



The Relationship Between Student Stress and Coping Strategies Among Students at Universiti Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia

Nor Aqilah Binti Mohd Noor¹, Siti Marhamah Kamarul Arifain^{2*}, Muhammad Yasin Omar Mokhtar⁴,
Mohd Zulfakar Mohd Nawi¹, Nurul Ashikin Ismail³

¹Department of Vocational Education, Faculty of Technical and Vocational Education, Universiti Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia, Malaysia

²Department of Professional Education and Postgraduates, Faculty of Technical and Vocational Education, Universiti Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia, Malaysia

³Department of Technology Studies, Faculty of Technical and Vocational Education, Universiti Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia, Malaysia

⁴Universiti Islam Melaka, Malaysia

*Corresponding Author

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2026.100800472>

Received: 11 August 2026; Accepted: 26 August 2026; Published: 08 September 2026

ABSTRACT

Student stress remains an important concern in higher education, as it can influence students' psychological well-being, academic performance, and adjustment to university life. Although stress and coping have received considerable attention in previous research, evidence on how these two factors are related among undergraduate students at Universiti Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia (UTHM) is still limited. This study therefore examined the level of stress experienced by UTHM undergraduates and explored its relationship with the coping strategies they used. A quantitative, cross-sectional correlational design was employed, involving 371 undergraduate students from different faculties and years of study who were selected through stratified random sampling. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire adapted from the Student Stress Inventory (SSI) and the Brief COPE Inventory and analyzed using descriptive statistics and Pearson correlation analysis. The results showed that the students experienced a moderate level of stress ($M = 2.71$, $SD = 0.918$). A significant positive relationship was also found between student stress and coping strategies ($r = .372$, $p < .001$). This suggests that students tended to make greater use of coping strategies as their level of stress increased. Accordingly, the hypothesis proposing a significant relationship between student stress and coping strategies was supported. These findings add to the existing understanding of stress and coping among university students, particularly within the Malaysian higher education setting. From a practical perspective, the results highlight the need for universities to strengthen stress-management initiatives and psychological support while helping students develop appropriate and adaptive ways of coping with the academic and environmental demands of university life.

Keywords: student stress; coping strategies; university students

INTRODUCTION

Higher education institutions play an important role in preparing graduates with the knowledge, skills, and personal capabilities required to meet the demands of an increasingly competitive environment. The university experience, however, is not without challenges. Students are often required to balance academic responsibilities with time constraints, personal commitments, and the process of adjusting to a new social and learning environment (Hashim et al., 2021). Managing these demands can be difficult, particularly when several challenges occur at the same time. As a result, stress has become a common concern among university students

and may affect not only their psychological well-being but also their motivation, satisfaction with learning, and academic achievement (Zhao, 2024; Hashim et al., 2021).

The sources of stress experienced by university students are diverse and may change throughout their period of study. Academic responsibilities such as assignments, examinations, presentations, and project work often occur alongside other pressures, including financial concerns, social relationships, and adjustment to university life. The impact of these demands becomes more apparent when students perceive that the resources available to them are insufficient to manage the challenges they face. Under such circumstances, prolonged or excessive stress may interfere with students' emotional stability, motivation to learn, and ability to perform effectively in their studies. Zhao (2024), for instance, found that excessive academic stress was associated with lower learning satisfaction and poorer academic achievement. In a similar vein, Hameed et al. (2024) reported that students with higher levels of stress may experience greater difficulty in regulating their emotions and sustaining their motivation to learn. Taken together, these findings suggest that student stress should not be viewed merely as a temporary response to academic demands, but as an issue that may have broader implications for students' educational experiences and psychological functioning.

In response to these challenges, students employ various coping strategies, including problem-solving, time management, emotional regulation, and seeking social support. Waterhouse and Samra (2025) emphasised that the effectiveness of coping strategies depends on an individual's ability to appraise stressful situations and respond to them appropriately. Despite the growing body of literature on student stress and coping strategies, these variables have frequently been examined independently, while empirical evidence concerning the relationship between student stress and coping strategies within the specific context of Universiti Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia (UTHM) remains limited. Addressing this contextual gap is important for developing a more comprehensive understanding of how students manage stress within the university environment.

