

The Relationship between Self-Esteem, Social Support, and Life Satisfaction among Residential College Students

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Abstract

A person's life satisfaction can be measured by how happy and satisfied they are with their life. Based on past studies, the element of self-esteem and social support is one of the factors that can influence a person's life satisfaction. Therefore, this study aims to examine the level of relationship between self-esteem, social support, and life satisfaction among residential college students. In addition, this study also aims to identify the most influential and significant factors among the three variables (self-esteem, social support, and life satisfaction). The design of this study is quantitative and will involve a total of 292 respondents who are students at one of the residential in a public university in Malaysia. A simple random sampling technique was used in this study. Several instruments were used in the questionnaire, namely the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES) to measure the level of self-esteem, the Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS) to measure the level of social support, and the Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS) to measure life satisfaction. The statistical analysis used is both descriptive and inferential. Findings showed that self-esteem and social support are both positively related to life satisfaction. This findings implied that by strengthening both self-esteem and social support networks, educational institutions can positively influence life satisfaction, leading to improved academic performance, reduced stress, and better overall mental health outcomes among residential students.

Keywords: Life Satisfaction, Residential College Students, Self-Esteem, Social Support

Introduction

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), mental health refers to a state of well-being in which an individual realizes their own abilities, can face the normal pressures of life, can work productively and is able to contribute to society (WHO, 2022). University students are often associated with depression and high stress. This problem is usually

associated with problems with oneself, family problems, learning problems and also problems with the environment. These three mental health related problems have led to several cases leading to suicide or attempted suicide. A female university student committed suicide by hanging herself in the bedroom of the family home (Kueh, 2021). Suicide is the fourth most common cause of death for those between the ages of 15 and 29 and one of the top 10 causes of mortality worldwide (WHO, 2021). When an individual experiences problems, especially from his environment, it indirectly affects his life. These individuals are especially university students who often face the problems of depression experienced by them every day. This causes, they do not get the happiness that is needed in everyone. There is an increase in cases related to mental health in Malaysia, and this is supported through a report stated to the Ministry of Health Malaysia (KKM) by the Royal Malaysian Police (PDRM) that there is an increase in the trend of suicide among Malaysians, where in 2020, as many as 631 cases compared to 609 cases in 2019 and until last March 2021, a total of 336 suicide cases have been reported as quoted by Health director-general Tan Sri Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah (Choong, 2021). Overall, when a person does not find and feel happiness in their life, it will interfere with the satisfaction of a person's life. An individual will begin to feel their life satisfaction decrease due to problems from their environment. It starts from the problems from their environment that happen repeatedly causing their mental health to be disturbed leading to a low level of life satisfaction especially among students at the university. Clinical psychologist, Levinson (1978) describes growing up as a life phase full of stress and change. These changes and pressures will affect a person's perception of life satisfaction and well-being.

Literature Review

Satisfaction is something that everyone wants to get in their life. Life satisfaction is a form of cognitive evaluation process where a person measures their life based on unique characteristics according to what the individual thinks and determines (Pavot & Diener, 1993). An individual will use various ways to get the satisfaction in life that he wants. Marsam and Mamat (2018) stated that life satisfaction is not only an evaluation of life but it also involves the recognition, gratitude, confidence and appreciation of a person in his life. When a person can achieve what he wants, it will lead to happiness and well-being in that person's life. According to Veenhoven (2006), happiness is often associated with the achievement of a person feeling comfortable and satisfied with their life.

The concept of self-esteem was introduced for the first time by David Hume, a Scottish Enlightenment thinker around the 18th century where Hume stated that it is important for an individual to evaluate and think about himself well because this will provide a motivational function within the individual. further allowing them to explore their full potential (Cheema & Bhardwaj, 2021). This concept was later developed around 1965 by Rosenberg, where according to him, self-esteem or self-esteem can be defined as behavior that is liked or disliked towards oneself and acts as an affective evaluation of oneself (Rosenberg, 1965). In other words, this self-esteem can be described generally as an individual's way of looking at and evaluating himself about his worth, advantages and abilities.

Social support refers to the help or encouragement given to an individual to other individuals who may be facing problems or challenges in order to reduce the burden of stress on him (Knoll et al., 2018). This social support involves any form of support or encouragement

that can help a person mentally and physically. There are three forms of support that can be given which are emotional support, practical support and informational support. Marsam and Mamat (2018), explained in the study that this aspect of social support plays an important role in a person's life. When this aspect is fulfilled, it allows an individual to achieve his goals and fulfill his wishes and lead to the well-being of his life. Benhke et al. (2011) and McMahon et al. (2011) argues that individuals who do not receive social support cause them to have low self-esteem and feel unappreciated.

