



THE EFFECT OF BUDDHIST FASTING AND VEGETARIAN ON THE MENTAL HEALTH OF BODHICTTA BUDDHIST HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

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Abstract

Health is not a temporary need, but a lifelong need that can be said to be a very valuable investment. It can be seen from the words of the Buddha that health is the greatest gift. Health is a combination of physical and mental well-being. It is not only limited to being free from physical illness, but also avoiding mental disorders. Mental health strongly correlated with productivity and physical health. Disruption in mental health or psychological condition can be experienced by anyone. A healthy mental health is a mental condition that is always in a calm, safe and peaceful state, and also avoids various mental illnesses such as low self-esteem, anxiety, fear, anxiety, and other inner tensions. Buddhist fasting (Vikalabhojana) is fasting in general, which can be interpreted as a conscious and sincere effort and action to refrain from various temptations, desires for physical and spiritual needs, and behavior, in order to obtain a simple life, towards peace of mind to achieve holiness. Vegetarian are people who for some reason no longer consume the foods made from living beings and develops a love for living beings where every creature has the right to continue to live. Vegetarians are more inclined to consume foods in the form of whole grains, vegetables, fruits, nuts, legumes and seeds. This study uses a Quasi Experiment method with a quantitative approach, with multiple regression analysis. The type of research instrument used is in the form of a closed, direct and multilevel questionnaire. The population used in this study are 160 respondents of SMA Buddhist Bodhicitta students. The sample method used was non-probability sampling with purposive sampling technique to specially select students of class XII SMA. The results of the hypothesis test for H1 buddhis, fasting shows the Sig. value of $0.001 < 0.05$ and $t_{count} 4.521 > t_{table} 2,145$; for H2 vegetarian shows the Sig. value of $0.005 < 0.05$, or $t_{count} 3,357 > t_{table} 2.145$; and for H3 Sig. deviation value of $0.000 < 0.05$ and $F_{count} 29,959 > F_{table} 3,74$, which means that there is an influence between the independent variable and the dependent variable, either partially or simultaneously The results of this study concluded that students' mental health can be improved through the practice of Buddhist fasting and being vegetarian either partially (individually) or simultaneously (together).

Keywords: mental health, buddhist fasting, vegetarian

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INTRODUCTION

Mental health greatly supports productivity and physical health. Mental or psychiatric health disorders can affect everyone. Information from Riskesdas (basic health research) 2018 indicates that approximately 6.1% of Indonesia's total population, or 11 million individuals, suffer from anxiety and depression, which are common mental and emotional problems for those over the age of 15. As many as 6.2% of adolescents experienced depression. Major depression causes a tendency to commit violence against oneself (self-harm) to suicide attempts. As many as 80-90% of suicide cases are the effects of depression and anxiety experienced during life.¹⁻³ According to succulentologists, 4.2% of students in Indonesia are thinking about suicide. The students (6.9%) had had suicidal thoughts, while the remaining 3% had attempted suicide. There are several causes of depression in adolescents such as stress in education, bullying, family harmony, and the economy.^{4,5}

The Indonesian Association of Psychiatric Specialists (PDSKJI) conducted a survey related to mental health by means of online self-examination. The outcomes of the self examination reached 4,010 respondents (71% women and 29% men) in the period April-August 2020, showing the results of 64.8% of respondents experiencing mental health disorders with a proportion of 64.8% experiencing anxiety, 61.5% experiencing stress, and 74.8% experiencing trauma. The age group of 17-29 years is the age group that suffers the most from mental health.⁶

Mental health is a harmonious state in life that can be seen in the continuity of the role of the soul, such as the ability to face life's problems, and being able to feel happiness and potential positively.⁷⁻⁹ The opinion that is concurrent with the term mental health is the condition of a person who knows his abilities and can overcome normal stress in himself, work productively and contribute to his social environment.¹⁰⁻¹²

In line with the above results, the researcher conducted a survey of students' mental health through interviews conducted with the principal of the Bodhicitta Medan Buddhist private high school. Bodhicitta Buddhist Private School is the only Buddhist school in Medan City, with the motto of knowing gratitude, gratitude and returning the favor. With the results of the survey on the state of mental health of students during the pandemic as follows: 65% are anxious, 15% are

anxious, 10% are stressed, 10% do not feel anything. From the above conditions, it is followed by a decrease in the level of student achievement. This result was conveyed by the principal of Bodhicitta Buddhist Private High School, Mr. Rudiyanto Tan Wijaya (Preliminary Study on October 22, 2021).

