



**The Relationship between Self-Care and Burnout Level Among Trainee Counsellors
in UNIMAS.**

Christy Ellen Anak Kim Hin

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The Relationship between Self-Care and Burnout Levels Among Trainee Counsellors in
UNIMAS

CHRISTY ELLEN ANAK KIM HIN

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(Miss Muliana Binti Mohamad Taha)

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ABSTRACT

The Relationship between Self-Care and Burnout Level among Trainee Counsellor in UNIMAS

Christy Ellen Anak Kim Hin

This research aimed to examine the relationship between self-care and burnout levels among trainee counsellors. A total of 160 counselling students from Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS) participated in the study. The respondents were selected using stratified random sampling based on their year of study. The research design applied in this study was correlational. Two main instruments were used: the Self-Care Assessment for Wellness (SCAW) and the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI). The SCAW was used to measure the levels of self-care based on six subscales: physical, psychological, emotional, spiritual, workplace or professional, and balance self-care. Meanwhile, the MBI was used to measure the overall level of burnout experienced by the respondents. The data collected were analysed using Spearman's Rho Correlation Coefficient and Bootstrap Multiple Linear Regression Analysis. The findings revealed a significant relationship between overall self-care and burnout ($r = .204, p < .01$). Specifically, psychological self-care ($r = .234, p < .01$), emotional self-care ($r = .206, p < .01$), and workplace or professional self-care ($r = .193, p < .05$) were found to have a weak but significant relationship with burnout. Bootstrap regression analysis showed that psychological self-care ($B = .486, p < .01$), emotional self-care ($B = .286, p < .01$), and workplace or professional self-care ($B = .285, p < .01$) were significant predictors of burnout. However, physical, spiritual, and balance self-care did not show a significant relationship with burnout. The implications of this study are discussed in both theoretical and practical contexts, particularly in highlighting the need for culturally relevant self-care models and proactive strategies for burnout prevention among trainee counsellors. Recommendations for future studies include increasing the sample size, expanding to other universities, and updating measurement instruments to reflect current professional and cultural realities.

Keywords: Self-care, burnout, trainee counsellors, psychological well-being, counselling training.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

In this chapter, will discuss and explain in general about the relationship between self-care and burnout level among trainee counsellor in University Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS). This chapter includes research background, problem statement, research framework, research objectives, research hypotheses, definitions of terms, significance of research, and limitations of study.

1.1 Background of the study

Self-care was essential for protecting the mental, emotional, and physical health of individuals, especially in emotionally draining professions like counseling. Despite its recognized importance, many counsellors found it challenging to engage in consistent self-care practices, even as they advocated for such routines with clients (Coaston, 2017). This conflict was particularly evident among student counsellors, who had to manage a complicated set of academic obligations, practicum demands, and emotionally intense client contacts. These stressors often placed them at heightened risk for burnout, a psychological condition characterized by emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and a diminished sense of personal accomplishment (Maslach et al., 2001).

Burnout not only undermined the personal well-being of future counsellors but also threatened their professional efficacy and ethical conduct (Skovholt & Trotter-Mathison, 2014). Considering the significant effects of burnout on professionals and clients, it was essential to comprehend the components that contributed to its onset and the preventative strategies that might have alleviated its occurrence. Self-care had emerged as a crucial protective factor. Defined as a multidimensional practice encompassing physical, emotional, psychological, spiritual, and professional domains, self-care was more than a wellness trend—it was a professional imperative (Thompson, 2014).

The Self-Care Assessment Worksheet emphasized the need for balance across these dimensions, highlighting how practices such as mindfulness, physical activity, spiritual reflection, emotional processing, and boundary setting contributed to sustained wellness. In this regard, Self-Determination Theory (SDT), developed by Deci and Ryan (2008), provided a theoretical lens to understand how self-care nurtured psychological well-being. According to SDT, the satisfaction of basic psychological needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness was essential for intrinsic motivation and mental health. When these needs were met through deliberate self-care practices, individuals were more resilient and less susceptible to burnout (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

Empirical research supported the role of self-care in reducing burnout and promoting ethical practice. Studies indicated that counsellors who neglected their own well-being were more likely to experience empathy fatigue and commit ethical violations (Puig et al., 2012). For trainee counsellors, who were still developing their professional identity and coping mechanisms, structured self-care strategies were crucial for fostering resilience and ethical awareness. Interventions targeting wellness habits, such as mindfulness, emotional regulation, and work-life balance, had been shown to enhance self-efficacy and reduce burnout risk (Richards et al., 2010).

In the context of trainee counsellors at University Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS), comprehending the relationship between self-care and burnout levels was especially important. Trainee counsellors frequently encountered academic, psychological, and professional stresses that increased their susceptibility to burnout. Due to the complex requirements of their training and the ethical obligations of counselling, self-care activities were essential for cultivating resilience and ensuring professional efficacy. Developing resilience through self-care practices was vital for practitioners to maintain their effectiveness and well-being (Skovholt & Trotter-Mathison, 2014). Self-Determination Theory offered a comprehensive framework for comprehending how self-care improved well-being by satisfying the psychological demands of autonomy, competence, and relatedness, therefore reducing the likelihood of burnout. According to Ryan and Deci (2000), when the basic psychological needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness were satisfied, individuals experienced enhanced self-motivation and mental health.

The present research sought to investigate the relationship between self-care and burnout levels in trainee counsellors at UNIMAS. The study aimed to furnish empirical evidence for

the incorporation of structured self-care activities into counselling education and training through the examination of these interactions. Establishing a culture of self-care within training programs was essential to prepare counsellors for the demands of the profession (Barnett and Cooper, 2009). Such insights could have guided targeted interventions that boosted resilience, prevented burnout, and fostered the comprehensive development of future counselling professionals. Self-care practices, particularly those enhancing self-awareness and mindfulness, contributed significantly to the well-being of mental health professionals (Richards et al., 2010). Addressing burnout by self-care enhanced the well-being of trainee counsellors and furthered their main goal of delivering superior client care, thereby upholding the ethical and professional standards of the counselling field. According to Lee et al. (2010), understanding different types of burnout could have helped in developing targeted self-care strategies for counsellors.

1.2 Problem Statement

Burnout was a critical concern among trainee counsellors, characterized by emotional tiredness, depersonalization, and a reduced sense of personal achievement. According to Schaufeli et al. (2009), burnout not only affected the individual's mental health but also their ability to work effectively, particularly in professions that required emotional labour. These symptoms adversely impacted their well-being and hindered their capacity to evolve into proficient experts. Burnout, coping strategies, and psychological well-being were critical aspects of a counsellor-in-training's (CIT) professional development (Paul et al., 2024). Nonetheless, there existed an empirical gap in comprehending the function of self-care in alleviating burnout, particularly concerning Malaysian trainee counsellors. Current research had mainly centered on practicing counsellors or had taken place in Western settings, failing to accurately reflect the distinct experiences of trainee counsellors at UNIMAS. According to Skovholt and Trotter-Mathison (2014), most burnout studies and self-care interventions were developed in Western contexts, limiting their applicability to non-Western cultural settings. The absence of comprehensive and representative data in this domain constrained the capacity to derive significant findings and formulate effective actions specific to this demographic. Burnout research in Malaysia often emphasized practicing counsellors and overlooked the unique challenges faced by trainee counsellors (Jie et al., 2021).

Moreover, a significant gap persisted in converting study findings on self-care into implementable techniques for trainee counsellors. Numerous studies highlighted the theoretical advantages of self-care but failed to offer clear, culturally pertinent guidance for implementing it. The theoretical frameworks around self-care remained underdeveloped in terms of real-world applications, especially in culturally diverse settings (Maslach and Leiter, 2016). According to Gunduz (2012), although self-care was widely regarded as essential for preventing burnout, many counsellor training programs failed to integrate these practices into the daily routines of students. A major obstacle was time limitations, as demanding schedules and substantial workloads frequently resulted in the disregard for self-care. According to Rakovec and Videmšek (2024), the questioned social workers believed that the biggest barriers to taking care of well-being and professional practice were lack of time (43%), work overload (28%), and lack of support (10%). Moreover, certain persons felt guilt and regarded self-care as an egocentric behavior rather than an essential practice. This gap made it difficult to incorporate self-care techniques into the daily routines of trainee counsellors, who frequently balanced academic obligations and clinical training which could have led to burnout. Insufficient integration of self-care into training programs led to greater burnout and reduced professional competence (Rupert and Morgan, 2005).

Theoretical inadequacies worsened the problem, since existing research lacked a comprehensive framework for exploring the connection between self-care and burnout. Self-Determination Theory (SDT), which highlighted the satisfaction of psychological needs like autonomy, competence, and relatedness, provided a valuable framework for examining this relationship. Self-Determination Theory posited that the satisfaction of basic psychological needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness was essential for optimal functioning and well-being (Gagné and Deci, 2005). Nevertheless, little study had applied Self-Determination Theory (SDT) to trainee counsellors, resulting in unresolved questions regarding the role of intrinsic motivation and need fulfillment through self-care in mitigating burnout. Establishing a theoretical framework based on SDT might have yielded significant insights into the mechanisms governing this relationship and guided future actions. The satisfaction of autonomy, competence, and relatedness needs at work was associated with higher levels of work motivation and lower levels of burnout (Van den Broeck et al., 2016).

Lastly, demographic and contextual gaps restricted the relevance of current study outcomes. Research on self-care and burnout frequently targeted broad groups or specific

locales, overlooking the distinct cultural, intellectual, and institutional elements that influenced the experiences of trainee counsellors in Malaysia. According to Soh and Tan (2018), academic pressures, especially in higher education settings in Southeast Asia, contributed significantly to counsellor burnout, which called for tailored interventions to address specific cultural needs. Mental health professionals in Malaysia, shaped by the local culture, might have struggled to prioritize self-care, leading to heightened levels of burnout (Shin and Lee, 2019). The collectivist cultural beliefs prevalent in Malaysia might have affected the perception and practice of self-care. In collectivist societies, institutional pressures, such as expectations of communal work, could have exacerbated feelings of burnout among counsellors, particularly in academic environments (Ting and Lee, 2020). This study sought to address contextual nuances to bridge a significant gap in the literature, enhancing comprehension of self-care's impact on burnout among trainee counsellors at UNIMAS and delivering targeted practical advice to meet their requirements.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between self-care and burnout levels among trainee counsellors at UNIMAS, focusing on the unique challenges they faced in balancing academic and clinical training demands. By exploring the relationship between self-care practices and the dimensions of burnout such as emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment, this research sought to provide a comprehensive understanding of how self-care could serve as a protective factor. Counsellors, especially counsellors-in-training, were at high risk of compassion fatigue, impairment, and burnout, as their practicum and internship training stages were the phases where they tested out their theoretical skills in practice (Hymavathee et al., 2017). The study aimed to address the lack of empirical data specific to the Malaysian context, offering insights that reflected the cultural, academic, and institutional nuances influencing trainee counsellors' experiences. Practicing self-care helped counsellors to manage stress, burnout, and compassion fatigue more effectively (Voon et al., 2022).

This study sought to reconcile the disparity between theoretical studies on self-care and its practical implementation in real-world contexts. The research aimed to find effective self-care practices that were culturally appropriate and practical for trainee counsellors, ultimately

developing actionable recommendations for their daily routines. Professional development involved a dynamic process of growth and change throughout a counsellor's career (Rønnestad and Skovholt, 2003). These guidelines addressed the distinct challenges encountered by trainee counsellors, including the management of academic responsibilities, the fulfillment of practicum responsibilities, and compliance with ethical standards in counselling practice. This project aimed to equip trainee counsellors with practical techniques to improve their well-being and professional resilience. According to Norcross and VandenBos (2018), psychotherapists needed to engage in self-care to prevent burnout and maintain professional competence.

Lastly, this study aimed to enhance the theoretical comprehension of the relationship between self-care and burnout by utilizing Self-Determination Theory (SDT) as a foundational framework. Self-Determination Theory posited that satisfaction of basic psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness was essential for well-being (Dreison et al., 2018). The study sought to provide a solid theoretical framework by analyzing the significance of these requirements in relation to self-care and burnout, thereby guiding future research and interventions. The results were anticipated to enhance the understanding of self-care and burnout, offering a detailed perspective that emphasized the interaction among personal drive, cultural values, and professional growth.

1.4 Research Objectives

1.4.1 General Objective:

The general objective of this research is to investigate the relationship between self-care and burnout level among trainee counsellors in UNIMAS.

1.4.2 Specific Objectives:

- a) To investigate the relationship between self-care (physical self-care subscale) and burnout level among trainee counsellors in UNIMAS.
- b) To investigate the relationship between self-care (psychological self-care subscale) and burnout level among trainee counsellors in UNIMAS.
- c) To investigate the relationship between self-care (emotional self-care subscale) and burnout level among trainee counsellors in UNIMAS.
- d) To investigate the relationship between self-care (spiritual self-care subscale) and burnout level among trainee counsellors in UNIMAS.