Therefore, this study aims to determine the level of stress among UTHM students and to examine the relationship between student stress and coping strategies. The findings are expected to provide valuable empirical evidence to inform university administrators and relevant stakeholders in developing appropriate intervention and support programmes aimed at enhancing students' psychological well-being and promoting academic success.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Stress has become an important issue in higher education because of its implications for students' well-being, academic progress, and adjustment to university life. For many students, stress develops as they attempt to manage several academic responsibilities at the same time. Assignments, examinations, project deadlines, time constraints, and expectations to perform well can place considerable pressure on students. Yet, their experience of stress is not determined by academic demands alone. The environment in which students study and interact may also influence how they respond to these pressures. Factors such as the quality of the learning environment, availability of university facilities, social relationships, and support from people around them can either ease or intensify the challenges they experience.

This broader understanding of student stress is reflected in previous research. Mofatteh (2020) identified several sources of stress among university students, ranging from academic workload and pressure to achieve to uncertainty about the future and insufficient social support. When such pressures persist without appropriate ways of managing them, they may affect students' psychological well-being and, consequently, their engagement with learning. The university environment is therefore particularly relevant when considering how students experience and manage stress. Li et al. (2023) showed that social relationships, academic support, learning facilities, and the overall campus climate were associated with students' stress and mental well-being. This suggests that the same academic demands may be experienced differently depending on the environment and support available to students.

Academic and environmental pressures rarely occur separately in university life. Students are often required to meet academic expectations while also adjusting to changes in learning systems, social relationships, and their

surrounding environment. Browning et al. (2021) noted that changes in the learning environment, when combined with increasing academic demands, can contribute to greater stress among university students. This reflects the complexity of student stress, which extends beyond academic workload and may develop from several interconnected aspects of university life. Considering both academic and environmental sources of stress is therefore important for understanding the actual pressures students experience throughout their studies.

How students respond to these pressures is equally important. Experiencing stress does not necessarily mean that every student will react in the same way, as their responses may depend on how they interpret a stressful situation and the resources available to deal with it. This perspective is consistent with the Transactional Model of Stress and Coping developed by Lazarus and Folkman (1984). The model explains stress as a process involving an individual's appraisal of a situation and the coping responses used to manage its demands. In this sense, the impact of a stressful experience is shaped not only by the stressor itself but also by how students perceive and respond to it.

Previous research has shown that coping responses may differ according to the level and nature of stress experienced by students. Active approaches such as problem-solving, planning, managing time, and seeking social support may help students deal more effectively with stressful situations and support their psychological well-being (Karyotaki et al., 2020). Other responses, particularly avoidance or withdrawal, may be less helpful and can potentially interfere with students' daily functioning and academic responsibilities. For this reason, understanding student stress requires attention not only to how much stress students experience, but also to what they actually do when confronted with academic and environmental difficulties.

Students may also rely on different forms of coping depending on the situation they face. Waterhouse and Samra (2025) observed that university students use both problem-focused and emotion-focused strategies when dealing with stress. When a problem is perceived as manageable, such as meeting an assignment deadline or organising study time, students may attempt to address the source of the problem directly. In situations where they have less control over what is happening, managing their emotional response may become more relevant. Coping should therefore not be viewed as a single or fixed response. Rather, students may draw on different strategies as they navigate changing academic and environmental demands during university life.

Similarly, Browning et al. (2021) demonstrated that changes in the learning environment and increasing academic demands may heighten students' stress levels. Nevertheless, the use of appropriate coping strategies may help mitigate the adverse effects of such stressors. This suggests that coping strategies serve not merely as responses to stressful experiences but may also function as protective mechanisms that facilitate students' adaptation, psychological well-being, and ability to manage academic challenges.

Within the context of UTHM, academic and environmental stress represent important challenges that students need to manage throughout their university studies. Students are therefore required to employ appropriate coping strategies according to the specific situations they encounter, including assignments, examinations, project requirements, social relationships, and changes in the learning environment. The use of coping strategies may also vary according to gender. Azman and Surat (2025) reported significant differences in coping strategies between male and female students, a finding that is also supported by Syed Mustafa et al. (2023). These findings suggest that individual characteristics, particularly gender, should be considered when examining how university students respond to academic and environmental stressors. Therefore, relevant stakeholders, including university administrators, counsellors, and academic staff, should recognise these variations when developing appropriate stress-management initiatives and support mechanisms. A more context-sensitive understanding of coping strategies may facilitate the provision of targeted interventions that address the diverse coping needs of university students. Overall, the literature indicates a meaningful relationship between student stress and coping strategies. However, despite growing empirical attention to these constructs, evidence concerning their relationship within the specific context of UTHM remains limited. Examining this relationship is therefore important for developing a context-specific understanding of how UTHM Main Campus students respond to stress and the coping strategies they employ. Such evidence may contribute to the identification of appropriate support mechanisms and interventions aimed at strengthening students' ability to manage stress while maintaining their psychological well-being and academic achievement.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study employed a quantitative research approach using a descriptive correlational design. The descriptive component was used to determine the levels of student stress and coping strategies among undergraduate students at Universiti Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia (UTHM), while the correlational component was employed to examine the relationship between student stress and coping strategies. A quantitative approach was considered appropriate as it enables the systematic collection of numerical data from a relatively large sample and facilitates statistical analyses to address the research objectives (Creswell & Creswell, 2023).