Some of the phenomena above are indications that a person's mental health is disturbed, including: envy, sadness, grumpyness, uselessness, fickle feelings, suicidal thoughts, and anxiety.¹³ To solve these indications, it is necessary to have coaching as a way to increase happiness and provide good acculturation for everyone.¹³ In addition to doing this, it turns out that there are other ways that can be used as a solution to overcome problems related to mental health, namely fasting and vegetarianism. A study shows that fasting can lower mental health symptoms.¹⁴⁻¹⁶ This is because fasting makes the body release more endorphins in the brain which gives rise to feelings of happiness.¹⁷⁻¹⁹ Similarly, being vegetarian can also reduce mental health problems. This is evidenced by Cami Martin, who works as a Health Education at Nedlye Health Solutions, an Oklahoma-based mental health service, said that a vegetarian lifestyle managed to bring a positive influence on her mental health in seven days.²⁰

Fasting or often known as refraining from eating and drinking has been practiced since several centuries ago.²¹ Fasting is worship by restraining one's own desires from the desire to consume food and drinks as well as doing things that arouse sensual desires, from sunrise to sunset.^{22,23}

Fasting for Buddhists is the practice of practicing precepts, which is the most basic thing in the practice of religious teachings, which includes all actions (behavior) and good qualities that are recommended to be practiced in morality and ethics in Buddhism.²⁴

In Buddhism, fasting is known as one of the methods to practice self-control. The Buddha advised the monks not to consume food after noon. Laypeople who practice the rule of eight precepts on the full moon also avoid eating after noon.²⁵ People who eat excessively, will have difficulty fighting laziness, and people who are greedy and lazy are unable to fight sexual desires.²⁶ Thus, in terms of morality, behavior control starts from efforts to fight lust by fasting. The condition for a righteous life is self-control.²⁷

Deep Kitagiri Sutta There is a message that monks by abstaining from eating at night, by practicing it we will be free from all diseases and sufferings, and can also enjoy health, strength and a comfortable dwelling.²⁸

The research conducted at the Bodhicitta Buddhist School in Medan refers to the values of the Buddhist school with a pattern of human development that is spiritually, physically and intellectually intact. This is developed through a vision and mission that is crystallized with the motto of knowing gratitude, gratitude and returning gratitude. Although it is a Buddhist school, the Bodhicitta Buddhist school currently does not have a Buddhist and vegetarian fasting Vikala Bhojana self-training program applied to students to help their students' mental health. Therefore, the researcher is eager to learn more about the study theme regarding the influence of Buddhist fasting (Vikala Bhojana) and vegetarianism on the mental health of students of SMA XII IPA Bodhicitta Buddhist College Medan. It is intended that the findings of this study will serve as the foundation for a regular curriculum in Buddhist Bodhicitta schools in the future.

METHOD

This research was conducted with a quantitative approach using experimental research methods. Experimental research is a study that aims to find out or research how causal influence is by comparing the experimental group that was given treatment (the group received the treatment of Buddhist fasting / Vikala Bhojana and Vegetarian) with the control group that was not given the treatment of the control group. This research uses Quasi Experimental Design (Pseudo-Experiment) design. Posttest Only Control Group Design was used in this study where two groups were given different treatments.²⁹ The instrument used in this research is in a questionnaire form to obtain data on the mental health state of grade XII students of Bodhicitta Buddhist High School 2021/2022. Data collection in this study is by survey method, namely using a questionnaire as a data collection tool.

Multiple regression analysis is the analysis technique used in this research. First, a description was carried out on the research data consisting of 2 variables, namely the free variable and the bound variable listed in the data table, frequency distribution and histogram which was then

analyzed. After that, a test of data analysis requirements was carried out, which was then followed by a hypothesis test.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The respondents of this study are students of SMA XII Buddhist Bodhicitta Class of 2021/2022 which totals 160 students. The overall sampling of grade XII high school students needed is 32 people. The questionnaire that has been tested for validity and reliability is rearranged in a google form, and the questionnaire link is shared in the whatsapp group of each class for the student concerned to fill in, with the help of the subject teacher.

Table 1. Mental Health Reliability Test Results

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
0,886	20

The table above shows that the reliability of the Mental Health variable (Y) has a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.886 which means that it exceeds the limit of the table = 0.349, so it can be said that these 20 (twenty) items of the Buddhist fasting variable statement (X1) are reliable or trustworthy, and are classified as reliable and strong (0.80 – 1,000).

Table 2. Results of the Reliability Test of Buddhist Fasting

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
0,962	20

The table above shows that the reliability of Buddhist fasting (X1) has a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.962 which means that it exceeds the limit of r-table = 0.349 so that it can be said that these 20 (twenty) items of the Buddhist fasting variable statement (X1) are reliable or reliable, and are classified as reliable and strong (0.80 – 1).