- e) To investigate the relationship between self-care (workplace or professional self-care subscale) and burnout level among trainee counsellors in UNIMAS.
- f) To investigate the relationship between self-care (balance self-care subscale) and burnout level among trainee counsellors in UNIMAS.
- g) To analyse the influence of self-care on burnout level among trainee counsellors in UNIMAS.

1.5 Research Questions

- a) Is there any relationship between self-care (physical self-care subscale) and burnout level among trainee counsellors in UNIMAS?
- b) Is there any relationship between self-care (psychological self-care subscale) and burnout level among trainee counsellors in UNIMAS?
- c) Is there any relationship between self-care (emotional self-care subscale) and burnout level among trainee counsellors in UNIMAS?
- d) Is there any relationship between self-care (spiritual self-care subscale) and burnout level among trainee counsellors in UNIMAS?
- e) Is there any relationship between self-care (workplace or professional self-care subscale) and burnout level among trainee counsellors in UNIMAS?
- f) Is there any relationship between self-care (balance self-care subscale) and burnout level among trainee counsellors in UNIMAS?
- g) Is there any influence of self-care on burnout level among trainee counsellors in UNIMAS?

1.6 Research Hypotheses

Ha₁: There is a significance relationship between self-care (physical self-care subscale) and burnout level among trainee counsellors in UNIMAS.

Ha₂: There is a significance relationship between self-care (psychological self-care subscale) and burnout level among trainee counsellors in UNIMAS.

Ha₃: There is a significance relationship between self-care (emotional self-care subscale) and burnout level among trainee counsellors in UNIMAS.

Ha₄: There is a significance relationship between self-care (spiritual self-care subscale) and burnout level among trainee counsellors in UNIMAS.

Ha₅: There is a significance relationship between self-care (workplace or professional self-care subscale) and burnout level among trainee counsellors in UNIMAS.

Ha₆: There is a significance relationship between self-care (balance self-care subscale) and burnout level among trainee counsellors in UNIMAS.

Ha₇: There is a significance influence in self-care on burnout level among trainee counsellors in UNIMAS.

1.7 Conceptual Framework and Theoretical Framework

1.7.1 Conceptual Framework

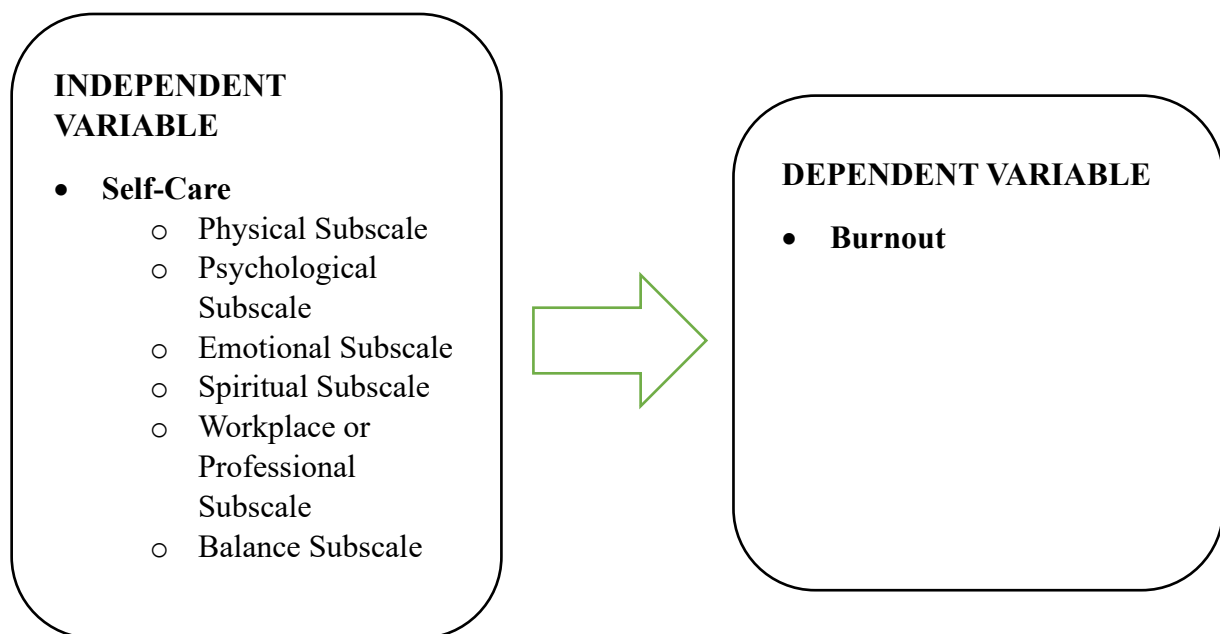


Figure 1.1: Conceptual Framework for independent variable and dependent variable.

1.7.2 Theoretical Framework

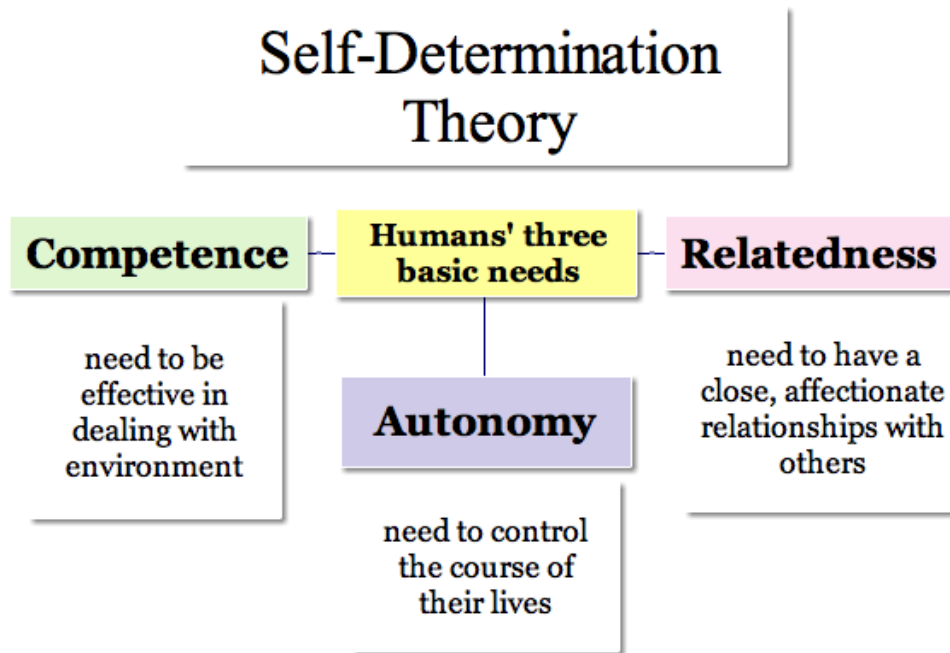


Figure 1.2 Self-Determination Theory

1.8 Definition of Terms

This section will explain the conceptual and operational definitions of terms that are used in this research. Conceptual definition is an understanding of the theory and ideas derived from various sources such as previous studies, journal articles, and other reference materials. An operational definition is a set procedure that is used to explain this research based on basic theory and the suitability of the procedure.

Conceptual & Operational Definitions:

1.8.1 Self-care

Conceptual: According to Bressi and Vaden (2017), the definition of self-care draws on the idea of a self in balance in its aim at protecting the integrity of the personal self to be one's best at work, alongside facilitating the protection of the professional self through cautious use of self on the job. This includes attempts at basic regulation of the body and mind through sleep hygiene, good nutrition, an exercise regimen, building a supportive matrix of relationships with one's community, family, or peers, and those activities that promote creativity, pleasure rest, and relaxation (Lee and Miller 2013; Morse et al. 2012; Newell and Nelson-Gardell 2014).

Operational: Self-care for trainee counsellors involves the deliberate participation in physical, mental, and spiritual activities that foster well-being, lessen stress, and improve overall functioning, so assuring a balanced maintenance of their mind, body, and spirit for effective professional practice. It was assessed using the 65 items of the Self-Care Assessment Worksheet (SCAW).

1.8.2 Burnout

Conceptual: According to Maslach and Leiter (2017), burnout is a psychological syndrome emerging as a prolonged response to chronic interpersonal stressors on the job. It is marked by sensations of exhaustion, diminished efficacy, and disconnection from one's responsibilities or duties.

Operational: Burnout can be assessed using self-report questionnaires that examine symptoms including exhaustion, irritation, and disengagement from a profession or everyday activities, frequently employing scales such as the Maslach Burnout Inventory. It was assessed using the 22 items of the Maslach Burnout Inventory.

1.9 Significance of the Study

This study was significant for comprehending how self-care techniques could reduce or avert burnout in trainee counsellors at UNIMAS. Trainee counsellors frequently experienced considerable emotional and psychological stress due to the demands of their academic responsibilities and the emotional impact of counselling practice. Self-care practices were also recognized as an essential necessity for trainee counsellors in becoming helping professionals in the future (Coaston, 2017). If self-care had been shown to positively impact the reduction of burnout, it could have established a basis for interventions designed to enhance resilience and well-being in this at-risk population. According to Moore et al. (2011), self-care had developed in popularity and had been seen as a positive support in explaining the effects of stress, particularly among trainee counsellors over the years. This research might have ultimately facilitated the incorporation of self-care education into counsellor training programs, enhancing long-term professional development and decreasing counsellor attrition.

Moreover, comprehending burnout among trainee counsellors was essential for improving the quality of counselling services at UNIMAS. Burnout could severely diminish a counsellor's capacity to offer effective assistance to clients, undermining the therapeutic relationship and the efficacy of counselling methods. Burnout could have led to deterioration in the quality of care or service provided by the professional, increased absenteeism, and eventually, turnover (Lee et al., 2010). This study examined the relationship between self-care and burnout level, potentially enhancing the quality of care delivered by future counsellors. Engaging in wellness and self-care activities had been associated with higher professional quality of life and might have served as protective factors against burnout (Lawson and Myers, 2011). This comprehension might have impacted curriculum development by integrating targeted training on burnout avoidance and self-care as essential elements of counsellor education. The inclusion of self-care training in counsellor education programs was essential to prepare future counsellors for the demands of the profession and to promote longevity in the field (O'Halloran and Linton, 2000).

Furthermore, the study's results might have offered significant insights for the whole counselling profession, exceeding the scope of UNIMAS. Burnout was a known concern in counselling, and comprehending its causes and mitigating elements in trainee counsellors could have aided in formulating evidence-based guidelines for minimizing burnout in various counselling environments. Hill et al. (2007) stated that "Novice trainees often report feelings of being overwhelmed, which, if unmanaged, can lead to burnout. Addressing these challenges early through training programs is crucial." This study's conclusions might have initiated a wider discourse within the profession regarding the significance of self-care and its promotion throughout all tiers of training and practice.

The importance of this study lay in its potential to impact policies and practices at UNIMAS, especially regarding the organization of counsellor training programs. The findings might have assisted the institution in establishing targeted support systems for trainee counsellors, encompassing workshops, counselling resources, and peer support networks. Supervision courses that included components such as workshops and peer support networks significantly enhanced counsellor self-efficacy and preparedness (Hill and Curry, 2012). By including self-care within the academic setting, UNIMAS could have fostered a more supportive environment that promoted the personal and professional development of its learners. This would not only have diminished burnout rates but also fostered a culture of care

essential for cultivating future generations of counsellors capable of maintaining personal well-being while effectively assisting others. Ethical responsibility included advocating for systemic changes to incorporate self-care and well-being into professional and training standards for counsellors (Corey et al., 2024).

Finally, this research enhanced the existing literature on the significance of self-care in high-stress professions. Despite the increasing interest in self-care across multiple disciplines, there was a lack of research examining the relationship between self-care practices and burnout levels among counselling trainees, particularly in the setting of UNIMAS. According to O'Halloran and Linton (2000), the adoption of structured self-care practices as part of counsellor training could have served as a model for institutions to enhance global counsellor education standards. This study provided new insights into the connection between self-care and burnout, potentially encouraging additional research on the distinct issues encountered by trainee counsellors in various cultural and academic contexts. Addressing the importance of self-care was vital to professional discourse, as it formed the foundation for reducing compassion fatigue across the profession (Figley, 2002).

1.10 Limitation of Study

The limitation of this study was its dependence on self-reported data, which might have been affected by respondents' subjective impressions and biases, potentially resulting in inaccurate or socially desired results. According to Cook et al. (2021), self-reported data could have been influenced by respondents' subjective impressions and biases, potentially leading to inaccurate or socially desirable responses. Trainee counsellors might have minimized symptoms of burnout or exaggerated their commitment to self-care techniques owing to personal or professional constraints. This constraint might have impacted the validity and reliability of the results. The study was limited to a particular sample group of trainee counsellors at UNIMAS, potentially lacking to fully represent the experiences of trainees in different institutions or cultural settings. Consequently, the findings might not have applied to a wider range of counsellors in other academic or clinical environments. A further weakness was the cross-sectional design of the study, which offered a singular snapshot of burnout and self-care at a certain moment, failing to account for changes in the counselling program or the long-term impacts of self-care practices. Cross-sectional studies offered only a snapshot of the

phenomena, making it difficult to assess the long-term effects of interventions or changes in the counselling profession (Gallup and Johnstone, 2015). Finally, the study might have overlooked additional external factors affecting burnout, such as workload, personal life difficulties, or institutional support, which could have further confused the association between self-care and burnout. External factors like excessive workload, insufficient institutional support, and personal life stressors could have exacerbated burnout, complicating the relationship between self-care practices and burnout in counsellors (Pearce and Mulvey, 2011). Notwithstanding these constraints, the study provided significant insights into the dynamics of burnout among trainee counsellors at UNIMAS, establishing a basis for future research.