Jafar and Hasan (2016), reported that there is a moderate positive significant relationship between self-esteem and life satisfaction. This is proven through a study that examines self-esteem and life satisfaction involving 316 respondents among second-year students in a secondary school. Through regression analysis, it shows that self-esteem factors such as friends, school and family have a significant relationship with student life satisfaction. This shows that when there is an increase in self-esteem among school students, their life satisfaction also increases. Therefore, attention to the aspect of self-esteem needs to be increased to get better life satisfaction because a person's self-esteem can affect their life satisfaction. Marsam and Mamat (2018) stated that there is a strong significant relationship between social support and life satisfaction among residents of the Narcotic Addiction Rehabilitation Center (PUSPEN) Benta, Pahang. This study was conducted to examine the relationship between the level of religious appreciation and life satisfaction with social support and involved a total of 72 respondents and all of them were male residents of PUSPEN. Social support is very important for individuals who are prisoners or who are in rehabilitation centers involving drugs because for the rehabilitation process, support from the people around them can help them build a better life than before. This social support helps them build positive emotions and form good morals.

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Asif (2019), has conducted a study on the effect of perceived social support on self-esteem and life satisfaction among university students. This study involved 100 students at the University of Karachi. The results of the study show that there is a significant positive relationship between self-esteem and social support among university students, however, a weak positive relationship is shown between social support and life satisfaction. The results of this study also show that there is no significant difference in the perception of social support from family and gender, but a significant difference is shown in the perception of social support from friends. In addition, female university students have higher life satisfaction than male university students. However, self-esteem shows no difference between female and male university students. Overall, this study is quite accurate because the level of significance is quite high where there is only a one percent chance that the results

may have occurred sampling error. Therefore, social support from the family such as care, upbringing and good upbringing since childhood is very important.

Based on research conducted by Hilwa Abdullah and Nor Asyirah Hamidi (2019), a total of 300 respondents aged 18 to 25 years were involved. This study examines social support and self-esteem as indicators of depression among students of Institutes of Higher Education (IPT). The results of the study show that there is a significant relationship between self-esteem and depression. While the relationship between social support and depression has a significant negative relationship with depression. It is clear that, both variables are significantly related. Therefore, it can be seen how important self-esteem and social support is for an individual to have a prosperous life, especially for mental health.

Asif (2019) has conducted a study on the effect of perceived social support on self-esteem and life satisfaction among university students. This study involved 100 students at the University of Karachi. Based on this study, there is a significant positive relationship between self-esteem and social support among university students. The significant relationship between self-esteem and social support shows that an individual's increased self-esteem can lead to a more productive lifestyle and the life support received from those around them also helps make life more prosperous. According to a study by Shazili et. al. (2020), showed a significant relationship between adolescent bonding style with parents and life satisfaction. This proves that the higher a teenager's bond with their parents, the higher their satisfaction in life. This shows that an individual will find life satisfaction if they meet the needs of self-confidence and social support, especially from parents. The findings of the study conducted (Chen et. al., 2017) found that the bonding style of children and parents, acceptance of social support, self-confidence and life satisfaction are interrelated. Therefore, the most important social support in a person's life is to be closely related to the support of parents to give a happier and more prosperous life in the future.

According to Ali and Raop (2021), there is a significant relationship between self-esteem and bullying behavior conducted on 250 high school students in Kuala Lumpur. Based on this study, the self-esteem of bullied individuals and bullies is at a low level compared to teenagers who are not directly involved in bullying. This study is supported by previous studies that show the same results. An individual who has low self-esteem, especially among individuals who are bullied, causes the individual involved to feel difficult to overcome their problems and feel unable to achieve the highest level of self-efficacy well (Mann et al., 2004). This is because, the individual does not have confidence and trust in himself. Therefore, this bullying behavior needs to be constantly monitored at the school level because it can make a person not get the happiness they are looking for and cause their life to be miserable.

Methodology

Research Design

This study is a quantitative study and uses a correlational study design. A correlational study design is used to describe the relationship between variables (Creswell & Creswell, 2022). The researcher used this research method to identify the relationship between the independent variables, namely self-esteem and social support, and the dependent variable studied, namely life satisfaction. This study also uses descriptive and inferential statistics

because it has research objectives regarding levels and relationships that are closely related to correlation.