Sampling Technique

Stratified random sampling was used to select undergraduate students from Universiti Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia (UTHM) for this study. The student population was first divided into relevant strata, after which respondents were randomly selected from each group. This approach allowed students from different segments of the undergraduate population to be represented in the sample. According to Saunders et al. (2020), stratified sampling is useful when a population consists of groups with different characteristics, as it can improve sample representation and reduce the likelihood of sampling bias. Given the diverse undergraduate population at UTHM, this technique was considered suitable for obtaining a sample that reasonably reflected the population under investigation.

Population and Sample

The study involved undergraduate students enrolled at Universiti Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia (UTHM). The appropriate sample size was determined based on the total undergraduate population using the sample size determination table by Krejcie and Morgan (1970). A total of 371 students participated in the study and completed the questionnaire. The participants were drawn from different faculties and years of study to ensure adequate representation of the undergraduate student population at UTHM. This sample provided the basis for examining students' levels of stress and their use of coping strategies within the university setting.

Research Instruments

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire comprising three sections. Section A collected respondents' demographic information, including gender, age, faculty, year of study, and parental income level. Section B assessed student stress using the Student Stress Inventory (SSI), adapted from Gadzella et al. (1994). This section comprised 12 items covering two dimensions of stress, namely academic stress and environmental stress. Section C assessed coping strategies using the Brief COPE Inventory developed by Carver (1997). This section consisted of 12 items measuring three dimensions of coping strategies: problem-focused coping, emotion-focused coping, and avoidant coping. Both instruments employed a four-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 4 (Strongly Agree). Prior to the main data collection, a pilot study involving 30 respondents was conducted to assess the reliability of the instruments. The reliability analysis demonstrated satisfactory internal consistency, with Cronbach's alpha coefficients of 0.741 for the Student Stress Inventory (SSI) and 0.789 for the Brief COPE Inventory. These coefficients exceeded the generally acceptable threshold for internal consistency, indicating that both instruments demonstrated adequate reliability for assessing student stress and coping strategies among undergraduate students at UTHM.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Level of Stress Among UTHM Students

The first objective of this study was to determine the level of stress among undergraduate students at UTHM. The findings revealed that the overall level of student stress was moderate, with a mean score of 2.71 ($M = 2.71$). This result indicates that UTHM students generally experienced a moderate level of stress in relation to the academic and environmental demands encountered throughout their university studies.

Table 1. Level of Student Stress

Variable	Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (SD)	Level
Student Stress	2.71	0.918	Moderate

The findings show that stress remains a common experience among university students, particularly as they deal with the demands of academic life. Throughout a semester, students are expected to manage assignments, presentations, examinations, and other academic responsibilities, often within limited periods of time. When several of these demands occur simultaneously, students may experience greater difficulty in balancing their academic responsibilities. Mofatteh (2020) similarly identified academic workload, pressure to achieve, and adjustment to the learning environment as important sources of stress among university students. In the present study, UTHM students reported a moderate level of stress ($M = 2.71$, $SD = 0.918$). This finding is noteworthy because it suggests that stress is present as part of students' university experience, although it has not reached a particularly severe level at the group level.

A possible interpretation of this moderate level is that students are experiencing academic demands that are challenging but remain within their capacity to manage. University students are regularly exposed to deadlines, examinations, group projects, presentations, and competing academic responsibilities. These pressures may be sufficient to generate stress without necessarily overwhelming students. This interpretation is consistent with Al-Kumaim et al. (2021), who found moderate stress among university students in relation to academic workload, changes in learning approaches, and competitive learning environments. Raman (2022) also identified academic stress as a widespread issue across different higher education settings. The present result therefore appears to reflect a broader pattern in university life rather than an experience that is unique to UTHM.