1.11 Conclusion

This chapter presents an overview of the research on the relationship between self-care and burnout level among trainee counsellors at UNIMAS, outlining the study's background and the principal themes involved. It has underscored the importance of investigating self-care as a possible alleviating factor for burnout among this particular group of trainees, stressing the deficiency of empirical research on this matter within the local context. The problem statement has been recognized, highlighting the necessity for a comprehensive understanding of how self-care techniques can mitigate burnout among trainee counsellors, a topic with limited study attention. The conceptual framework identifies self-care as the independent variable and burnout as the dependent variable, to analyze the link between both of these variables. The chapter provides the theoretical framework for the study, rooted in recognized ideas of burnout and self-care. Definitions of essential words, including self-care and burnout, have been presented both conceptually and operationally to guarantee clarity within the research setting. This chapter establishes a framework for further exploration of the relationship between self-care and burnout level, providing a robust basis for the ensuing approach and analysis.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter will explore the literature review of the relationship between self-care and burnout level among trainee counsellors at UNIMAS. This includes previous studies on the

relationship between specific self-care practices and burnout in counselling settings. This chapter will discuss the theoretical framework for this research, which is grounded in the Self-determination Theory (STD) developed by two psychologists, Edward Deci and Richard Ryan will be addressed in this chapter. Lastly, this chapter will provide an overview of the relevant previous research.

2.1 Self-care

Self-care is a multifaceted notion that includes various actions and behaviors designed to sustain and enhance overall well-being. It encompasses deliberate measures to nurture one's physical, mental, emotional, and social well-being. Self-care encompasses behaviors where individuals take initiative to manage their health (WHO, 2009). Self-care is acknowledged as a fundamental practice across multiple disciplines, such as healthcare, psychology, and counselling, as it fosters personal development, stress alleviation, and professional efficacy. Engagement in self-care can help promote therapist well-being, reduce stress, and improve overall job satisfaction (Dorociak et al., 2017).

Besides, the concept of self-care has developed, originating in ancient cultures where individuals practiced meditation, exercise, and dietary habits to enhance health and longevity. The results showed that training self-care based on Orem's theory can improve the quality of life of patients with hypertension (Khademian et al., 2020). The notion received formal acknowledgment in the medical domain in the mid-20th century when Orem (2001) presented the Self-Care Deficit Nursing Theory, highlighting the significance of self-care in health preservation. According to Gonzalo (2024), Dorothea Orem's Self-Care Deficit Theory defined Nursing as 'the act of assisting others in the provision and management of self-care to maintain or improve human functioning.' The self-care movement emerged in the 1970s alongside an increase in holistic health methodologies, which advocated for individuals to assume a stronger responsibility for their health and wellness. According to Naluri (2023), Orem's primary objective was to shift the focus of nursing from being solely dependent on healthcare professionals providing care to empowering individuals to take charge of their own well-being through self-care. This theory emphasizes the importance of self-care in maintaining and improving health and its principles have been instrumental in promoting patient engagement and autonomy within the healthcare system (Maruca, 2023).

In the field of counselling, self-care has emerged as an essential component of professional practice, as it enables counsellors to sustain their mental and emotional strength

while assisting clients. Self-care is essential for mental health professionals to maintain their effectiveness and well-being (Barnett and Cooper, 2009). Counselling professionals encounter numerous emotional pressures, such as compassion fatigue, burnout, and vicarious trauma, rendering self-care crucial for maintaining their efficacy and well-being. Compassion fatigue (CF), or the extreme stress and burnout from helping others, is widely considered to be harmful to professional well-being (Paiva-Salisbury and Schwanz, 2022). The notion of self-care in counselling is fundamentally anchored in ethical standards, with entities like the American Counselling Association (ACA) highlighting the necessity for practitioners to partake in self-care as an ethical obligation. According to Newsome et al., (2012), the ACA Code of Ethics (2005) emphasizes the importance of counsellors engaging in self-care activities to maintain and promote their own emotional, physical, mental, and spiritual well-being to best meet their professional responsibilities.

Physical self-care entails purposeful measures to sustain and enhance one's physical well-being. This involves participating in consistent physical exercise, including jogging, yoga, or weightlifting, which contributes to improved cardiovascular health, muscle strength, and general physical endurance. According to Lobelo et al., (2018), improving and maintaining recommended levels of physical activity leads to reductions in metabolic, hemodynamic, functional, body composition, and mental health risk factors. A balanced diet rich in important nutrients is vital for maintaining energy levels, enhancing immunological function, and fostering long-term health. A well-balanced diet provides all of the energy you need to keep active throughout the day and the nutrients you need for growth and repair, helping you to stay strong and healthy and help to prevent diet-related illness (Childs et al., 2019). Moreover, sufficient sleep facilitates bodily recovery, tissue repair, and the regulation of essential activities, including metabolism and cognitive performance. Regular physical activity can lead to improved sleep quality, reduced sleep latency, and better overall sleep quality (Alnawwar et al., 2023). Prioritizing physical self-care enables individuals to bolster resilience, diminish the likelihood of chronic illnesses, and elevate their overall quality of life.

Psychological self-care involves maintaining a sound mentality and preserving mental lucidity. This encompasses self-reflection, which aids individuals in comprehending their ideas, feelings, and behaviors. Participating in journaling or therapy might yield insights into personal difficulties and enhance self-awareness. Writing about emotional experiences can lead to improvements in mood and reductions in health care visits (Pennebaker and Chung, 2011). Engaging in self-acceptance and affirmative self-dialogue cultivates confidence and emotional

balance. Positive self-talk has been shown to enhance self-confidence and reduce anxiety and depression (Jones et al., 2024). Minimizing exposure to negativity, including detrimental relationships or disturbing news, enhances psychological well-being. Taking pauses from stressful situations and participating in recreational activities mitigate burnout and strengthen mental resilience. Engaging in leisure activities is associated with better mental health and well-being (Iwasaki and Mannell, 2000). By emphasizing psychological self-care, individuals can foster a robust self-concept, enhance decision-making capabilities, and sustain inner tranquility.

Emotional self-care emphasizes the recognition, comprehension, and successful management of emotions. This entails exercising self-compassion by approaching oneself with love and understanding, particularly in difficult circumstances. Self-compassion involves treating oneself with kindness and understanding during times of suffering or perceived inadequacy (Neff, 2011). Establishing good limits in interpersonal and professional contexts is crucial for preventing emotional fatigue and preserving mental health. Cloud and Townsend (2017) stated that “Boundaries define us. They define what is me and what is not me.” Participating in activities that elicit joy, such as hobbies, creative pursuits, or socializing with loved ones, enhances emotional contentment. Moreover, obtaining assistance from reliable friends, family, or professional counsellors can offer solace and perspective when confronting emotional difficulties. Social support has been found to buffer the effects of stress on health (Cohen and Wills, 1985). Formulating emotional self-care practices enables individuals to cultivate resilience, enhance emotional intelligence, and sustain an optimistic perspective on life. Emotional self-care practices are essential for managing stress and enhancing emotional well-being (Cramer and Lauche, 2015).

Spiritual self-care entails participating in activities that correspond with one’s values, beliefs, and feelings of purpose. Spirituality encompasses the search for meaning and purpose in life (Pargament and Mahoney, 2005). This may encompass meditation, prayer, or contemplation, which offer a sense of inner tranquility and direction. According to (Miller and Thoresen, 2003), spiritual practices such as meditation and prayer can enhance well-being and provide a sense of purpose. Engaging with nature can serve as a means of spiritual self-care, enabling individuals to reconnect with their surroundings and attain peace. Engaging with nature has been shown to improve mental health and promote spiritual well-being (Koenig, 2012). Participating in acts of kindness, volunteering, or expressing gratitude cultivates a sense of fulfillment and interconnectedness with others. Examining philosophical or spiritual

literature might yield insights regarding personal development and existential comprehension. Spiritual self-care cultivates inner strength, enhances resilience, and assists individuals in confronting life's problems with a profound feeling of meaning and purpose. According to (Pham, 2023), wellness practices like meditation and breathing exercises, along with nature walks and gratitude exercises, to help reconnect with your inner self.

Professional self-care is crucial for sustaining a good work-life balance and guaranteeing enduring career fulfillment. Establishing boundaries between professional and personal life, including the allocation of designated work hours and the implementation of frequent breaks, reduces burnout and improves productivity. Setting clear boundaries between work and personal life is essential for preventing burnout and maintaining well-being (Maslach and Leiter). Participating in reflective techniques, such as journaling or supervision, enables individuals to get insight into their professional experiences and issues. Not just that, pursuing mentorship and professional development options, such as workshops or advanced education, promotes career advancement and skill enhancement. Fostering a healthy and supportive work environment through collaboration with colleagues and managing workplace stresses enhances overall job satisfaction. According to Kahn (1990), a supportive work environment fosters personal engagement and enhances job satisfaction. Engaging in self-care practices is essential for professionals to maintain their well-being and prevent burnout (Figley, 2002).

In 2014, the American Counselling Association (ACA) underscored the ethical responsibility of counsellors to practice self-care to maintain their capacity to offer effective client support. According to American Counselling Association (2014), the ACA Code of Ethics (2014) emphasizes the importance of self-care for counsellors to maintain their effectiveness. Self-care techniques promote professional efficacy and foster personal development and well-being. Implementing self-care strategies can mitigate the negative effects of stress and prevent burnout among counsellors (Christopher and Maris, 2010). Through consistent self-care practices, counsellors can preserve their enthusiasm for their profession and alleviate the adverse impacts of stress and burnout. Engaging in self-care practices enhances counsellors' resilience and ability to cope with work-related stressors (Skovholt and Trotter-Mathison, 2014).

In conclusion, self-care is essential for sustaining general well-being and professional efficacy. Counsellors who engage in regular self-care practices report higher levels of well-being and professional effectiveness (Lawson and Myers, 2011). Notwithstanding the

difficulties in implementing self-care, embracing a proactive strategy can provide enduring advantages, such as diminished stress, increased job satisfaction, and enhanced quality of life. As research increasingly underscores the need for self-care, both individuals and businesses must prioritize and include self-care practices in their daily routines.

2.2 Burnout

Burnout is a psychological condition arising from extended exposure to chronic stress, especially in occupational environments. Burn-out is a syndrome conceptualized as resulting from chronic workplace stress that has not been successfully managed (World Health Organization, 2019). Burnout is a critical issue in numerous professions, especially in human service sectors like healthcare, counselling, and education, where individuals undertake emotionally draining responsibilities. Apart from that, burnout also known a prolonged response to chronic emotional and interpersonal stressors on the job, and is defined by the three dimensions of exhaustion, cynicism, and inefficacy.

The concept of burnout has developed over time, with its official acknowledgment originating in the 1970s when Freudenberger (1974) developed the phrase to characterize the emotional exhaustion encountered by healthcare practitioners. The term 'burnout' was first used in a clinical sense in the early 1970s by Herbert Freudenberger, a practicing American psychologist (Schaufeli, 2017). Subsequently, Maslach and Jackson (1981) created the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI), a prevalent instrument for evaluating burnout in various professional environments. A scale designed to assess various aspects of the burnout syndrome was administered to a wide range of human services professionals (Maslach and Jackson, 1981). Since then, research on burnout has proliferated, elucidating its causes, effects, and possible solutions to alleviate its impact on professionals. According to Schaufeli (2017), since the first description of burnout in 1974 until today, more than 140 definitions have been suggested.

In addition, burnout is especially common among counsellors due to the emotionally demanding nature of their profession. Counsellors often engage with clients facing anguish, trauma, and intricate personal challenges, perhaps resulting in emotional fatigue over time. Counsellors often experience emotional fatigue due to their continuous exposure to clients' trauma and distress (Cuartero-Castañer et al., 2021). Ongoing exposure to clients' challenges, along with heavy workloads and administrative duties, heightens the likelihood of burnout

among counselling professionals. High caseloads and administrative duties contribute significantly to counsellor burnout (Ducharme et al., 2008).