Instruments

The research instrument comprises of four sections such as Section A: Demographic Information, Section B: Self-Esteem, Section C: Social Support, and Section D: Life Satisfaction.

Section A: Demographic Information

Part A contains 4 question items that describe the respondent's personal information. Basic demographic information of the respondents was checked using a demographic questionnaire such as age, gender, race, and study program.

Section B: Self-Esteem

Part B aims to measure the respondents' self-esteem. The respondent's level of self-esteem was measured using the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES) developed by Rosenberg in 1965. The RSES contains a 10-item scale that measures global self-esteem by measuring both positive and negative feelings about oneself. The scale is believed to be uni-dimensional. All items are answered using a 4-point Likert scale format ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree.

According to Juhod (2019), the validity of this self-esteem instrument has been determined through the validity of the content and the validity of the idea of the instrument by two experienced panelists in the field under study. Each item has been translated into Malay by a language translator from the Special Science Campus Teacher Education Institute. Also, an experienced English teacher was chosen to translate items from Malay to English again. This translation process is done using the back to back translation method. RSES is one of the measurement tools that has a high Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient of 0.92 to measure the self-esteem of an individual.

Section C: Social Support

Part B aims to identify social support consisting of family, friends and key motivators. The questionnaire in this section contains 12 question items that use a 7-point Likert scale. The level of student social support was measured using the Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS). According to Juhod (2019), the validity of this social support instrument has been determined through content validity and validity of the instrument's idea by two experienced panelists in the field under study. Each item has been translated into Malay by a language translator from the Special Science Campus Teacher Education Institute. Next, an experienced English teacher was chosen to translate items from Malay to English again. This translation process is done using the back to back translation method. As a result of the pilot study made by the researcher, the Cronbach Alpha reliability index obtained is 0.82 (Juhod, 2019).

Section D: Life Satisfaction

Part D is used to measure the level of student life satisfaction. Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS) was used to measure students' level of life satisfaction. Diener developed a life satisfaction test tool (Satisfaction With Life Scale) to assess a person's overall level of happiness (Diener et al., 2013). According to Diener and friends, this element of life

satisfaction, is evaluated from the overall cognitive aspect of a person about the quality of his life, depending on the criteria determined by the person. This section contains five statements using a 5-point likert scale.

The Malay version of the SWLS instrument was taken from a study conducted by Swami and Chamorro-Premuzic in 2009. According to Swami and Chamorro-Premuzic (2009), this SWLS has a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.83 based on a study conducted on Malay respondents and Chinese. The SWLS instrument in the Malay version has gone through the back to back translation method. Where at the beginning, this instrument was translated into Malay and then translated back into English by a translator who had no connection to the field under study.

Sample

The population of this study consists of residential college students in one public university in Malaysia. The selection of this population is based on the criteria of college students who reside there in the current year, ages starting from 19 years and above, who are studying full-time and reside in this residential college on a regular basis in the current year. Students from other colleges were excluded from being respondents in this research. The total population in this study is 1200 college students as study respondents.

This study does not need to involve all members of the population if the sample used can give an overview to understand a problem that occurs (Gall et al., 2005). Therefore, this study ensures that the sample selected and used reflects the characteristics studied. The determination of the number of samples required is based on the determination of sample size presented by Cochran (1977). This study involves a population (N) of 1200 people. The sample size determination method is as follows:

$$n_0 = \frac{Z^2 pq}{e^2}$$

First formula:

n_0 = fixed sample size

Z^2 = z- value at the reliability stage or significance stage 95% ($Z = 1.96$)

p = population proportion (= 0.5)

q = level of confidence (= 0.5)

e^2 = acceptable margin of error ($e = 0.05$)

Therefore,

$$n_0 = \frac{(1.96)^2(0.5)(0.5)}{0.05^2}$$

$$= 384.16$$

$$= 384 \text{ (the value of a large population sample size)}$$

Second formula:

$$n = \frac{n_0}{1 + \frac{n_0 - 1}{N}}$$

n = sample size

N = population size

Thus,

$$n = 384$$

$$\begin{aligned} & \frac{384 - 1}{1 + 1070} \\ & = 282.35 \\ & = 282 \text{ responden} \end{aligned}$$

Therefore, based on the sample size calculation made, a total of 282 respondents from the total population required for this study.