Nevertheless, the moderate overall score requires careful interpretation. An average score can conceal differences in individual experiences. While many students may experience manageable levels of stress, others within the same population may face substantially greater difficulties. Students differ in their academic workload, personal circumstances, financial responsibilities, social support, and ability to cope with demanding situations. Consequently, the moderate mean reported in this study should not be interpreted as indicating that stress is unproblematic among all UTHM students. Instead, it points to the need to identify groups of students who may be more vulnerable when academic and environmental demands accumulate. This is particularly relevant during periods of intensive assessment, when several academic requirements may occur within a relatively short period.

The result can be further understood through the Transactional Model of Stress and Coping developed by Lazarus and Folkman (1984). The model proposes that stress depends not only on the demands individuals encounter but also on how those demands are appraised and whether sufficient coping resources are perceived to be available. From this perspective, the moderate stress level among UTHM students may indicate a relative balance between the demands they experience and the resources they can mobilise to manage them. Students who perceive an assignment, examination, or academic deadline as difficult but manageable may experience stress while continuing to function effectively. Conversely, similar demands may become more disruptive when students believe that they lack sufficient time, skills, emotional resources, or support to deal with them. This helps explain why students exposed to similar university environments may not necessarily experience stress at the same level.

The present finding also raises an important distinction between the presence of stress and students' capacity to function under stress. A moderate level of stress does not necessarily imply poor adjustment. Some degree of pressure may accompany normal engagement with academic responsibilities, particularly when students are working towards deadlines or performance goals. The concern arises when these pressures become persistent, accumulate across different areas of life, or exceed the resources available to students. In such circumstances, stress may begin to interfere with concentration, emotional regulation, motivation, and academic functioning. The practical issue for universities is therefore not simply to eliminate stress, which may be unrealistic, but to prevent manageable academic pressure from developing into prolonged or debilitating stress.

The social and institutional environment may be particularly relevant in this process. Students may draw upon friends, family members, lecturers, counsellors, and university services when they encounter difficulties. Zurlo et al. (2021) suggested that access to supportive resources may assist students in adapting to academic demands and buffer some of the negative consequences of stress. Within UTHM, counselling and student-support initiatives such as individual counselling, K-Talk, The A-Leader, and mental health awareness programmes form part of the support environment available to students. These services may provide avenues through which students can seek assistance before academic or personal pressures become more difficult to manage. However, because the present study did not measure students' participation in or perceptions of these programmes, their effectiveness cannot be inferred from the current findings. Future research could examine whether awareness, accessibility, and utilisation of university support services are associated with differences in students' stress levels.

Support outside the university may be equally important. Hasan et al. (2021) highlighted the role of family emotional support in strengthening students' resilience and their capacity to deal with stressful experiences. This is particularly relevant because university students do not experience academic stress independently of their personal and social lives. Difficulties in one area may influence their ability to manage demands in another. The moderate stress observed in the present study may therefore be better understood as the outcome of an ongoing interaction between academic and environmental pressures and the personal, social, and institutional resources available to students.

Taken together, the present findings suggest that managing student stress requires more than responding to students only after they experience serious psychological difficulties. A more preventive approach may involve identifying periods of high academic demand, strengthening students' coping skills, improving awareness and accessibility of support services, and encouraging supportive relationships among students, families, academic staff, and university support personnel. For UTHM, the finding provides an empirical basis for viewing stress management as a shared responsibility within the university ecosystem rather than solely as an individual student concern. Such an approach may help students manage the normal pressures of university life while reducing the likelihood that accumulated stress develops into difficulties that affect their psychological well-being and academic functioning.

Relationship Between Student Stress and Coping Strategies

The second objective of this study was to examine the relationship between student stress and coping strategies among UTHM students. As presented in Table 2, Pearson correlation analysis revealed a statistically significant positive relationship between student stress and coping strategies ($r = .372, p < .001$). The correlation coefficient indicates a moderate positive association, suggesting that students who reported higher levels of stress also tended to report greater use of coping strategies. However, given the cross-sectional and correlational nature of the present study, this finding should be interpreted as an association between the two variables rather than evidence of a causal relationship. Therefore, the findings do not establish that higher stress causes students to use more coping strategies or that greater use of coping strategies subsequently reduces stress.

