchers do research-based on healthy lifestyle worldwide. But most people have knowledge in living healthy lifestyle and not know how to cultivate interest for leads healthy life in reality (Dong Wang & Xiao-Hui Xing, 2015).

As we know that living a positive mind is a key component of disease prevention, wellness, and longevity. This research will educate people especially parents on how to combat some potential mental health issues and encountered many kinds of behavior. According to one of the researchers, "*Health is determined by a range of social, environmental and economic factors. People's choice of these aspects can strongly influence their health and general well-being.*" (Mazlina Mansor, 2014)

According to the report by Ministry of health, the major mental illnesses among parents are Generalised Anxiety Disorder (GAD), major depressive disorders and suicidality. The prevalence of GAD, current depression and attempted suicide were 1.7% (95% CI:1.52 – 2.0), 1.8% (95% CI:1.5 – 2.1), and 0.5% (95% CI:0.4 – 0.7) respectively (National Health Morbidity Survey, 2016).

In addition to NHMS 2011, NHMS in 2015 covers mental health problems both in adults and children. The prevalence of mental health problems in were 29.2% (95% CI:27.9 – 30.5). For the Geriatric group aged 60 and above, the prevalence was 24.0%. (95% CI 20.9– 27.5). Therefore, if we can educate parents to understand mental health issues, it will bring awareness for everyone because as parents they will spread awareness for next generations to combat this mental health issue. respectively (National Health Morbidity Survey, 2016).

## **RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

The objective of this study is to develop innovative technology to build mental health resilience among parents based on:

- a. Developing innovative technology such as a hybrid application for mental health awareness,
- b. Measuring the level of Stress, Anxiety and Depression among parents during Covid-19 pandemic,
- c. Organizing Online Mental Health Conference between parents to develop a module about preventing mental health issues in Selangor, Malaysia.

The scope of this study will be based on youth located in Selangor, Malaysia that the researchers have identified as critical in mental health issues. This will also involve the following group of respondents:

- a. Psychiatrist
- b. Counselors
- c. Clergy
- d. Spiritual Practitioners

## **PROBLEM STATEMENT**

Parents nowadays should step up when they face difficulties of lives in these pandemic surroundings. During this era, they should be supported by the professionals such as counselors, social workers and society. Resilience can be boosted to prevent every individual from getting permanent effects of stress which is one of the crucial mental illnesses.

According to researcher Kristina Holmqvist (2013) who had conducted a study focusing on Mental health stated that the innovative technology of mental health is still developing in this country especially in Non-Peninsular of Malaysia. The empirical research about mental illnesses was only focused in Selangor and Kuala Lumpur. For instance, there weren't many types of research were conducted in non-peninsular about the potential of mental health issues as researchers merely conduct this topic research in Peninsular areas in Malaysia.

Our society should enhance their awareness of emotional and psychological issues among parents in this country especially during Covid-19 pandemic. As the effects of the mental health problem are crucial, this awareness among many professional parties should be involved such as the counselors, clergies, psychiatrist, spiritual practitioners to help them built resilience by using the neo-bio-Physio-psycho-social-spiritual. These group should be appointed as the 'first reference' and the ultimate respondents when facing mental illness.

According to the research, mental health issues also will affect our parenting performance. If they are at their peak of stress and depression, it would bring them down to raise their children in many ways. Besides, mental

health issues also may lead to other diseases and health problems such as obesity, the dissatisfaction of their body image, binge eating disorders when they are stressed out. Moreover, research shows that most adults who have mental health issues will feel unhappy, which would lead to many diseases such as heart attack, high blood pressure, excessive migraine, etc.

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

In this study, mix methods approaches will be employed in data collection. The scope of the study will cover the parents who are working in Selangor, Malaysia during pandemic. Nevertheless, field visit will also be conducted outside Selangor depending on the need of the study.

The respondents who will be involved in this qualitative and quantitative study are the parents with different education attainment, job status, period of marriage and parents' income monthly. In this mixed-method, survey and semi-structured interview will be used to gather details and specific data that would reflect the objectives of this study.

To achieve the objective of the study, the other approaches that shall be utilized to cater to the needs of data gathering will be the following:

- a. Apps Innovation
- b. Workshop and seminar
- c. Interview
- d. Focus group
- e. Field visit when necessary

## **RESEARCH OUTCOME**

At the end of this research project, the expected research findings will offer ways to prevent parents from mental health issues. The findings of this research will formulate a Mental Health Application program and approaches to ensure a positive attitude and behavior among parents in the lower and higher income in Selangor. The professional such as counsellors and psychologists are known as the pillar of knowledge and support, the outcome will facilitate them to organize efficient strategies that help them to establish our parental institution which is free from the mental health problems.

Research findings also will enable the participants themselves to discover in-depth the level of their mental illness. They also will understand clearly about this issue and perhaps may assist them to focus more on things that make them happy instead of focusing on things that would bring stresses out in their life.

Nevertheless, it is also expected that the data gathered will allow us to provide a gap analysis between the intervention the psychiatrist, religious experts and spiritual practitioners have received in overcoming the

mental health issues. Indirectly, the suggestions for improvement to enhance the present approaches can be proposed.

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