According to American Counselling Association (2024), stated that “Engage in your own personal therapy if needed. Maintain a strong support system of friends, family members, and fellow therapists”. The ethical principles established by the American Counselling Association (2014) underscore the significance of self-care to avert burnout, so assuring counsellors preserve their professional efficacy and personal wellness. Counsellor fatigue can lead to diminished empathy and compromised decision-making abilities. (Barnett & Cooper, 2009). Therefore, comprehending and mitigating burnout is essential for maintaining a healthy and proficient counselling workforce. Burnout is a significant risk for counsellors, necessitating proactive self-care strategies (Skovholt and Trotter-Mathison, 2016).

Besides, insufficient control over the work environment, characterized by restricted autonomy and inadequate resources, might exacerbate stress levels. A lack of control over one's work environment can lead to increased stress and burnout (Trinkenreich et al., 2023). An inadequate workplace culture, marked by insufficient support from peers or superiors, fosters an untenable work environment. Emotional strain, especially for counsellors and healthcare workers managing client's trauma and anguish, introduces an additional layer of burnout risk. Emotional strain is particularly prevalent among professionals who manage client's trauma and distress (Ducharme et al., 2008). The mismatch between work and life, wherein professionals find it challenging to disengage from workplace obligations, exacerbates the risk of burnout. The mismatch between personal life and work obligations exacerbates the risk of burnout (Leiter and Maslach, 2003). Addressing these factors necessitates a blend of personal methods, including self-care and boundary establishment, alongside structural initiatives, such as workplace regulations that foster mental well-being. Organizational interventions, such as policy changes and support programs, are crucial in promoting mental well-being (Richardson and Rothstein, 2008). According to (Glisson, 2008), supportive workplace cultures that prioritize employee well-being can mitigate the effects of emotional strain.

The consequences of burnout are extensive, affecting individuals, organizations, and client results. Burnout can result in chronic weariness, irritation, diminished motivation, and a sense of pessimism on a personal level. Individuals experiencing burnout may exhibit physical symptoms including headaches, sleeplessness, and a compromised immune system, leading to heightened vulnerability to infections. According to (Salvagioni et al., 2017), burnout is

associated with physical symptoms such as headaches, insomnia, and a compromised immune system. Mental health disorders, such as anxiety and depression, may result from extended burnout. Burnout can lead to mental health issues such as anxiety and depression (Acker, 2010).

Apart from that, burnout in enterprises results in diminished productivity, elevated absenteeism, and increased employee turnover. Well established outcomes of burnout include actual and intended turnover, low job satisfaction, and poor physical health (Landrum et al., 2012). Burnout leads to disengagement and decreased job performance (Halbesleben and Buckley (2004). In fields like counselling and healthcare, burnout can adversely affect the quality of care delivered to clients, as professionals may experience difficulties with empathy, decision-making, and overall participation in their responsibilities. By definition, burnout inhibits an individual's ability to perform optimally at work, hence likely sacrificing service quality (Green et al., 2014). Mitigating burnout is essential for sustaining a healthy workforce and guaranteeing efficient service provision.

To conclude, burnout is a multifaceted and widespread phenomenon that impacts professionals in diverse sectors, especially in high-stress settings such as therapy. The emotional weariness, depersonalization, and diminished personal accomplishment can substantially affect individual well-being and professional efficacy. Burnout is characterized by emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and a reduced sense of personal accomplishment (Maslach and Leiter, 2016). Mitigating burnout necessitates a proactive strategy, encompassing self-care, supervision, peer support, and workplace initiatives that enhance mental well-being. As research elucidates the adverse impacts of burnout, both individuals and organizations must prioritize efforts for its prevention and management. By cultivating a culture of well-being, professionals may preserve their enthusiasm for their work while safeguarding their mental and emotional health. Cultivating a culture of self-care within organizations can enhance employee well-being (Cuartero-Castañer et al., 2021).

2.3 Relationship between Self-care and Burnout Level

Burnout is a significant concern for trainee counsellors, typically marked by emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and diminished feelings of personal achievement (Bagodi, 2023). In one study, 13% of behavioral health providers were at risk of compassion fatigue or burnout (Merk, 2018). As trainees manage substantial workloads and emotionally taxing environments, the likelihood of burnout rises. This condition impedes their professional growth

and undermines their overall well-being. Confronting this challenge necessitates an understanding of protective factors that lessen burnout, with self-care consistently emphasized as an achievable remedy. According to (Mayorga, 2015), research indicates that a lack of self-care is correlated with heightened levels of burnout, secondary traumatic stress symptoms, increased risk of health decline etc. Comprehending the links between self-care practices and burnout offers significant insights for enhancing the well-being of trainee counsellors.

Self-care is a comprehensive practice that includes methods for preserving physical, emotional, and psychological well-being. For trainee counsellors, self-care encompasses establishing boundaries, participating in relaxation-promoting activities, and obtaining support when necessary. Self-care is essential for preventing stress and burnout among counsellors and trainees (Baker and Gabriel, 2021). Quantitative research has examined self-care as a mitigator of occupational stress, highlighting its essential function in maintaining professional efficacy. The self-care grounded in mindfulness and SEL taught in the course enabled them to face emotions such as anger, disappointment, anxiety, uncertainty, and shame with nonjudgment and acceptance (Mi Choi and Hyun, 2023). Since counselling entails continuous emotional effort, self-care is vital to maintaining long-term resilience and avoiding burnout, rather than being a mere personal preference. Self-care activities can help improve wellbeing, reduce stress, and be a preventive factor against burnout for helping professionals (Duncan and Pond, 2024). According to (Thompson et al., 2011), supervisors can help counsellors-in-training create a personal framework for finding meaning in their work in order to promote hardiness, resilience, and the potential for transformation.

Emotional regulation is crucial for counsellors who frequently face emotionally intense situations. Emotion regulation is essential for therapists to help clients navigate their emotional experiences (Goldman, 2016). According to (Prihidko and Swank, 2018), counsellors need emotion regulation knowledge and skills to manage their own emotions effectively during sessions. Self-care practices, including mindfulness, journaling, and relaxation techniques, have demonstrated efficacy in improving emotional regulation skills. Engaging in self-care practices, such as mindfulness and relaxation techniques, can enhance emotional regulation skills among counsellors (Duncan and Pond, 2024). Enhanced emotional regulation enables trainees to manage stress effectively, thereby diminishing the probability of emotional exhaustion. According to (Ko and Lee, 2021), engaging in self-care practices can prevent burnout and enhance emotional regulation among counsellors. Quantitative research indicates that self-care enhances emotional stability, enabling individuals to sustain balance and

composure in their professional responsibilities (Brown, 2022). This link highlights the significance of adopting self-care strategies that directly improve emotional regulation.

Resilience is related to psychological, emotional, balance, and spiritual self-care, an essential attribute for counsellors to confront challenges and recover from stress adeptly. "Cultivating resilience is not just a skill but a life-affirming journey. It enriches our experience of both highs and lows" (Graham, 2019). Self-care is essential for cultivating resilience by providing opportunities for rest, contemplation, and revitalization. Engaging in hobbies, fostering supportive networks, and adhering to a healthy routine enhance adaptability. Resilient trainees are more adept at managing the demands of their positions, consequently diminishing their vulnerability to burnout. Counsellors providing disaster mental health services who practiced self-care activities were more likely to experience lower levels of burnout, compassion fatigue, and vicarious traumatization than those who did not practice self-care (Litam et al., 2021).

Physical self-care, encompassing consistent exercise, appropriate nutrition, and sufficient rest, is a crucial component of overall well-being. A strong physique directly enhances emotional and mental well-being, allowing trainees to excel in challenging environments. Exercise is a powerful antidote to stress, anxiety, and depression (Ratey and Loehr, 2011). Engaging in physical self-care practices corresponds with diminished stress levels and enhanced energy, both of which reduce the risk of burnout. Regular physical activity is associated with improved psychological well-being and reduced levels of stress (McAuley and Rudolph, 1995). Promoting physical self-care among trainees guarantees they possess the endurance to handle their responsibilities while maintaining their health. According to (Goyal et al., 2014), mindfulness meditation can lead to improvements in psychological well-being.

Self-compassion entails treating oneself with kindness and empathy in moments of hardship. According to (Neff, 2011), self-compassion involves being warm and understanding toward oneself when encountering pain and personal shortcomings. It is included in emotional self-care, psychological self-care and spiritual self-care. Self-compassion serves as an essential emotional buffer for trainee counsellors, who frequently encounter self-doubt and increased expectations. Engaging in self-reflection, affirmations, and embracing imperfections cultivates a positive mindset, which reduces the negative effects of stress and prevents burnout. Self-compassion is associated with lower levels of burnout (Kelly and McGowan, 2020). Fostering self-compassion enables trainees to maintain motivation and emotional well-being, thereby

enhancing their overall professional development. According to (Raab, 2014), self-compassionate individuals are more likely to maintain motivation and emotional well-being.

The evidence confirms the essential function of self-care in reducing burnout among trainee counsellors. According to (Beaumont et al., 2016), the findings suggest that developing self-compassion could help to reduce burnout and compassion fatigue in trainee therapists. Quantitative research underscores the necessity for systematic interventions that instruct self-care practices within counsellor training programs. The results indicated that self-care practices were significant predictors of burnout among counsellor educators (Sangganjanavanich and Balkin, 2013). Integrating physical, emotional, and professional self-care into daily practices fosters resilience, emotional regulation, and a sustainable work ethic among trainees. By emphasizing self-care, institutions can assist trainee counsellors in stress management and attaining sustained professional and personal success. Respondents reported that engaging in self-care activities was essential in managing work-related stress and preventing burnout (Cook et al., 2021).

2.4 Self-determination Theory

Self-Determination Theory (SDT) is a psychological theory that underscores the significance of intrinsic motivation and the satisfaction of fundamental psychological needs for good functioning and well-being, developed by psychologists Edward L. Deci and Richard M. Ryan. Their research expanded upon prior motivational theories, notably those of Abraham Maslow and Albert Bandura, and has since been extensively utilized in education, employment, healthcare, and personal development. SDT has been applied to various domains including education and health care (Williams and Deci, 1996). Grounded in 1970s research on intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, Self-Determination Theory (SDT) arose as a counter to behaviorist theories that prioritized external rewards. The concept of basic psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness is essential for understanding the basis of self-motivation and personality integration (Deci and Ryan, 2000). According to Ryan and Deci, when the basic psychological needs are satisfied, individuals experience more volitional engagement in activities and greater psychological well-being. In the realm of trainee counsellors, SDT offers a significant perspective on how self-care activities can foster intrinsic motivation and fulfill psychological needs, thus reducing burnout and improving their ability to cope with the challenges of counselling training.

The need for autonomy, as defined in SDT, underscores the significance of individuals perceiving themselves as in control of their actions and decisions. According to Deci and Ryan (2012), SDT postulates that the satisfaction of the basic psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness is essential for psychological health and well-being. For trainee counsellors, participating in self-selected and meaningful self-care practices can promote a sense of autonomy. Trainees who own responsibility for their well-being are more inclined to feel empowered in properly managing stress. According to (Vansteenkiste et al., 2007), when individuals feel autonomous in their actions, they experience greater well-being and motivation. This autonomy in self-care not only reduces burnout but also improves their capacity to sustain balance despite the academic and emotional strains of their training, thereby fostering their total personal and professional development. Autonomy support from the environment enhances individuals' sense of ownership over their actions (Ryan, 2017). Satisfaction of autonomy needs leads to enhanced employee well-being and reduced stress levels (Van den Broeck et al., 2016).

Competence, a fundamental requirement in SDT, pertains to individuals perceiving themselves as efficient and capable in their endeavors. According to Deci and Ryan (2000), competence involves understanding how to attain various external and internal outcomes and being efficacious in performing the requisite actions. Self-care techniques, including time management, mindfulness, and professional growth, could improve the sense of competence of trainee counsellors. Interventions that support competence needs can enhance employee well-being and performance (Slemp et al., 2021). Through the implementation of these activities, trainees can enhance their emotional resilience and develop skills to manage the challenges of their training. Addressing the demand for competence via self-care helps alleviate emotions of inadequacy and self-doubt, which are prevalent factors in burnout. According to Baard et al., (2004), satisfaction of the competence need was associated with greater well-being and performance. This enables trainees to execute their responsibilities with greater efficacy and assurance, enhancing both client outcomes and their well-being. Self-care activities can help improve well-being, reduce stress, and be a preventive factor against burnout for helping professionals (Duncan and Pond, 2024).

Relatedness, the third psychological need in SDT, emphasizes the importance of feeling linked to others and belonging to a supportive community. Relatedness refers to feeling connected to others, to caring for and being cared for by those others, to having a sense of belongingness both with other individuals and with one's community (Deci and Ryan, 2000).

Self-care may encompass social dimensions, like requesting supervision, obtaining peer support, or participating in group activities. According to Thompson et al., (2011), supervision that emphasizes self-care strategies can assist counsellors-in-training in developing habits that prevent burnout. For trainee counsellors, cultivating relatedness via self-care practices helps mitigate feelings of isolation and augment their sense of belonging. Satisfaction of the need for relatedness enhances intrinsic motivation and well-being (Ryan and Deci, 2017). An encouraging setting fosters transparent communication and mutual support, both of which are crucial for addressing the emotional challenges of counselling. Social support plays a crucial role in enhancing motivation and reducing feelings of isolation (Schunk, 2008). By addressing the desire for relatedness, self-care fosters a good and collaborative learning environment, reducing burnout risk and improving the overall training experience.