Table 3. Results of the Spirituality Reliability Test

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
0,962	20

Descriptive analysis is used to describe the characteristics that the variables studied in this study.

Table 4. Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
kesehatan mental - Control	16	34.00	82.00	51.6250	13.62779
Valid N (listwise)	16				

Based on the table above, it is known that the sample in the control group is 16 respondents, there are 20 question points for the health variable with an average value of 51.62 where the lowest total score value is 34 and the highest total score value is 82.

Table 5. Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
puasa buddhis - eksperimen	16	64.00	94.00	78.0000	7.86554
vegetarian- eksperimen	16	58.00	97.00	77.8125	9.86049
kesehatan mental - eksperimen	16	66.00	98.00	77.8750	10.18414
Valid N (listwise)	16				

Based on the table above, it is known that the sample in the control group is 16 respondents, there are 20 question points for the health variable with an average value of 78 where the lowest total score value is 64 and the highest total score value is 94.

In this study, the normality test was carried out with the Kolmogorov-Smirnow test. If the significant value is greater than 0.05, the data is said to be normally distributed. The results of the normality test are as below.

Table 6. One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test

		puasa buddhis - eksperimen	vegetarian- eksperimen	kesehatan mental - eksperimen
N		16	16	16
Normal	Mean	78.0000	77.8125	77.8750
Parameters ^{a,b}	Std. Deviation	7.86554	9.86049	10.18414
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.150	.158	.155
	Positive	.118	.158	.155
	Negative	-.150	-.123	-.133
Test Statistic		.150	.158	.155
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.200 ^{c,d}	.200 ^{c,d}	.200 ^{c,d}

- a. Test distribution is Normal.
- b. Calculated from data.
- c. Lilliefors Significance Correction.
- d. This is a lower bound of the true significance.

Based on the table above in the normality test, the significance value of the Buddhist fasting variable was $0.200 > 0.05$, the significance value of the vegetarian variable was $0.200 > 0.05$ and the significance value of the mental satisfaction variable was $0.200 > 0.05$ so that it can be concluded that all data in this study are normally distributed.

A significance value of > 0.05 is obtained, so it can be said that the variants of both groups are the same. The results of the homogeneity test can be seen in the following table.

Table 7. Test of Homogeneity of Variances

		Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
kesehatan mental	Based on Mean	.740	1	30	.397
	Based on Median	.261	1	30	.613
	Based on Median and with adjusted df	.261	1	24.706	.614
	Based on trimmed mean	.566	1	30	.458

Based on the above output on the levene statistics of mental health variables, a significance value of $0.397 > 0.05$ was obtained, so it can be concluded that all data in this study are homogeneous.

The results of the multicollinearity test in this study, as below.

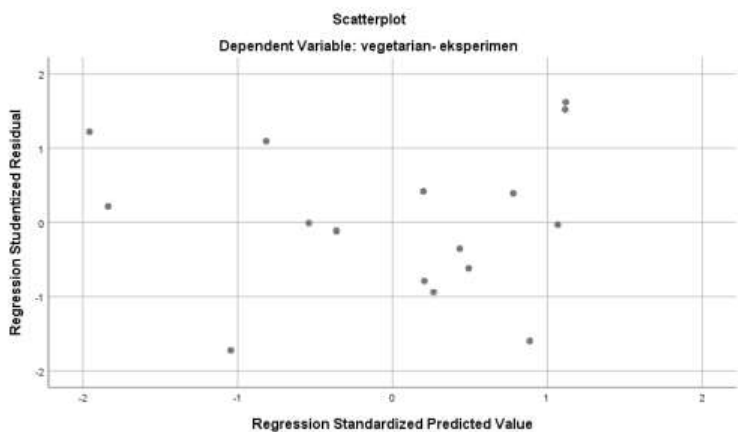
Table 8. Multicholinerity Test

Model	Coefficients ^a				Collinearity Statistics			
	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		t	Sig.	Toleranc e	VIF
	B	Std. Error	Beta					
1 (Constant)	21.29	14.407			1.47	.16		
	9				8	3		
puasa buddhis - eksperimen	.799	.177	.617	4.52	.00	.881	1.13	6
vegetarian- eksperimen	.473	.141	.458	3.35	.00	.881	1.13	6
					7	5		

a. Dependent Variable: kesehatan mental - eksperimen

Based on the table above, it is known that all independent variables in the experimental group in this study obtained a tolerance value of $0.881 > 0.1$ and $VIF 1.136 < 10$, so it can be concluded that the data in the experimental group in this study are free from multicollinearity problems.

The results of the heterokedacity test can be seen in the graph below.