Respondents' Demography

Respondents who have participated in this study meet all the required criteria, namely students who reside in residential colleges. Based on Table 2.1, some information is required namely gender, age, race and year of study. The highest respondent in terms of gender is female (n = 119, 40.8%) while the male respondent is (n = 173, 59.2%). Out of that number, 100 people (34.2%) are of Malay ethnicity, 64 people (21.9%) of Chinese ethnicity, 47 people (16.1%) of Indian ethnicity, 32 people (11.0%) of Sabah Bumiputera ethnicity, 29 people (9.9%) of Bumiputera ethnicity Sarawak and the remaining 20 people (6.8%) others. The majority of respondents were between 22 - 24 years old, that is 121 people (41.4%), 120 people (41.1%) were between 19 - 21 years old and 51 people (17.5%) were 25 years old and above. Based on Table 2.1 also shows that the majority of the students involved are 3rd year which is 80 people (27.4%), 2nd year students are 79 people (27.1%), 1st year students are 66 people (22.6%) and 4th year students are 65 people (22.3%).

Table 2.1

Demographics of Respondents (N = 292)

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	119	40.8
Female	173	59.2
Ethnicity		
Malay	100	34.2
Chinese	64	21.9
Indian	47	16.1
Sabahan Bumiputra	32	11.0
Sarawakian Bumiputra	29	9.9
Other	20	6.8
Age		
19 – 21	120	41.1
22 – 24	121	41.4
25 and above	51	17.5
Years of Study		
1	66	22.6
2	79	27.1
3	80	27.4
4	65	22.3

Data Collection Procedure

Once the study design was chosen, the data collection process was established. The data collection process was done by the researcher himself by dividing the questionnaire to the respondents who had been set. The use of questionnaires is a quantitative method that has been used to help obtain the desired information and data. To ensure that the process of answering the given questionnaire runs smoothly, the researcher has included a guide to answer for each part of the question. This is to get correct and effective data and make it easier for respondents to answer easily. The right instrument is used to get the right data in this study. These existing instruments only help researchers not to run away from the research that is being done, but the results of using these instruments are not entirely able to provide good data. Therefore, the researcher has examined each item and instrument used in accordance with the selected sample and achieved the necessary research requirements.

Findings*Level of Self-Esteem, Social Support and Life Satisfaction*

The level of self-esteem of respondents is measured based on the interpretation of low, medium and high scores. Through this interpretation, respondents will be categorized into three levels of self-esteem, i.e. a score of 10 to 20 indicates a low level of self-esteem, a score of 21 to 30 indicates a moderate level of self-esteem while a high level of self-esteem is indicated by a score of 31 to 40. Table 3.1 shows analysis of self-esteem items based on frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation.

Table 3.1
Level of Self-Esteem

Self-Esteem	Frequency	Percentage	Mean	Standard Deviation
Low	33	11.30		
Moderate	41	14.04		
High	218	74.66	3.17	0.63
Total	292	100		

Based on Table 3.1, the minimum score obtained by the respondents is 10 while the highest score is 40. The frequency and percentage results for this level of self-esteem show that 33 respondents (11.30%) are at the low self-esteem, 41 respondents (14.04%) were at a moderate level of self-esteem and 218 respondents (74.66%) were at a high level of self-esteem. The mean value and standard deviation from this study are 3.17 and 0.63. The highest frequency is 218 which shows the level of self-esteem among residential college students is high.

The level of social support of respondents will be measured based on the interpretation of low, medium and high scores. A score in the range between 12 to 36 indicates a low level of social support, a score in the range between 37 to 60 indicates a moderate level of social support and a high level of social support score is indicated by a score in the range between 61 to 84. Table 3.2 shows the analysis social support items based on frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation.

Table 3.2
Level of Social Support

Sokongan Sosial	Frequency	Percentage	Mean	Standard Deviation
Low	22	8		
Moderate	42	14		
High	228	78	5.56	1.11
Total	292	100		

Based on Table 3.2, the minimum score that can be obtained by respondents is 12 while the highest score is 84. The frequency and percentage results for this level of social support show that 22 respondents (8%) are at a low level of social support, 42 respondents (14 %) are at a moderate level of social support while 228 respondents (78%) are at a high level of social support. The mean value and standard deviation from this study are 5.56 and 1.11. The highest frequency is 228 which shows the level of social support among high residential college students.