The alignment of the three needs in Self-Determination Theory (SDT) which are autonomy, competence, and relatedness, indicates that these needs are interrelated and must be fulfilled concurrently to promote optimal motivation and well-being. The satisfaction of the basic psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness is essential for optimal motivation, well-being, and personal growth (Vansteenkiste et al., 2010). When all three needs are concurrently satisfied, individuals are more inclined to experience intrinsic motivation, psychological development, and comprehensive fulfillment. According to (Reis et al., 2000), daily fluctuations in well-being were significantly associated with the degree to which individuals experienced autonomy, competence, and relatedness in their activities. In counselling, when clients experience autonomy (control over their choices), competence (capability and effectiveness), and relatedness (connection and support from others), they are more inclined to exhibit positive behaviors and express greater satisfaction with their progress. Need fulfillment, particularly autonomy and relatedness, was associated with better relationship functioning and personal well-being (Patrick et al., 2007). Alignment among these needs fosters resilience and sustainable personal growth towards self-care.

The utilization of SDT in this study is notably important as it offers a theoretical framework to investigate the processes by which self-care affects burnout. According to Fernet et al., (2010), based on SDT premises, we propose that perceived autonomy, competence, and relatedness are relevant psychological resources for predicting the three components of burnout. This study aimed to discover unique self-care practices that effectively mitigate burnout among trainee counsellors by contextualizing self-care within the framework of autonomy, competence, and relatedness. “Counsellors are routinely exposed to painful

situations and overwhelming emotions that can, over time, result in burnout. Self-care and recognition of burnout symptoms are necessary for counsellors to effectively care for their clients as well as themselves” (Coaston, 2017). This theoretical perspective emphasizes the necessity of fostering an atmosphere that bolsters trainees' intrinsic drive for self-care, hence facilitating the development of durable behaviors that improve their well-being and professional efficacy. According to Elman and Forrest (2007), if we do not attend to our own functioning and wellness, we can be at risk of developing problems with our professional competence

In conclusion, the Self-Determination Theory provides a comprehensive framework for comprehending the correlation between self-care and burnout in trainee counsellors. The idea emphasizes the importance of autonomy, competence, and relatedness, offering practical insights into how self-care practices can alleviate burnout and bolster trainees' resilience. Personal wellness, which includes self-care practices that satisfy basic psychological needs, is inversely related to job burnout among mental health professionals (Puig et al., 2012). This research emphasizes the significance of supporting intrinsic motivation and psychological needs through the application of SDT, providing essential information for creating interventions that foster sustainable self-care practices. According to Pisarik (2009), students with higher levels of intrinsic motivation, which is supported by the satisfaction of basic psychological needs, report lower levels of burnout. The theory's significance to the study underscores its capacity to enhance the training experience and professional growth of trainee counsellors.

2.5 Overview of Related Literature

The relationship between self-care between mitigating burnout in trainee counsellors is a crucial research domain within counselling psychology. Comprehending the influence of self-care practices on well-being and professional efficacy is crucial, particularly in emotionally taxing environments. Quantitative research has been essential in elucidating the correlation between self-care practices and burnout levels in mental health professionals. Research conducted by Dorociak et al. (2017) and Barnett and Cooper (2009) underscores the importance of self-care in alleviating stress, augmenting job satisfaction, and bolstering resilience. This research highlights the necessity of incorporating self-care practices into counselling training programs to ensure long-term professional sustainability.

A variety of studies have investigated the relationship between self-care practices and the prevention of burnout among counselling professionals. Newsome et al. (2012) underscored the ethical imperative of self-care in counselling, whereas Smith (2017) discovered that self-care techniques, including mindfulness and peer supervision, markedly alleviate burnout symptoms. Skovholt and Trotter-Mathison (2014) emphasized the significance of establishing boundaries to manage work-related stress. Although there is consensus on the importance of self-care in mitigating burnout, research varies regarding the most effective practices. The discrepancies may result from differences in research methodologies, participant demographics, or contextual factors affecting burnout levels.

Despite comprehensive research on self-care and burnout, there are still gaps in understanding the impact of various self-care strategies on the long-term resilience of trainee counsellors. Current research frequently neglects the interplay among workplace conditions, institutional support, and individual self-care practices in influencing burnout experiences. Moreover, numerous studies depend on self-reported metrics, potentially introducing biases in evaluating the efficacy of self-care interventions. This research seeks to fill these gaps by employing a holistic methodology that examines various aspects of self-care through the lens of Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 2000). The results will provide actionable insights for creating targeted self-care programs that improve the well-being and professional effectiveness of trainee counsellors.

2.6 Conclusion

This chapter examined the relationship between self-care and burnout level among trainee counsellors, specifically within the context of UNIMAS. It underscores the essential importance of self-care practices encompassing physical, emotional, psychological, and professional well-being in bolstering resilience, alleviating stress, and upholding ethical standards in counselling. This study, based on Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 2000), highlights the significance of autonomy, competence, and relatedness in maintaining effective self-care. Prior research highlights that organized self-care techniques substantially reduce burnout risks; however, there are still deficiencies in comprehending their enduring effects. This study seeks to address these deficiencies by creating focused self-care interventions to enhance the professional and personal well-being of trainee counsellors.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses the research design, sample population, research location, instruments utilized, as well as the procedures for data collection and data analysis employed to achieve the objectives of this study.

3.1 Research Design

This study employed a quantitative design to systematically investigate the relationship between self-care and burnout levels among trainee counsellors at UNIMAS. Quantitative research, through structured surveys, facilitated the systematic analysis of burnout levels and self-care practices, providing objective insights into counsellor well-being (Smith & Lee, 2017). This approach, which emphasizes the collection and analysis of numerical data to discern patterns, correlations, and effects within a defined context (Bauer et al., 2014), ensured objectivity, dependability, and validity in analyzing social phenomena. It proved particularly effective in evaluating the influence of self-care practices on burnout, as it enabled precise measurement and statistical verification. Standardized questionnaires were utilized to gather structured data, promoting consistency and accuracy in the collection of relevant factors. According to Negash and Sahin (2011), this methodology aimed to generate valid, generalizable insights to enhance the field of counselling education.

The study employed a predictive correlational research approach to examine the relationship between self-care (independent variable) and burnout (dependent variable) among trainee counsellors. A predictive correlational design examines relationships between variables and seeks to predict the dependent variable based on independent variables (Basnet, 2022). This design was especially appropriate for examining how self-care influenced the reduction of burnout levels. Correlational designs also provided the opportunity to predict outcomes and explain the relationships among variables (Creswell, 2014). This approach allowed the study to move beyond mere correlation and explore the predictive capacity of particular self-care dimensions on burnout outcomes. Data collection utilized standardized, validated instruments, including self-care evaluation scales and burnout inventories. The sample consisted of trainee counsellors, ensuring relevance to the field of counselling education. Using validated tools

ensured the accuracy and reliability of measurements, offering a comprehensive understanding of the interrelations between self-care and burnout and generating evidence-based insights for addressing burnout among counselling trainees.

The independent variable in this study was self-care, defined as intentional actions aimed at maintaining physical, emotional, and mental well-being. According to Frost (n.d), the independent variable is the variable that is manipulated or controlled to test its effects on the dependent variable. The dependent variable, burnout, referred to a state of emotional, physical, and mental exhaustion resulting from prolonged stress exposure. The dependent variable is the one measured to observe changes in response to the independent variable (Testbook, 2024). Understanding the relationship between self-care and burnout was essential, as effective self-care strategies could mitigate the negative impacts of stress and enhance well-being. This study aimed to identify specific self-care practices that significantly correlated with burnout levels among trainee counsellors, offering practical implications for establishing sustainable self-care models.

Descriptive statistics, Spearman's Rho Correlation Coefficient, and Bootstrap Multiple Linear Regression analysis were used to analyze the data. Descriptive statistics (means, standard deviations, frequencies) summarized participants' levels of self-care and burnout (Field, 2013). A normality test revealed a non-normal distribution, justifying the use of Spearman's Rho Correlation Coefficient to assess the strength and direction of the relationship between self-care and burnout (Pallant, 2020). A reliability test using Cronbach's alpha demonstrated good internal consistency across all measurement scales. Bootstrap multiple linear regression was conducted to evaluate the predictive power of self-care on burnout, providing more accurate estimates despite the violation of normality assumptions (Tabachnick et al., 2013). These analyses ensured reliable and meaningful insights into the relationship between self-care and burnout levels among trainee counsellors.

3.2 Research Subject

3.2.1 Population

The research population consisted of all trainee counsellors enrolled in the counselling program at Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS), including first-year, second-year, third-year, and fourth-year undergraduate counselling students. These individuals represented

various stages of academic and practicum training, offering a broad perspective on self-care practices and burnout experiences throughout their educational journey. The population included all trainee counsellors at UNIMAS, regardless of their prior experience with actual clients. Burnout could still occur due to academic pressures, ethical challenges, and the emotional demands of their training. Counsellors are often at high risk of psychological and emotional distress, making self-compassion as a self-care strategy essential to be nurtured among counselling students (Lim & Tan, 2023). These issues were evident across all academic levels, making the population suitable for examining the relationship between self-care and burnout. According to Lee and Cheng (2022), burnout is more than just stress—it is a state of emotional, physical, and mental exhaustion resulting from prolonged and excessive demands. The inclusion of counselling students from all academic years ensured that the study captured the full range of experiences and challenges faced by trainee counsellors, offering comprehensive insights into the relationship between self-care and burnout across different developmental stages. Counselling students underwent structured training that gradually introduced them to increasingly complex ethical dilemmas, client interactions, and decision-making responsibilities, making them ideal participants for investigating this relationship (Egan, 2013).

3.2.2 Sample

The research sample consists of first-year, second-year, third-year, and fourth-year counselling students in training to become counsellors. The sample size is determined by many established methods to ensure adequate representation for meaningful statistical analysis. A formula proposed by Tabachnick and Fidell (2007) which is The Green's Rule of Thumb for determining the minimal sample size necessary for regression analysis is:

$$N > 50 + 8m$$

According to VanVoorhis and Morgan (2007), for multiple regression analyses, Green (1991) has provided a useful rule of thumb: $N \geq 50 + 8m$ (where m is the number of predictors). It is for testing multiple correlations and for testing individual predictors. N is the requisite sample size, while m represents the quantity of independent variables (predictors). The independent variables in this research are self-care practice derived from the six subscales of the Self-care Assessment Worksheet: Physical, Emotional, Spiritual, Workplace or Professional, and

Balance. Consequently, m equals 6. Utilizing the formula, $N > 50 + 8(6) = 98$. The requisite minimum sample size for this study is 98 respondents.

The necessary sample size for this research, the 15 per Predictor Rule or 15m Rule. A common rule of thumb is to have at least 15 subjects per predictor variable in a regression analysis (Steven, 2002). Stevens (1996) presents the formula for determining the necessary sample size about the number of predictor variables as follows:

$$N > 15m$$

Where m is the quantity of predictor variables. This guideline suggests that a minimum of 15 respondents should be included for each predictor variable to provide credible results. For regression equations using six or more predictors, an absolute minimum of 10 participants per predictor variable is appropriate (Green, 1991). The independent variable, self-care, is assessed across six subscales with The Self-care Assessment Worksheet (SCAW), resulting in a total of $N = 15 \times 6 = 90$ respondents. This sample size guarantees adequate statistical power for examining the relationship between self-care and burnout level, while preserving proportionate representation.

Lastly, is the Krejcie and Morgan Table. This research has a total population of 208 trainee counsellors are 57 first-year, 88 second-year, 63 third-year students, and 64 fourth-year students. The overall population of trainee counsellors is $N = 57 + 88 + 63 + 64 = 272$. According to the Krejcie & Morgan Table, a population of 272 necessitates a sample size of 159. This sample size guarantees that the research outcomes will accurately reflect the broader population with an acceptable margin of error. Upon determining the overall sample size, it must be dispersed proportionately among the three groups: first-year, second-year, third-year, and fourth-year students. This proportionate allocation guarantees that the sample appropriately represents the relative sizes of each group within the population. To determine the sample size for each group, the formula is as follows:

$$\text{Sample per group} = S \times \frac{\text{Group Size}}{N}$$

In conclusion, the Krejcie & Morgan Table serves as a straightforward yet efficient instrument for ascertaining an acceptable sample size, and by proportionate allocation, the study may accurately represent the diversity among the trainee counsellor population at UNIMAS. The Krejcie and Morgan table provides a simplified method for determining sample size based on population size (Fay et al., 2010).

As a results, the sample size for this research will be 160 respondents.

