Association between Happiness and perceived Quality of Life in a Malaysian B40 Urban Community: A study during COVID-19 Lockdown

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Introduction

The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and the prolonged lockdown has affected all Malaysians, with the B40 urban folks being the most vulnerable. Quality of life (QOL) and happiness are vital components of a population's health and well-being.
There is a paucity of research and data on the link between QOL and happiness in the urban poor.

Evidence-based information is required to plan strategies to improve the well-being of our people, especially the low-income group.

Objective

To investigate the correlation between happiness and QOL across the four domains of physical health, psychological status, social relationships, and environmental conditions.

Methodology

Study design, location, sample and data collection tools

A cross-sectional study was conducted among 182 adult residents of PPR Sri Pantai, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia from 14 July 2021 till 23 July 2021. The data was collected via online questionnaires using Google Forms.
Questionnaires used :
Validated Malay versions of *WHOQOL-BREF* and the *Oxford Happiness Questionnaire*
A p value ≤ 0.05 was considered statistically significant for this study.

Data analysis

Data were analysed using SPSS program version 27.0. The Pearson's correlation test was used to study the association between happiness scores and the four domains of QOL.

Results

Table 1: Correlation and partial correlation between QOL domains and happiness scores

Variables	Mean ± SD	Median	Correlation between QOL domains and happiness*	Partial correlation between QOL domains and happiness*
Happiness	4.17 ± 0.68	4.03	-	-
Physical	**52.30 ± 14.48**	**50.00**	**0.585 (<0.001)**	**0.171 (0.022)**
Psychological	**51.90 ± 14.84**	**50.00**	**0.741 (<0.001)**	**0.485 (<0.001)**
Social	65.16 ± 21.05	69.00	0.573 (<0.001)	0.056 (0.456)
Environmental	59.04 ± 18.12	56.00	0.446 (<0.001)	- 0.013 (0.867)

*r(p-value)

✓ There were statistically significant strong positive correlations between all four domains of QOL and happiness. (p<0.001) The higher the happiness score, the higher was the QOL domain score.

✓ After controlling other domains, the physical (p=0.02) and psychological domains were significantly positively correlated with happiness, (p<0.001) .

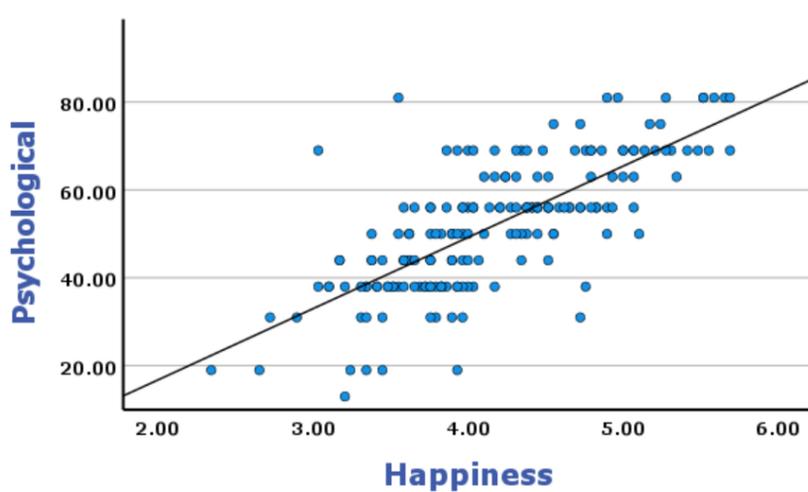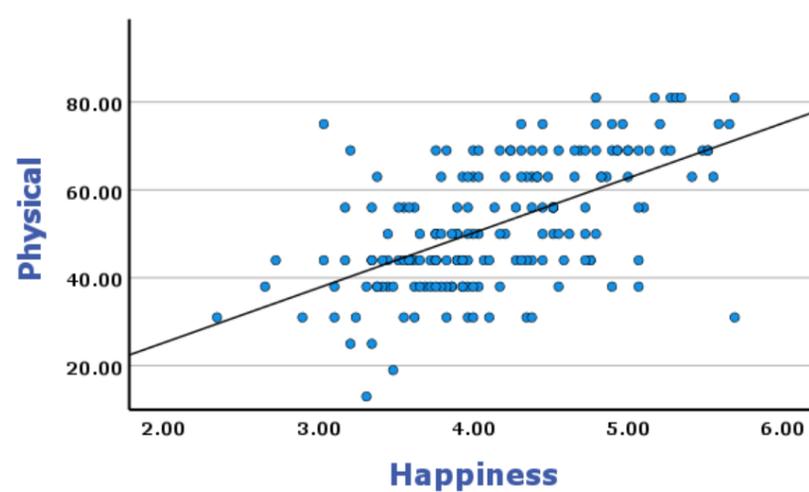### Figure 1: Correlation between Psychological domain of QOL and happiness scores

Figure 2: Correlation between Physical domain of QOL and happiness scores

Conclusion

The psychological and physical domains of QOL proved to have a strong positive correlation with happiness.

Recommendations

Based on the study findings, it is recommended that further studies need to be conducted to determine the cause and effect relationship between psychological and physical domains with happiness.

With the strong support of evidence of the correlation between physical and psychological domain with happiness, the government and NGOs could address issues around QOL and happiness to ensure improvement in the well-being of the underprivileged population. in Malaysia.

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