The level of life satisfaction is measured based on a score range between 5 to 9 indicating a level of life satisfaction which is very dissatisfied, a score range between 10 to 14 indicating a level of life satisfaction which is satisfied, a score range of 15 indicating a level of life satisfaction which is neutral, a score range between 16 to 20 shows the level of life

satisfaction which is satisfied and the score range between 21 to 25 shows the level of life satisfaction which is very satisfied. Table 4.6 shows the analysis of life satisfaction items based on frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation.

Table 3.3
Level of Life Satisfaction

Kepuasan Hidup	Frequency	Percentage	Mean	Standard Deviation(
Very Dissatisfied	15	5.14		
Not Satisfied	24	8.22		
Neutral	18	6.16		
Satisfied	66	22.60	3.98	0.94
Very Satisfied	169	57.88		
Total	292	100		

Based on Table 3.3, the minimum score that respondents will get for life satisfaction is 5 while the highest score is 25. The frequency and percentage results for this level of life satisfaction show that 15 respondents (5.14%) are very dissatisfied with life satisfaction, 24 respondents (8.22%) were not satisfied with life satisfaction, 18 respondents (6.16%) were neutral with life satisfaction, 66 respondents (22.60%) were satisfied with life satisfaction while 169 respondents (57.88%) were very satisfied with life satisfaction. The mean value and standard deviation from this study are 3.98 and 0.94. The highest frequency is 169 which shows the level of life satisfaction is very satisfied among residential college students.

The Relationship between Self-Esteem and Life Satisfaction among Residential College Students

The second objective of this study was to identify the relationship between self-esteem and life satisfaction among college students. Analysis was done using Spearman Rho correlation based on data collection using SPSS. The analysis made has been shown as in Table 3.4.

Table 3.4
Spearman Rho Correlation Analysis between Self-Esteem and Social Support with Life Satisfaction

Variables	Life Satisfaction
Self-Esteem	.546***
Social Support	.549***

***Sig (2 tailed) .000

Based on Table 3.4, the Spearman Rho correlation value between self-esteem and life satisfaction among residential college students is .546 while the significant value is .000. This shows that there is a significant relationship between self-esteem and life satisfaction among residential college students and shows that the value of the correlation coefficient is ($r = .546$, $p < 0.05$). Therefore, null hypothesis 1 is rejected because the researcher found that there is a significant relationship between self-esteem and life satisfaction among residential college

students. Based on Table 3.4, the findings show that there is a strong positive relationship between self-esteem and life satisfaction among residential college students.

The Relationship between Social Support and Life Satisfaction among Residential College Students

The objective of this third study was to identify the relationship between social support and life satisfaction among college students. Analysis was done using Spearman Rho correlation based on data collection using SPSS. The analysis made as shown in Table 3.4.

Based on Table 3.4, the Spearman Rho correlation value between social support and life satisfaction among students in residential colleges is .549 while the significant value is .000. This shows that there is a significant relationship between social support and life satisfaction among residential college students and shows that the value of the correlation coefficient is ($r = .549, p < 0.05$). Therefore, null hypothesis 2 is rejected because the researcher found that there is a significant relationship between social support and life satisfaction among residential college students. Based on Table 3.5, the findings show that there is a strong positive relationship between social support and life satisfaction among residential college students.

Table 3.5
Correlation Strength by Cohen (1988)

r	Strength
.90	Almost perfect
.70 - .89	Very strong
.50 - .69	Strong
.30 - .49	Moderate
.10 - .09	Very weak
.00	Not related

Discussion

Levels between Self-Esteem, Social Support and Life Satisfaction among Residential College Students

This discussion begins by discussing the level of the dependent variable, which is life satisfaction, followed by the independent variable, which is self-esteem and social support. In this study, the results show that the level of life satisfaction among the respondents is high, which is at a very satisfied level of satisfaction. This shows that students are happy with their current student life. According to Veenhoven (2006), happiness is often associated with the achievement of a person feeling comfortable and satisfied with their life. This can be linked to a study obtained where students show a very high level of satisfaction because they are in a phase of happiness that they feel in their lives. These students show that they can achieve what they want in life. This is because life satisfaction is not only an evaluation of life but it also involves the recognition, gratitude, confidence and appreciation of a person in his life (Marsam & Mamat, 2018).