Table 2. Pearson Correlation Between Student Stress and Coping Strategies

Variables	Student Stress	Interpretation
Coping Strategies	$r = .372$	Significant positive correlation

*** $p < .001$

The significant positive correlation ($r = .372, p < .001^{***}$) indicates that student stress and coping strategies tend to vary in the same direction. Specifically, students reporting higher levels of stress also tended to report greater engagement in coping behaviours. Nevertheless, the moderate magnitude of the correlation suggests that coping behaviour is associated with, but cannot be fully accounted for by, variations in student stress. Other factors, including individual characteristics, social support, previous experiences, perceived control, resilience, and the nature of the stressor, may also be associated with differences in how students cope with stressful situations.

One possible theoretical explanation for the observed positive association is that students experiencing greater academic and environmental demands may engage more frequently in coping behaviours. For example, students experiencing academic pressure may report behaviours such as planning their work, seeking support, regulating their emotional responses, or using other coping strategies. However, because the present study employed a cross-sectional design, the direction of this relationship cannot be established. It is therefore possible that higher stress is associated with greater coping efforts, that particular coping patterns are associated with differences in perceived stress, or that both stress and coping are influenced by other individual or contextual factors. This interpretation is consistent with Pascoe et al. (2020) and Paralkar and Knutson (2023), who reported that students employ various coping responses when dealing with academic stress.

The observed association can also be interpreted within the Transactional Model of Stress and Coping proposed by Lazarus and Folkman (1984). According to this theoretical perspective, stress and coping are understood as components of a dynamic process involving individuals' appraisal of environmental demands and their perceived resources for responding to those demands. When students encounter academic or environmental challenges, their appraisal of the situation may be associated with the coping responses they employ. From this theoretical perspective, the positive correlation identified in the present study may reflect the interconnected nature of perceived stress and coping behaviour. Nevertheless, the present findings should not be interpreted as empirical evidence of the causal sequence proposed by the model, as the cross-sectional design does not permit conclusions regarding temporal order or causality.

Importantly, greater reported use of coping strategies should not automatically be interpreted as evidence of more effective stress management or better psychological outcomes. The correlation identified in this study only demonstrates that stress and overall coping scores are significantly associated. It does not establish whether the coping strategies used by students successfully reduced their stress. Students experiencing higher levels of stress may report greater engagement in coping behaviours for various reasons, while certain coping responses may be more appropriate or adaptive than others depending on the situation. Thus, the effectiveness of coping may depend not only on the frequency of coping behaviours but also on the specific type of strategy employed, the context in which it is used, and its suitability for the stressor encountered.

This consideration is particularly important because coping is not a single, uniform construct. Coping strategies may generally be differentiated into problem-focused, emotion-focused, and avoidant coping, and these dimensions may have different relationships with student stress and well-being. Problem-focused coping involves efforts directed towards addressing or modifying the source of stress, whereas emotion-focused coping involves attempts to regulate emotional responses associated with stressful experiences. Avoidant coping, in contrast, may involve disengagement or avoidance of the stressor. Consequently, the overall positive correlation reported in the present study should not be interpreted as indicating that all coping dimensions are similarly associated with stress. Where appropriate and supported by the measurement structure of the instrument, examining the relationship between student stress and each coping dimension separately would provide a more nuanced understanding of students' coping patterns.

The moderate correlation ($r = .372$) further suggests that coping behaviour may be associated with a range of factors beyond stress itself. Students experiencing similar levels of academic pressure may report different coping responses depending on their personal and social resources. Some students may rely more strongly on problem-solving and planning, whereas others may seek emotional support or engage in avoidance. Previous studies by Hameed et al. (2024) and Ali et al. (2025) have highlighted the relevance of coping strategies in students' responses to stressful experiences and academic functioning. Chaudhry et al. (2023) also reported associations between psychological well-being and adaptive coping strategies, including positive reappraisal, planning, and seeking social support. Collectively, these studies suggest that understanding student coping requires consideration of both the type of coping strategy employed and the broader psychological and social context.

For UTHM, the present findings provide useful implications for student support initiatives, although these implications should be regarded as practice-oriented considerations rather than direct causal conclusions from the current data. Since higher stress scores were associated with greater overall coping scores, student support

programmes may benefit from focusing not merely on increasing the frequency of coping behaviours but also on developing students' awareness of different coping strategies and their suitability for different situations. For example, problem-focused approaches may be relevant to manageable academic demands such as scheduling and competing deadlines, whereas emotion-regulation strategies may be relevant when students encounter circumstances that cannot be immediately changed. Such recommendations are theoretically consistent with the broader coping literature, although their effectiveness would need to be evaluated through intervention or longitudinal research.

