



## Mental Health Status Among UNIMAS Medical Students During the Pandemic Covid-19

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Article Info	Abstract
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## INTRODUCTION

Mental health is the "foundation for well-being and effective functioning for an individual and a community," by World Health Organization (WHO).<sup>1</sup> Mental health standards vary as people's behaviors change across time, region, and society.<sup>2</sup> Poor mental health maintenance will lead to depression, stress, and anxiety. People with "depressed mood, loss of interest or pleasure, decreased energy, feelings of guilt or low self-worth, disturbed sleep or appetite, and poor concentration" are called depressed.<sup>3</sup> Stress is defined as an emotional disturbance when stressors cause changes.<sup>4</sup> Anxiety is characterized as the feeling of apprehension and physiological arousal.<sup>5</sup>

Undergraduate medical students must undergo arduous study and training for 5 to 6 years.<sup>6</sup> Kulsoom and Afsar mentioned that adequate high-level knowledge and skill should be acquired during this period to overcome life-long challenges independently.<sup>6</sup> As a result, medical students are more likely to suffer from mental illness. In order to graduate from medical school, students need to have high achievement in clinical assessments, assignments, and examinations. As a consequence, students often have no free time for personal interests. Iqbal et al. showed that over half of Indian medical students were sensitive to the effects of depression, anxiety, and stress in research performed in India.<sup>7</sup>

The Covid-19 pandemic has spread around the world.<sup>8</sup> Medical students' mental health is deteriorating due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Covid-19, according to O' Byrne et al., will impact the educational integrity of medical pro-

grams.<sup>7,9,10,11,12,13</sup> Many universities have canceled the clinical clerkship to minimize exposure to Covid-19.<sup>14,15</sup> This delays clinical posting and affects academic records. Besides, problem-based learning interaction, face-to-face anatomy dissection, group discussions, and local examination were also affected.<sup>16</sup> The delivery of academic services is easily disrupted because of Covid-19, such swift and unparalleled reorganization cause many students distress.<sup>17</sup> Direct learning has been replaced by e-learning which reduced collaborative experiences among students.<sup>14</sup> Based on Rajab et al., 57.5% of students encountered technical problems while 35% had poor time management when dealing with online education<sup>8,17</sup> This leads to negative thinking among students. This result is proven by research conducted by Sartorao Filho et al., 46.17% of medical students experienced moderate or severe anxiety symptoms, while 64.41% had moderate or severe depressive symptoms during the pandemic.<sup>18</sup> Given the high prevalence of poor mental health among students throughout Covid-19, research to better understand mental health is critical. A study done among medical students at Universiti Putra Malaysia reported that mental health among clinical students is significantly affected among quarantined clinical students compared to preclinical students during the pandemic.<sup>9</sup>

Therefore, the study aims to assess UNIMAS medical students' mental health during the Covid-19 pandemic. In addition, this research is aimed to discover the factors that influence mental health and the coping mechanism to improve mental health problems. The findings