The findings of the study on self-esteem show that the majority of students are at a high level of self-esteem and only a small number have a moderate and low level of self-esteem. This self-esteem can be defined as behavior that is liked or disliked towards oneself and acts

as an affective evaluation of oneself (Rosenberg, 1965). Based on this statement, it can be linked to the results of the study that a high level of self-esteem shows that students can evaluate themselves well and can be seen through the behavior shown and also the feelings or emotions that are experienced towards themselves and others. Therefore, students who have this level of self-esteem will tend to have a positive character, knowing what suits them because students know their strengths and abilities.

The findings of the study for the independent variable that is social support show that the majority of students are at a high level of social support. Social support refers to the encouragement given to an individual by other individuals who may be facing problems or challenges in order to reduce the burden of stress on themselves (Knoll et al., 2018). The findings of this study show that students will get help from other people if they have a problem or are in a situation that needs someone, whether it is support from family, friends or other people who are significant to them. The social support given by other people affects the student's life to some extent. What can be concluded through this study, students who have high social support enjoy their lives more while students who have low social support do the opposite. Students with a moderate level of social support are likely to be motivated by one of the significant motivators.

Relationship between Self-Esteem and Life Satisfaction among Residential College Students

The results of the study show that there is a strong positive relationship between the variables of self-esteem and life satisfaction. This means that if self-esteem is high then life satisfaction is also high. Both variables show a one-way relationship where if one is high then the other will be high. The findings of this study show that students who have self-esteem cause them to live a good life or find happiness in their lives. Students tend to be satisfied with their lives.

Research findings from previous studies also report significant results between the two variables. Jafar and Hasan (2016) reported that there is a moderate positive significant relationship between self-esteem and life satisfaction. Through regression analysis, it shows that self-esteem factors such as friends, school and family have a significant relationship with student life satisfaction. This shows that when there is an increase in self-esteem among school students, their life satisfaction also increases. Therefore, attention to the aspect of self-esteem needs to be increased to get better life satisfaction because a person's self-esteem can affect their life satisfaction.

Relationship between Social Support and Life Satisfaction among Residential College Students

This study shows that there is a strong positive relationship between social support and life satisfaction among residential college students. This proves that if social support is high then the level of student life satisfaction is also high. These two variables are interrelated and influence each other. Students who have social support whether from family, friends or other main motivators, it somewhat influences the student to be satisfied with their life.

The findings of this study are consistent with some of the results of previous studies. Marsam and Mamat (2018) stated that there is a strong significant relationship between social support and life satisfaction among residents of the Narcotic Addiction Rehabilitation Center (PUSPEN) Benta, Pahang. Social support is very important for individuals who are

prisoners or who are in rehabilitation centers involving drugs because for the recovery process the support from the people around them can help them build a better life than before. This social support helps them build positive emotions and form good morals.

Nevertheless, based on research that has been done regarding the effect of perceived social support on self-esteem and life satisfaction among university students (Muhammad Asif, 2019). The results of the study show that there is a weak positive relationship between social support and life satisfaction. In addition, female university students have higher life satisfaction than male university students.

Implications

The main theory used in this study is Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory (1943) through his book "A Theory of Human Motivation". Maslow believed that an individual has a unique desire to be themselves, that is, to get everything they want. However, some more basic needs must be met such as physiological, safety, social, satisfaction and personal needs to achieve these goals. The results of the study found that the aspect of satisfaction is very important to fulfill in order to achieve goals in life, especially the things you want achieved in life. Therefore, a new contribution can be made to Maslow's Hierarchy Theory in the highlighted concept.

Based on Choice Theory, according to Glasser (1967) every human being has a healthy drive within them and every human being has a desire to achieve happiness in life. There are five needs that every human needs and wants to fulfill for life satisfaction, namely love and belonging, power, freedom, fun and survival. Corey (2005) states that at least one need is not met if a person has dissatisfaction in their life. The results of the study found that social support and self-esteem are among the elements in the five necessary and desirable needs to gain satisfaction in life. The element of self-esteem can be linked to the five needs and the element of social support can be linked to the need for love and a sense of belonging. Therefore, the results of this study support the approach highlighted by Glasser.

The positive relationship between self-esteem, social support, and life satisfaction among residential college students has several practical implications for institutions, administrators, and mental health professionals seeking to improve student well-being. firstly, this finding implies on enhancing student support systems. Since social support is closely linked to both self-esteem and life satisfaction, colleges should prioritize the development of strong support networks within residential communities. This can be done by fostering peer mentorship programs, creating inclusive student organizations, and ensuring easy access to academic and personal support services. Organizing regular social and recreational activities can help students form meaningful relationships, which boosts both their social support and sense of belonging, thereby improving their overall life satisfaction.