Apart from that, a pilot test was conducted prior to the actual data collection using 30 respondents to assess the reliability of the instruments. The results of the pilot test confirmed that the measurement tools of SCAW and MBI were reliable for use in the main study, ensuring consistency and clarity in the items administered. Participants for the main study were selected using stratified sampling to ensure proportional representation across the different year groups.

3.2.3 Sampling Method

The research employed Stratified Random Sampling as its sampling method. This method entailed partitioning the population into subgroups, or strata, according to particular characteristics, and subsequently selected samples from each segment by simple random sampling. Stratified sampling was a method where the population was divided into homogeneous strata based on characteristics such as age, gender, or socioeconomic status (Thompson, 2012). This method guaranteed that all pertinent subgroups were sufficiently represented in the sample, resulting in accurate and reliable conclusions. According to Kalton (2020), stratified random sampling ensured that key subgroups were adequately represented in the final sample, reduced sampling bias and increased accuracy.

The research categorized the population into three sections according to the academic year of the trainee counsellors of first-year students, second-year students, third-year and fourth-year students. According to Etikan and Bala (2017), categorizing the population into subgroups or strata ensured that specific characteristics, such as academic year, were adequately represented in the sample. A stratified random sample was suitable as it enabled the researcher to encompass the variability in self-care and decision-making styles that might have been present within these two groupings. Stratified random sampling improved the precision of sample estimates by reducing variability within strata and ensuring representation across key subgroups (Lohr, 2021). The sample accurately represented the general population of counselling students by randomly selecting respondents from both the first-year, second-year, third-year and fourth-year stratum. A well-constructed stratified random sample enhanced the generalizability of the findings by capturing the diversity of the population (Creswell and Creswell, 2017).

This method was pertinent to the research's emphasis on the relationship between self-care and burnout level, as it accounted for variations across academic years, thereby yielding more precise insights into how these factors affected trainee counsellors at various stages of their training.

3.3 Instruments

3.3.1 The Self-Care Assessment Worksheet (SCAW)

The instrument used in this research was the Self-Care Assessment Worksheet (SCAW), a self-report questionnaire intended to evaluate respondents' self-care habits, emphasizing their physical, emotional, social, and spiritual well-being. The SCAW assisted respondents in assessing their involvement in diverse self-care behaviors, essential for sustaining mental professional efficacy, particularly in high-pressure professions such as counselling. The instrument had a series of items evaluated on a Likert scale from 1 (Never) to 5 (Always), including facets such as nutrition, exercise, relaxation, and social contacts. The Cronbach's alpha for the SCAW was .973, indicating a high level of internal consistency. Moreover, it possessed strong construct validity and test-retest reliability, rendering it a dependable instrument for evaluating self-care among counselling trainees.

3.3.2 The Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI)

The Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) is a self-administered questionnaire utilized in this study to assess burnout levels among trainee counsellors across three principal dimensions: emotional fatigue, depersonalization, and personal accomplishment. Emotional exhaustion examines feelings of being overwhelmed and depleted by job responsibilities; depersonalization assesses a distant or impersonal attitude towards clients; and personal accomplishment measures perceived competence and satisfaction in one's professional function. Respondents evaluate their experiences using a Likert scale ranging from 0 (Never) to 6 (Every day), yielding a quantified assessment of burnout. The Cronbach's alpha for the MBI was .93, indicating a high level of internal consistency. Thus, the MBI is acknowledged for its strong internal consistency and construct validity, making it a dependable instrument for detecting burnout tendencies. This study's application provides a comprehensive understanding

of burnout prevalence and its correlation with self-care practices, facilitating evidence-based suggestions to enhance trainee counsellors' well-being and professional efficacy.

Table 1: *Cronbach's coefficient alphas.*

Instruments	Cronbach's coefficient alphas (In instruments)
SCAW	.973
MBI	.93

3.3.4 Demographic Question

This demographic question comprises four simple questions designed to obtain fundamental information about the respondents. The questions pertain to gender, age, ethnicity, and academic year.

3.4 Data Collection

This research employed quantitative approaches to collect data on the relationship between self-care and burnout level among trainee counsellors at University Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS). Standardized instruments were utilized for this study, including a self-care assessment scale and a burnout inventory, ensuring the validity and reliability of the data collected. Formal requests were made to the respective instrument developers to obtain permission for their use in the study. These requests outlined the research objectives, the targeted respondents, and the intended application of the instruments. Upon receiving authorization, the instruments were prepared for distribution, including translating them into both Malay and English through a rigorous back-translation process to ensure accuracy and comprehension for all respondents. According to World Health Organization (2010), translation followed by back-translation was a common procedure used to assess the understandability of a source text and trace any inaccuracies or ambiguities in the translation. Also, a formal request was sent to the DEKAN of the Faculty of Cognitive Sciences and Human Development at UNIMAS to obtain approval for trainee counsellors to partake in the study. Upon receiving permission, surveys were disseminated to first-year, second-year, third-year, and fourth-year

counselling students who fulfilled the inclusion requirements. The data collection process was executed methodically, with explicit instructions given to respondents to guarantee consistent responses. Participation was voluntary, and informed consent was secured from all respondents before their involvement in the study. An informed consent resided on its three critical and essential elements including voluntarism, information disclosure, and decision-making capacity (Gupta, 2013). This methodology guaranteed the maintenance of ethical standards during the study process. Any information provided by participants through their study involvement was protected (Barrow et al., 2017).

3.5 Data Analysis

The data collected for this research underwent analysis through descriptive and predictive methods utilizing IBM's Statistical Package for the Social Sciences Version 26 (SPSS 26). Descriptive analysis utilized frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation to summarize the data, while predictive analysis ascertained and measured the relationship between self-care and burnout level among trainee counsellors in UNIMAS. Descriptive analysis utilized frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation to summarize the data (Gravetter and Wallnau, 2017).

Frequency and percentage (%) were employed to delineate the demographic characteristics of respondents, encompassing gender, age, ethnicity, and academic year. The mean, often termed the average, served to quantify the central tendency of the data; in this study, it was utilized to compute the average scores for the Self-Care Assessment Worksheet (SCAW) and the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI). According to Field (2024), the mean was a measure of central tendency that represented the average value of a dataset and was a crucial summary statistic in behavioural research. Furthermore, standard deviation was employed to evaluate the variability or dispersion of the scores for these instruments. It indicated the mean distance of the data points from the average, providing insight into the uniformity of the respondents' self-care routines and decision-making processes. Variability measures such as standard deviation were instrumental in assessing the consistency of behaviours, like decision-making or self-care, within a population (Hair et al., 2019).

The data gathered for this research were examined utilizing Normality Test Analysis, Spearman's Rho Correlation Coefficient Analysis and Bootstrap Multiple Linear Regression Analysis via IBM's SPSS 26. Spearman's Rho Correlation Coefficient examined the strength

and direction of the linear connections between self-care (assessed by the SCAW) and the dependent variables, burnout (assessed by MBI). In this research, Spearman's Rho Correlation Coefficient Analysis was employed to assess the strength and direction of the monotonic relationship between self-care subscales and burnout levels among trainee counsellors. This non-parametric test was chosen due to the violation of normality assumptions, as indicated by the Shapiro-Wilk and Kolmogorov-Smirnov tests, where p-values were less than .05, suggesting that the data were not normally distributed. In addition to correlation analysis, Bootstrap Multiple Linear Regression was conducted to examine the predictive power of self-care subscales on burnout. Bootstrapping was applied to enhance the reliability of parameter estimates, especially in light of non-normality, by resampling the dataset multiple times to generate robust confidence intervals. According to Field (2013), bootstrapping is an effective method to obtain accurate estimates when data deviates from parametric assumptions. These analyses provided both relational and predictive insights into how different aspects of self-care contribute to burnout among trainee counsellors in the Malaysian context.

Table 2: Data Analysis by Using IBM SPSS Version 26

Statistical Analysis	Description
Mean	The mean, or average, represents the central tendency of the data, summarizing the aggregate scores of individuals. This research calculates the mean for the Self-Care Assessment Worksheet (SCAW) and the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) to ascertain normal self-care and burnout.
Standard Deviation	The standard deviation quantifies the dispersion of scores from the mean, providing insights into response variability. This research evaluates the consistency of respondents' scores on the SCAW and MBI, aiding in the understanding of variations in self-care practices and burnout.

Normality Test (Shapiro-Wilk and Kolmogorov-Smirnov tests)	Shapiro-Wilk and Kolmogorov-Smirnov tests are statistical tests used to assess whether a dataset is normally distributed. They help determine if the data meet the assumptions required for parametric analyses. If the results are significant ($p < .05$), it suggests that the data deviate from a normal distribution, indicating the need for non-parametric tests.
Spearman's Rho Correlation Coefficient Analysis	Spearman's Rho Correlation Coefficient Analysis is a non-parametric test used to assess the strength and direction of a monotonic relationship between two variables. In this study, it was used to examine the correlations between self-care (measured through the SCAW model) and burnout levels (measured by the MBI). This method was selected due to the non-normal distribution of the data.
Bootstraps Multiple Regression Analysis	Bootstrap Multiple Regression Analysis is a robust statistical technique used to evaluate the predictive relationship between a dependent variable and multiple independent variables by resampling the data to improve estimation accuracy. In this study, it was employed to assess the predictive power of self-care dimensions (measured by the SCAW) on burnout levels (measured by the MBI) among trainee counsellors. This method was chosen to enhance result reliability, particularly given the non-normal distribution of data.

3.6 Conclusion

In this chapter, the research strategy for examining the relationship between self-care and burnout level among trainee counsellors at University Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS) was described. This research utilized a quantitative methodology to examine the relationship between self-care and burnout level, assessed using the Self-Care Assessment Worksheet (SCAW) and the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI). The sample size, calculated using many

calculations, was 160 respondents, and the sampling technique employed was Stratified Random Sampling. The data collection methodology was outlined, encompassing the dissemination of questionnaires to first-year, second-year, third-year, and fourth-year counselling students. Statistical analyses encompassed the computation of Mean, Standard Deviation, Spearman's Rho Correlation Coefficient Analysis, and Multiple Regression Analysis to evaluate the relationship between self-care and burnout level. These measures guaranteed that the research produced accurate and trustworthy insights into the relationship between self-care and burnout level on these critical aspects of counselling practice.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter will discuss about the finding of this research and analysis of the findings. The analysis of the findings is analyzed using descriptive analysis and inferential analysis by using IBM Statistical Package for the Social Sciences Version 26.

4.1 Reliability Analysis

The reliability of instruments that is used for this research which are Self-Care Assessment Worksheet (SCAW) and Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) has been tested before the analysis has been done. The Cronbach's coefficient alphas of both instruments for this research have shown similar reading with previous studies for both of the instruments. The value of Cronbach's coefficient alpha for SCAW is .97 while .93 for MBI. Though the value is higher compared to previous research, this shows that both of the instruments have high reliability and the results can be trusted to use for the research.

4.2 Demographic Data

A total of 160 trainee counsellors from Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS) participated in this study. The sample included students from all academic years which are first

year, second year, third year, and fourth year. Table 3 until Table 6 shows the demographic data of the respondent.

Table 3: Distribution of respondent by gender.

Gender	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Male	67	41.9
Female	93	58.1

N = 160

Table 3 shows the distribution of respondents by gender and it shows that this research has been dominated by female respondents with 58.1% (N=93) while there is only 41.9% (N=67) of male respondents participate in this research.

Table 4: Distribution of respondents by age.

Age	Frequency (%)	Percentage (%)
19 – 21	53	33.1
22 – 23	73	45.6
24 and above	34	21.3

N = 160

Based on Table 4 which shows the distribution of the respondents, most of the respondent are in the range age between 22 to 23 years old which is 45.6% (N=73), followed by respondents with a range age from 19 to 21 years old which is 33.1% (N=53). 21.3% (N=34) of respondents has been reported to be in the age of 24 years old and above.

Table 5: Distribution of respondents by ethnicity

Ethnicity	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Malay	66	41.3
Chinese	20	12.5
Indian	6	3.8

Bumiputera Sarawak	41	25.6
Bumiputera Sabah	27	16.9

N=160

Distribution of respondents by ethnicity is shown in Table 5. The majority of the respondents were Malay, accounting for 41.3% (N=66) of the total. This was followed by Bumiputera Sarawak at 25.6% (N=41) and Bumiputera Sabah at 16.9% (N=27). Meanwhile, Chinese respondents made up 12.5% (N=20), and the smallest group were Indian participants, comprising 3.8% (N=6) of the sample.

Table 6: Distribution of respondents by year of study.

Year of Study	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Year 1	57	35.6
Year 2	27	16.9
Year 3	40	25
Year 4	36	22.5

N = 160

Table 6 which shows the distribution of respondents by year of study reported that most of the respondents were Year 1 students, making up 35.6% (N=57). This was followed by Year 3 students at 25.0% (N=40), and Year 4 students at 22.5% (N=36). The smallest group were Year 2 students, comprising 16.9% (N=27) of the total participants.