Similarly, the evaluation of student well-being programmes should consider the appropriateness and potential effectiveness of coping strategies rather than assuming that a higher frequency of coping necessarily represents a better outcome. Different coping dimensions may have different implications for students' psychological and academic functioning. Accordingly, university counselling and student development initiatives could place greater emphasis on coping flexibility and students' ability to select strategies that are appropriate to the demands they encounter. However, further empirical research is required before conclusions can be drawn regarding which coping strategies are most effective in reducing stress among UTHM students.

Overall, the findings demonstrate a statistically significant moderate positive association between student stress and coping strategies among UTHM students ($r = .372, p < .001$). Students reporting higher levels of stress also tended to report greater overall use of coping strategies. However, the findings do not establish the direction of influence or demonstrate that coping strategies directly reduce or manage stress. The relationship should therefore be interpreted as an association rather than a causal effect. Future research should examine problem-focused, emotion-focused, and avoidant coping separately to determine whether these dimensions exhibit different relationships with student stress and well-being. Longitudinal and multi-institutional studies would also be valuable for examining temporal relationships and determining whether particular coping patterns predict subsequent changes in student stress.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study provide practical implications for higher education institutions, particularly Universiti Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia (UTHM), in strengthening student support services and promoting psychological well-being. Given the significant association between student stress and coping strategies, university administrators, counsellors, and academic staff may consider implementing structured stress-management programmes, psychological well-being workshops, and counselling initiatives that enhance students' awareness of adaptive and context-appropriate coping strategies. Rather than simply encouraging greater use of coping strategies, such initiatives should emphasise coping flexibility and assist students in selecting appropriate responses to different academic, emotional, and environmental challenges. Universities may also strengthen the accessibility of psychological, social, counselling, and academic support resources to foster a supportive environment for students experiencing stress. Nevertheless, as this study employed a cross-sectional correlational design, these practical implications should be regarded as recommendations informed by the observed association and relevant theoretical perspectives rather than evidence that coping strategies directly reduce stress or improve psychological outcomes.

Several limitations should be considered when interpreting the findings. First, the study involved only undergraduate students from UTHM, which may limit the generalisability of the findings to students in other higher education institutions. Second, the reliance on self-report questionnaires may introduce self-report bias, as responses may be influenced by social desirability, recall limitations, individual interpretation, or participants' emotional states. The use of the same self-report method to measure both stress and coping strategies also raises the possibility of common-method bias, whereby part of the observed association may reflect shared measurement characteristics rather than solely the underlying relationship between the constructs. Furthermore, the cross-sectional design captures stress and coping at a single point in time and therefore does not establish temporal order or causality. Future research should employ longitudinal designs and involve students from multiple public and private higher education institutions to examine changes over time and improve the generalisability of the findings. The use of mixed methods and multiple data sources, such as interviews, focus groups, or behavioural indicators, may further reduce reliance on self-report measures and provide a more

comprehensive understanding of students' experiences. Future studies should also examine problem-focused, emotion-focused, and avoidant coping separately, as these coping dimensions may demonstrate different patterns of association with student stress and psychological well-being.

Declarations

Author Contributions

1. Aqilah Mohd Noor conceptualised the study, developed the conceptual framework, and formulated the research objectives and research questions. She also led the overall study and prepared the initial draft of the manuscript.
2. Siti Marhamah Kamarul Arifain and Muhammad Yasin Omar Mokhtar conducted the literature searches using the Web of Science and Scopus databases and managed the article screening process. They also contributed to the inferential statistical analysis and the organisation and interpretation of the study findings.
3. Mohd Zulfakar Mohd Nawawi and Nurul Ashikin Ismail conducted the eligibility assessment and quality appraisal of the selected articles. All authors reviewed and approved the final version of the manuscript.

Funding

This research received no specific grant from any funding agency in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.

Conflict Of Interest

The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest concerning the research, authorship, or publication of this article.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The authors would like to express their sincere appreciation to the Faculty of Technical and Vocational Education, Universiti Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia (UTHM), for the support and facilities provided throughout this study. Communication of this research is made possible through monetary assistance by Universiti Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia and the UTHM Publisher's Office via Publication Fund E15216.

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