The positive relationship between self-esteem, social support, and life satisfaction among residential college students has several practical implications for institutions, administrators, and mental health professionals seeking to improve student well-being. Firstly, this finding implies on enhancing student support systems (Walton & Cohen, 2011). Since social support is closely linked to both self-esteem and life satisfaction, colleges should prioritize the development of strong support networks within residential communities. This

can be done by fostering peer mentorship programs, creating inclusive student organizations, and ensuring easy access to academic and personal support services. Organizing regular social and recreational activities can help students form meaningful relationships, which boosts both their social support and sense of belonging, thereby improving their overall life satisfaction.

The findings also implies on promoting mental health services. Given the connection between self-esteem and life satisfaction, it is essential for colleges to offer mental health services that help students build and maintain healthy self-esteem. Healthy self-esteem acts as a buffer against mental health challenges such as anxiety and depression. Students with low self-esteem often have a critical inner voice that can lead to pervasive feelings of inadequacy and hopelessness, which are common symptoms of depression. Research has consistently linked higher self-esteem with lower levels of depression and anxiety (Orth & Robins, 2014). Maintaining a positive self-view can help students navigate stressful situations more effectively, reducing the overall risk of mental health issues. Therefore, counseling centers should provide workshops on self-esteem, stress management, and emotional well-being, as well as offer individual counseling services for students struggling with low self-esteem. Providing training on self-compassion, resilience, and coping strategies can help students develop a more positive self-image, which directly enhances their life satisfaction.

Designing inclusive and positive residential environments is one of the practical implication of this study. The findings emphasize the importance of creating a positive residential environment where students feel safe, valued, and supported. A classic study has emphasized the role of residential staff in identifying and supporting students facing emotional and social challenges (Cutrona et al, 1994). Residential staff should be trained to recognize signs of social isolation and emotional distress among students and provide appropriate interventions is shown to have a positive effect on student well-being. The residential administration and management should facilitate activities that promote inclusiveness and cooperation among the students. By fostering a supportive and cohesive residential culture, students are more likely to experience a sense of belonging and increased life satisfaction. In addition, Wolff et al. (2017) believed that such activities help build a community atmosphere that supports both personal growth and educational achievement.

Lastly, the findings also implies on developing peer-based initiatives. Given that peer relationships significantly contribute to social support, colleges should encourage peer-based initiatives such as peer counseling programs, study groups, and support circles. These initiatives provide students with opportunities to seek advice and emotional support from their peers, which not only boosts their self-esteem but also enhances their satisfaction with life in college. Additionally, residential colleges can create student ambassador or buddy systems, pairing upperclassmen with freshmen to help them navigate their new environment.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study confirms the positive relationship between self-esteem, social support, and life satisfaction among residential college students. The findings highlight the importance of these two factors in shaping students' overall life satisfaction. Given that self-esteem influences motivation, resilience, and emotional stability, and social support provides a sense of belonging, encouragement, and stress relief, their combined impact plays a critical

role in students' overall well-being and mental health. By focusing on enhancing self-esteem and fostering stronger social support networks, educational institutions can play a significant role in improving students' well-being, academic success, and mental health. These insights highlight the needs for targeted interventions that address the emotional and social needs of students in residential colleges, ensuring a more inclusive, supportive, and satisfying student experience. Creating an environment where students feel valued, heard, and supported can lead to higher retention rates, improved academic performance, and enhanced personal growth, ultimately contributing to their long-term success and well-being.

This research contributes theoretically by integrating established psychological constructs - self-esteem (measured via Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale) and social support (assessed through the Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support) - into a unified framework to explore their collective impact on life satisfaction among residential college students. It extends existing literature by confirming the positive relationship between these variables in a non-Western, multicultural academic setting, particularly within Malaysia's unique residential college system, where communal living intensifies social dynamics. Contextually, the study addresses rising mental health challenges in Malaysian universities, evidenced by increasing suicide rates and stress-related issues, by identifying actionable factors (self-esteem and social support) that institutions can target through interventions. Its significance lies in bridging a gap in localized data, offering evidence-based strategies to enhance student well-being through structured support networks and confidence-building programs, which could reduce academic attrition and improve mental health outcomes in a region grappling with these pressing issues

Conflict of Interest

The author(s) declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

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