4.3 Mean and Standard Deviation

Overall values for mean and standard deviation for respondents based on SCAW and MBI are shown in Table 7. The values for all of the subscales within SCAW which are physical self-care, psychological self-care, emotional self-care, spiritual self-care, workplace or professional self-care, and balance self-care are calculated using Likert scale of 1 (it never occurred to me) to 5 (frequently). The value for the mean and standard deviation for MBI is also reported in Table 7 with Likert scale of 0 (never) to 6 (everyday).

Table 7: Descriptive Analysis on Self-Care Assessment Worksheet (SCAW) subscales and Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI)

Instruments	Maximum	Mean	Standard Deviation
SCAW			
Physical Self-care	5	3.25	.64
Psychological Self-care	5	3.32	.65
Emotional Self-care	5	3.58	.83
Spiritual Self-care	5	3.51	.77
Workplace or Professional Self-care	5	3.55	.84
Balance Self-care	5	3.77	1.01
MBI – total score	6	3.30	.85

N = 160

Based on the Table 7, which presents the descriptive statistics for the instruments used, Balance Self-care recorded the highest mean score of 3.77 (SD = 1.01), indicating that respondents most frequently practiced balanced self-care. This was followed by Emotional Self-care with a mean of 3.58 (SD = .83), Workplace or Professional Self-care at 3.55 (SD = .84), Spiritual Self-care at 3.51 (SD = .77), Psychological Self-care at 3.32 (SD = .65), and Physical Self-care at 3.25 (SD = .64). Compared to previous research by Hricová (2020), helping professionals reported greater use of Psychological (M = 4.22, SD = 0.62) and Physical Self-care (M = 3.92, SD = 0.64).

The differences in mean and standard deviation between this study and previous research may be influenced by sample characteristics and professional experience levels. In this study, trainee counsellors reported lower mean scores on self-care subscales, with Psychological Self-care (M = 3.32, SD = 0.65) and Physical Self-care (M = 3.25, SD = 0.64). In contrast, previous research involving helping professionals reported higher preferences for Psychological Self-care (M = 4.22, SD = 0.62) and Health/Physical Self-care (M = 3.92, SD = 0.64). These differences suggest that experienced professionals may engage more actively in

psychological and physical self-care practices, possibly due to greater awareness or workplace demands. However, the similarity in standard deviation shows consistent variability in self-care engagement across both groups.

Based on the findings of this study, trainee counsellors reported a moderate level of burnout with a total mean score of 3.30 (SD = 0.85, n = 160). In comparison, a previous study involving helping professionals reported a low level of burnout depersonalisation with a mean of 0.88 (SD = 0.99) and a high sense of personal accomplishment (M = 4.66, SD = 0.85). From this comparison, it can be concluded that sample size and population characteristics, such as level of training and professional exposure, can influence the reported levels of burnout, with larger and more experienced samples often demonstrating lower burnout symptoms and higher resilience.

4.4 Analysis of Normality Test

For this research, a Normality Test was conducted to determine whether the data for burnout levels among trainee counsellors were normally distributed. The analysis involved both the Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests, as shown in Table 8.

Table 8: Tests of Normality for self-care and burnout

Test	Statistic	df	Sig. (p)
Kolmogorov-Smirnov	.095	160	.001
Shapiro-Wilk	.953	160	.000

N = 160, p < .05

Based on the results of the normality tests, the distribution of the burnout scores deviates from normality. The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test (D = .095, p = .001) and the Shapiro-Wilk test (W = .953, p = .000) both showed significant p-values (p < .05), indicating that the data are not normally distributed.

4.5 Analysis of Spearman's Rho Correlation Coefficient

For this research, Spearman's Rho Correlation Coefficient was used to examine the relationship between self-care and burnout levels among trainee counsellors. The analysis specifically

investigated the correlation between the overall self-care score and its six subscales which are physical, psychological, emotional, spiritual, workplace or professional, and balance self-care, with burnout. This non-parametric test was selected due to the non-normal distribution of the data. The results of the Spearman's Rho Correlation Coefficient analysis are presented in Table 9.

Table 9: The relationship between self-care and burnout level.

Scale	N	Sig. (2 tailed)	Spearman Correlation (r)
Physical Self-care	160	.32	.079
Psychological Self-care	160	.003	.234
Emotional Self-care	160	.009	.206
Spiritual Self-care	160	.093	.133
Workplace or Professional Self-care	160	.014	.193
Balance Self-care	160	.058	.150
Burnout	160	.01	.204

N = 160, $p < .05$

The following are the findings found in this research based on the constructed research hypothesis for the research:

Ha₁: There is a significance relationship between self-care (physical self-care subscale) and burnout level among trainee counsellors in UNIMAS.

- The alternative hypothesis is **rejected** for the relationship between physical self-care and burnout among trainee counsellors, as the results show no significant correlation ($r = .079$, $p > .05$, $n = 160$). This indicates that levels of physical self-care are not meaningfully associated with burnout in this sample.

Ha₂: There is a significance relationship between self-care (psychological self-care subscale) and burnout level among trainee counsellors in UNIMAS.

- The alternative hypothesis is **accepted** for the relationship between psychological self-care and burnout among trainee counsellors, as the results show a significant correlation

($r = .234$, $p < .01$, $n = 160$). This indicates a weak positive relationship, suggesting that as psychological self-care increases, burnout levels also tend to slightly increase.

Ha3: There is a significance relationship between self-care (emotional self-care subscale) and burnout level among trainee counsellors in UNIMAS.

- The alternative hypothesis is **accepted** for the relationship between emotional self-care and burnout among trainee counsellors, as the results show a significant correlation ($r = .206$, $p < .01$, $n = 160$). This indicates a weak positive relationship, suggesting that as emotional self-care increases, burnout levels tend to slightly increase as well.

Ha4: There is a significance relationship between self-care (spiritual self-care subscale) and burnout level among trainee counsellors in UNIMAS.

- The alternative hypothesis is **rejected** for the relationship between spiritual self-care and burnout among trainee counsellors, as the results show no significant correlation ($r = .133$, $p > .05$, $n = 160$). This suggests that changes in spiritual self-care are not significantly associated with burnout levels in this sample.

Ha5: There is a significance relationship between self-care (workplace or professional self-care subscale) and burnout level among trainee counsellors in UNIMAS.

- The alternative hypothesis is **accepted** for the relationship between workplace or professional self-care and burnout among trainee counsellors, as the results show a significant correlation ($r = .193$, $p < .05$, $n = 160$). This indicates a weak positive relationship, suggesting that higher engagement in professional self-care is slightly associated with higher burnout levels.

Ha6: There is a significance relationship between self-care (balance self-care subscale) and burnout level among trainee counsellors in UNIMAS.

- The alternative hypothesis is **rejected** for the relationship between balance self-care and burnout among trainee counsellors, as the results show no significant correlation ($r = .150$, $p > .05$, $n = 160$.) This suggests that the level of balance in self-care is not significantly associated with burnout levels in this sample.

Ha7: There is a significance influence in self-care on burnout level among trainee counsellors in UNIMAS.

- The alternative hypothesis is **accepted** for the relationship between self-care and burnout among trainee counsellors, as the results show a significant correlation ($r = .204$, $p < .01$, $n = 160$). This indicates a weak positive relationship, suggesting that higher levels of self-care are slightly associated with higher levels of burnout in this sample.

4.6 Bootstraps Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

For this research, a Bootstrap Multiple Linear Regression Analysis has been conducted to investigate the influence of self-care (physical, psychological, emotional, spiritual, workplace or professional, and balance) on burnout level among trainee counsellors in UNIMAS. Table 10 shows the results of regression analysis for self-care on burnout level.

Table 10: Influence of Self-care on Burnout Level

Variables	β	Bias	Std. Error	Sig. (2 tailed)	95% Confidence Interval	Bca
Psychological Self-care	.486	-.026	.132	.006	[.261, .650]	
Emotional Self-care	.286	.005	.089	.006	[.078, .520]	
Workplace or Professional Self-care	.285	.006	.097	.006	[.085, .500]	

N = 160, $p < .05$

Out of the six self-care subscales, only psychological self-care, emotional self-care, and workplace or professional self-care were found to be significant predictors of burnout among trainee counsellors. Psychological self-care was statistically significant with $\beta = .486$, $p < .01$, and its bootstrapped 95% confidence interval ranged from .261 to .650, indicating it had the strongest predictive influence on burnout. Emotional self-care was also significant with $B = .286$, $p < .01$, and a 95% confidence interval of .078 to .520, suggesting it was the second most influential predictor. Workplace or professional self-care showed a significant contribution as well, with $\beta = .285$, $p < .01$, and a 95% confidence interval of .085 to .500, making it the third most predictive subscale.

As a conclusion, psychological, emotional, and workplace or professional self-care subscales can predict burnout levels among trainee counsellors. The regression equation for predicting burnout based on these three predictors is approximately 6.97 if a trainee counsellor scores the maximum (5) on all three significant self-care subscales.

4.7 Conclusion

In this chapter, Spearman's Rho Correlation Coefficient Analysis was conducted to examine the relationship between self-care and burnout among trainee counsellors. The results showed that overall self-care has a significant but weak positive relationship with burnout. Among the six self-care subscales, psychological self-care, emotional self-care, and workplace or professional self-care were found to have significant positive relationships with burnout. Meanwhile, physical, spiritual, and balance self-care subscales showed no significant relationship with burnout. Further analysis using bootstrapped multiple linear regression revealed that psychological self-care, emotional self-care, and workplace or professional self-care significantly influenced burnout among trainee counsellors.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION

5.0 Introduction

This chapter will focus on the discussion and summary of the research. This chapter presents a summary of the research outcomes, offers recommendations for future research, and outlines the theoretical and practical implications of the findings, particularly in relation to self-care and burnout within the counselling profession.

5.1 Discussion

Previous studies have shown the significance of self-care in mitigating mental exhaustion and enhancing well-being among helping professionals, such as trainee counsellors (Skovholt & Trotter-Mathison, 2011; Lawson & Myers, 2011). A variety of study initiatives have examined several facets of self-care and correlated them with less burnout, enhanced

resilience, and improved professional performance. This study aimed to explore the relationship between self-care practices and burnout levels among trainee counsellors.

This study's findings indicated a significant though weak positive correlation between total self-care and burnout among trainee counsellors at UNIMAS ($r = .204, p < .01$). Of the six self-care subscales, psychological self-care ($r = .234, p < .01$), emotional self-care ($r = .206, p < .01$), and workplace or professional self-care ($r = .193, p < .05$) exhibited significant correlations with burnout. Conversely, physical, spiritual, and balanced self-care had no significant correlation with burnout. These findings indicate that specific self-care categories, especially those concerning internal psychological processes and the work environment, may significantly influence burnout experiences.

Notably, the study revealed a significant association between overall self-care and burnout levels among trainee counsellors. Interestingly, this association was positive, indicating that higher levels of self-care were linked to increased burnout which a finding that appears to contradict the majority of existing literature, such as the works of Lawson (2007) and Shapiro et al. (2007), which emphasize that consistent self-care typically mitigates burnout risk. One plausible explanation for this unexpected result is the possibility that trainee counsellors may be engaging in self-care reactively rather than proactively. In this context, self-care activities may be employed as a coping mechanism in response to existing emotional exhaustion and stress, rather than as preventive strategies integrated into daily routines. Barnett et al. (2007) have noted similar patterns in high-stress populations, suggesting that individuals under chronic pressure often resort to wellness behaviors only after symptoms of burnout have begun to manifest. For trainee counsellors, who face academic, clinical, and personal demands simultaneously, this reactive approach may explain the paradoxical relationship observed. Rather than preventing burnout, self-care in such cases might simply reflect an attempt to manage symptoms that have already developed, highlighting the need for early, structured, and culturally relevant interventions that emphasize self-care as an ongoing, preventive practice

Moreover, although spiritual self-care had the greatest average score across all subscales in this study, it did not demonstrate a significant correlation with burnout. This discovery contrasts with other studies that identified spiritual activities as protective factors against stress and burnout, such as previous research from Richards in 2005. This may, however, be explained by cultural and contextual differences. In Malaysia, spiritual self-care is frequently regarded as a religious duty rather than an individual coping mechanism.

Consequently, students may participate in spiritual activities out of obligation or habit, rather than as deliberate self-care for mental health. Besides, inconsistency in the implementation of spiritual self-care may reduce its overall effectiveness on emotional consequences, including burnout.

Similar reasoning can apply to physical self-care and balance self-care, which were also not substantially correlated with burnout in the study. Despite being often endorsed in self-care literature, these areas may not have been regularly implemented or may have lacked profound intention. For instance, students may engage in physical relaxation or breaks, yet, in the absence of mindfulness or adequate emotional processing, such activities may be ineffective in alleviating stress. Similarly, achieving "balance" in self-care may be challenging for students managing academic, practical, and personal obligations; hence, although it represents a goal, it is not consistently performed or internalised. This is similar to the previous research where, according to Taylor et al., (2022), two studies... found no relationship between exercise and burnout. Indicates that some studies reported no significant link between physical activity and burnout.

