



# Positive Psychology of Malaysian University Students: Impacts of Engagement, Motivation, Self-Compassion, and Well-being on Mental Health

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## Abstract

Malaysia plays a key role in education of the Asia Pacific, expanding its scholarly output rapidly. However, mental health of Malaysian students is challenging, and their help-seeking is low because of stigma. This study explored the relationships between mental health and positive psychological constructs (academic engagement, motivation, self-compassion, and well-being), and evaluated the relative contribution of each positive psychological construct to mental health in Malaysian students. An opportunity sample of 153 students completed the measures regarding these constructs. Correlation, regression, and mediation analyses were conducted. Engagement, amotivation, self-compassion, and well-being were associated with, and predicted large variance in mental health. Self-compassion was the strongest independent predictor of mental health among all the positive psychological constructs. Findings can imply the strong links between mental health and positive psychology, especially self-compassion. Moreover, intervention studies to examine the effects of self-compassion training on mental health of Malaysian students appear to be warranted.

**Keywords** Malaysian students · Positive psychology · Mental health · Self-compassion · Academic engagement

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