The Bootstraps Multiple Linear Regression Analysis elucidated these data, indicating that only psychological self-care ($\beta = .486, p < .01$), emotional self-care ($\beta = .286, p < .01$), and workplace or professional self-care ($\beta = .285, p < .01$) substantially predicted burnout. Of these, psychological self-care exerted the most significant impact, underscoring its critical role in fostering self-reflection, emotional control, and mental limits. This supports the perspective of Shapiro et al. (2007), who underscored the importance of internal psychological self-care practices, including journaling, therapy, and mindfulness, in mitigating emotional fatigue. Professional self-care in the workplace is crucial, since it emphasises the need for supervision, establishing boundaries, and upholding ethical standards to ensure trainee well-being (Barnett et al., 2007).

This research involved 160 trainee counsellors from a single institution, in contrast to larger-scale investigations with varied participants. The sample size and demographic information may somewhat clarify the weak correlations and the surprising direction of the connections. Molero et al., (2018) assert that variations in demographic, culture, and sample characteristics can profoundly affect the manifestation and interaction of self-care and burnout. This indicates that the effectiveness and influence of self-care may not be universal, but rather influenced by the cultural norms, beliefs, and practices of the examined group.

In conclusion, this study contributes to the growing literature by highlighting that not all self-care practices equally predict burnout, and in this context, psychological, emotional, and professional self-care were the most relevant. The findings also raise the need to promote proactive and meaningful self-care practices, rather than reactive responses to burnout. Understanding cultural perceptions of self-care, especially spiritual and balance practices, is also important for developing more effective self-care programs for trainee counsellors in Malaysia. These insights can inform counselling education and supervision by emphasizing intentional, consistent, and culturally sensitive approaches to self-care in preventing burnout.

5.2 Summary of Research

This research aims to investigate the relationship between self-care practices and burnout levels among trainee counsellors at Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS). The primary aim was to ascertain if overall self-care and its subscales, which are physical, psychological, emotional, spiritual, professional, and balancing self-care, exert any meaningful link or impact on the burnout levels seen by trainee counsellors. This study is based on Self-Determination Theory (SDT), which highlights the significance of intrinsic motivation and the satisfaction of fundamental psychological needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness in enhancing well-being and mitigating adverse effects like burnout. Self-Determination Theory posits that when trainee counsellors prioritise self-care driven by intrinsic values and motivation, they are more likely to enhance their emotional well-being and resilience, serving as a protective mechanism against burnout.

Moreover, this study involved 160 trainee counsellors, comprising first, second, third, and fourth-year counselling students at UNIMAS. Stratified sampling was employed to guarantee participation from every academic year. This study employed two instruments: the Self-Care Assessment Worksheet (SCAW) to evaluate the frequency of self-care behaviours, and the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) to assess the amount of burnout among participants. The obtained data were analysed utilising descriptive statistics, Spearman's Rho Correlation Coefficient analysis, and bootstrapped multiple linear regression to examine the intensity, direction, and predicted associations between self-care subscales and burnout.

Nevertheless, the research findings indicated a significant but weak positive correlation between total self-care and burnout ($r = .204$, $p < .01$). Of the six self-care subscales, psychological self-care, emotional self-care, and workplace or professional self-care exhibited

significant correlations and impacts on burnout levels ($p < .01$), with psychological self-care displaying the highest predictive value ($\beta = .486$). Nonetheless, physical, spiritual, and balanced self-care had no significant correlation with burnout. The findings indicate that some areas of self-care may be more efficacious in mitigating burnout, whilst others may be done inconsistently or shaped by cultural attitudes, shown by spiritual self-care being regarded more as a religious duty than a coping mechanism. These findings are somewhat consistent with prior studies and offer insight into the self-care practices of trainee counsellors in Malaysia.

5.3 Recommendation

This research may provide significant insights on self-care practices and their correlation with burnout among trainee counsellors. Nonetheless, multiple hurdles must be overcome to enhance future study in this domain. Future research should broaden their coverage by include bigger and more varied samples, including trainee counsellors from various institutions around Malaysia. An expanded sample would enhance the generalizability of the findings and yield a more precise depiction of the counselling trainee population. Aren and Pisal (2022) emphasized the lack of breadth in previous research and the need for wider sampling to capture diverse coping or self-care patterns.

In addition, this research included measures like the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) and the Self-Care Assessment Worksheet (SCAW). Certain components in these instruments were determined to be more relevant to working professionals than to students in training. Consequently, this may have influenced the precision of participant's responses and in turn, the general validity of the results. A procedure of modification or contextual validation should have been performed in collaboration with supervisors or field experts to guarantee the appropriateness of the questions for a student trainee demographic.

Future research should also include longitudinal studies to more effectively examine the impact of self-care behaviours on burnout over time. A cross-sectional study offers only a snapshot, but a longitudinal design may monitor changes and the efficacy of self-care behaviours in alleviating burnout during various stages of training or academic stress periods. Moreover, revising the conceptual framework and instrument content to address current obstacles encountered by trainee counsellors, such as digital fatigue, academic pressure, and mental health stigma, would augment the research's applicability to the present counselling landscape.

Furthermore, future studies may also benefit from exploring other influencing variables such as personality traits, coping styles, or social support, which may interact with self-care and burnout levels. According to Shimizutani et al., (2008), neuroticism was more closely related to personal, work-related, and client-related burnout than extroversion... acquisition of skills to cultivate appropriate coping behaviors might be useful for reducing ... burnout. Shows that personality traits and coping styles or self-care significantly influence burnout, indicating these variables are important to include. Including perspectives from both trainee counsellors and their clinical supervisors may also provide a more holistic understanding of self-care practices and their implications within the training environment. Previous research of Thompson et al., (2011), suggests that supervision practices directly shape trainees' self-care, making supervisor input a valuable addition.

To conclude, by addressing these recommendations, future research can strengthen the theoretical and practical understanding of self-care as a protective mechanism against burnout and contribute to the development of more supportive and effective counselling education environments.

5.4 Implication

This research has enhanced the comprehension and implementation of Self-Determination Theory (SDT) in counselling training. This study indicates that specific self-care subscales, including psychological, emotional, and professional self-care, significantly correlate with burnout levels, thereby reinforcing the theoretical framework of Self-Determination Theory (SDT), which posits that the satisfaction of fundamental psychological needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness is crucial for well-being. SDT posits that the satisfaction of BPNs—autonomy, competence, and relatedness—is essential for psychological wellbeing and optimal functioning (Mobarak et al., 2024). The findings confirm that when trainee counsellors participate in self-care motivated by intrinsic factors and personal significance, it can enhance their emotional resilience and diminish vulnerability to burnout.

Moreover, this research contributes to the growing body of local studies in the Malaysian context, where much of the existing literature is predominantly shaped by Western perspectives. It highlights the need to consider cultural and environmental factors, such as the practice of spiritual self-care, which may influence how self-care impacts burnout. In the Malaysian setting, spiritual self-care is often viewed more as a religious obligation than a

personal coping strategy, potentially reducing its effectiveness in managing burnout. These findings underline the importance of updating existing self-care frameworks and measurement tools to better reflect the lived realities of trainee counsellors, particularly within Southeast Asian cultural contexts. As research on self-care and burnout continues to develop in Malaysia, this study contributes to advancing relevant practices, policies, and educational curricula that prioritize trainee well-being, ultimately supporting the formation of competent, emotionally resilient, and ethically grounded professional counsellors.

5.5 Conclusion

This chapter has presented the discussion of the research findings in relation to previous studies, showing that some findings are aligned with past literature, while others reveal new insights that reflect cultural and contextual differences. A full summary of this research has also been included. The implications of this research are divided into theoretical and practical aspects. Theoretically, the findings support Self-Determination Theory, emphasizing how intrinsic motivation and the fulfillment of psychological needs can influence self-care practices and burnout levels. Practically, this research brings awareness to the importance of promoting consistent and meaningful self-care habits among trainee counsellors to protect their well-being and reduce burnout risk.

Recommendations for future research include increasing the sample size and expanding the study to other universities to improve generalizability. It is also recommended to explore the effectiveness of self-care through longitudinal designs, to observe changes over time. Researchers are encouraged to re-evaluate and update certain outdated concepts within the instruments used, such as MBI and SCAW, and consider adapting them to be more suitable for the student context. Future studies may also benefit from exploring other influencing variables such as coping strategies, personality traits, and social support. These efforts can further enhance the understanding and importance of self-care in the development of emotionally resilient, competent, and ethical counsellors.

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APPENDIX

POSTER:



FACULTY OF
COGNITIVE SCIENCES &
HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

The Relationship Between Self-Care and Burnout Level

Christy Ellen Anak Kim Hin (83519)
Supervised by: Miss Muliana Binti Mohamad Taha

Poster No.:

Introduction

Trainee counsellors at UNIMAS face emotional, academic, and professional pressures that increase their risk of burnout.

Research Purpose:
The purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between self-care and burnout levels among trainee counsellors at UNIMAS. It aims to determine how self-care practices function as protective factors against burnout and provide practical, culturally relevant strategies to enhance trainee counsellors' well-being, resilience, and professional development.

Problem Statement:

- Burnout among trainee counsellors negatively affects mental health and professional development, especially in emotionally demanding roles (Paul et al., 2024).
- Research gaps exist, most studies focus on practicing counsellors in Western contexts, limiting relevance to Malaysian trainee counsellors (Skovholt & Trotter-Mathison, 2014).
- Self-care practices lack practical application in training programs, despite their importance in reducing burnout (Maslach & Leiter, 2016).

Research Objective:

- To investigate the relationship between physical self-care and burnout level among trainee counsellors in UNIMAS.
- To investigate the relationship between psychological self-care and burnout level among trainee counsellors in UNIMAS.
- To investigate the relationship between emotional self-care and burnout level among trainee counsellors in UNIMAS.
- To investigate the relationship between spiritual self-care and burnout level among trainee counsellors in UNIMAS.
- To investigate the relationship between workplace or professional self-care and burnout level among trainee counsellors in UNIMAS.
- To investigate the relationship between balance self-care and burnout level among trainee counsellors in UNIMAS.
- To analyse the prediction of self-care on burnout level among trainee counsellors in UNIMAS.

Conceptual and Theoretical Framework

INDEPENDENT VARIABLE

- Self-Care
 - Physical
 - Psychological
 - Emotional
 - Spiritual
 - Workplace or Professional
 - Balance

→

DEPENDENT VARIABLE

- Burnout

Self-Determination Theory

Competence	Humans' three basic needs	Relatedness
need to be effective in dealing with environment	Autonomy need to control the course of their lives	need to have a close, affectionate relationship with others

Key References

- Maslach & Leiter (2016): Defined burnout dimensions.
- Deci & Ryan (2000): Introduced Self-Determination Theory (autonomy, competence, relatedness).
- Skovholt & Trotter-Mathison (2014): Emphasized need for self-care in counselling.

Research Methodology

Design: Quantitative, correlational
Sample: 160 trainee counsellors, UNIMAS (Stratified Random Sampling)
Location: Faculty of Cognitive Sciences & Human Development
Instruments:
Self-Care Assessment Worksheet (Acceptable Reliability Value, Cronbach's Alpha: 0.962) & Maslach Burnout Inventory (Average Reliability, Cronbach's Alpha: 0.765)

Analysis: Descriptive, Spearman Correlation & Multiple Regression using SPSS
Ethics & Confidentiality:

- Consent obtained
- Anonymous participation
- Data used only for academic purposes

Finding/Results

- There is **no significant relationship** between physical self-care and burnout level among trainee counsellors in UNIMAS.
- There is a **weak positive relationship** between psychological self-care and burnout level among trainee counsellors in UNIMAS. ($r=.234, p=.003$)
- There is a **weak positive relationship** between emotional self-care and burnout level among trainee counsellors in UNIMAS. ($r=.206, p=.009$)
- There is **no significant relationship** between spiritual self-care and burnout level among trainee counsellors in UNIMAS.
- There is **weak positive relationship** between workplace or professional self-care and burnout level among trainee counsellors in UNIMAS. ($r=.193, p=.014$)
- There is **no significant relationship** between balance self-care and burnout level among trainee counsellors in UNIMAS.

Bookstraps Multiple Linear Regression
Psychological self-care significant predict on burnout level, $B=.486, SE=.132, p=.006, 95\% \text{ BCa } [.261, .650,]$ among trainee counsellors .

Discussion

Contradict to Patsiopoulous & Buchanan (2011) - Spiritual self-care, fosters a sense of purpose and interconnectedness.(may increase spiritual self-care only after experiencing burnout, not before.)

Future Research:

- Explore other mental health factors (e.g. stress, anxiety, compassion fatigue). May no longer fully reflect current challenges faced.
- Use instruments tailored for students, not working professionals.
- Compare different universities or regions for broader findings.

Conclusion

Overall, the study concludes that self-care plays an important role in reducing burnout among trainee counsellors, with psychological self-care showing the strongest impact.

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