Graph 1. Heterokedacity Test

Based on the graph above, the results are obtained that the points on the scatterplot graph move between the x and y axes and do not form a certain pattern so that it can be concluded that the data in this study are free from heterokedness disturbances.

The hypothesis test in this study uses multiple regression analysis which aims to determine whether or not there is an influence of the Buddhist Fasting variable (X1) and the Vegetarian variable (X2) on the Mental Health variable (Y). Basis for decision-making based on the t-test and F. Hypothesis formulation: H1 = There is an effect of Buddhist Fasting (X1) on Mental Health (Y), H2 = There is an influence of Vegetarian (X2) on Mental Health (Y), H3 = There is an effect of Buddhist Fasting (X1) and Vegetarian (X2) simultaneously on Mental Health (Y), with a confidence level of 95%. = 0.05.

Table 8. Regression Analysis

Model	Coefficients ^a			
	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients Beta	t
	B	Std. Error		
1 (Constant)	21.299	14.407		1.478
puasa buddhis - eksperimen	.799	.177	.617	4.521
vegetarian- eksperimen	.473	.141	.458	3.357

a. Dependent Variable: kesehatan mental – eksperimen

The Buddhist fasting free variable with t count at 4,521 > t table is worth 2,145 with a smaller significance level when compared to the P Value which is 0.001 < 0.05, this means that t count is greater than t table then the hypothesis is fulfilled, there is a positive influence of the Buddhist fasting variable (X1) on the mental health variable (Y).

H0 : $\beta y1 < 0$

H1 : $\beta y1 > 0$

The Vegetarian free variable with t count value of 3,357 > t table value of 2,145 with a smaller significance level when compared to the P Value which is 0.005 < 0.05, this means that the count is greater than t table then the hypothesis is fulfilled, there is a positive influence of the vegetarian variable (X2) on the mental health variable (Y).

H0 : $\beta y2 < 0$

H1 : $\beta y2 > 0$

Table 9. Anova Test Results

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1223.749	2	611.875	23.959	.000 ^b
	Residual	332.001	13	25.539		
	Total	1555.750	15			

a. Dependent Variable: kesehatan mental - eksperimen

b. Predictors: (Constant), vegetarian- eksperimen, puasa buddhis - eksperimen

Based on the output above, the value of $F_{count} > F_{table}$ is worth 2.145 with a smaller significance level when compared to P Value which is $0.000 < 0.05$, this means that F is greater than F table then the hypothesis is fulfilled, then it can be concluded that Buddhist and vegetarian fasting have a simultaneous effect / have a joint influence on mental health.

The determination coefficient can be obtained by squared the correlation coefficient or R Squared (R2). The results of the determination test can be seen in the table below.

Table 10. Coefficient of Determination

Model	Model Summary ^b			
	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.887 ^a	.787	.754	5.05356

a. Predictors: (Constant), vegetarian- eksperimen, puasa buddhis - eksperimen

b. Dependent Variable: kesehatan mental - eksperimen

Based on the output above, an R2 value of 0.787 was obtained, so it can be concluded that Buddhist and vegetarian fasting affects mental health by 78.7% and the remaining 21.3% is explained by other variables that are not discussed in this study.

To determine whether or not there is an influence of Buddhist fasting variables on mental health, the t-test formula is also used. The t-value of the Buddhist fasting variable t count is 4.521 with a significance level of 0.001, while the t-value of the table for the two-party test with $k = 14$, $\alpha = 0.05$ obtained a t- count of 2.145. It can be seen that t count the value of 4.521 > t table is worth 2.45, this means that the t count is greater than the t table then the hypothesis is fulfilled. So hypothesis 1 in this study is accepted, namely there is a significant influence between Buddhist fasting (X1) and mental health (Y). The value of

standardized coefficients beta was 0.617 or 61.7%, meaning that there was an influence of Buddhist fasting with a value of 61.7% on mental health and the remaining 38.3% was influenced by other variables from outside. In addition, the value of the Buddhist fasting coefficient is 0.799, which means that if the Buddhist fasting variable (X1) increases by 1% with the asumsi of constant and vegetarian values (X2) is 0, then mental health increases by 0.799 units. This gives the meaning that Buddhist fasting has a direct positive effect on mental health.

Buddhist education is still not well implemented in primary schools due to a number of issues, including insufficient training programs, media usage, poor facilities and infrastructure, and incompetent Buddhist education teachers.³⁰ Therefore, for Buddhist education to be implemented successfully at the primary school level, a variety of evaluations are required.

From this study, it can be concluded that the practice of Buddhist fasting can have a direct positive influence on mental health. This means that optimal and continuous Buddhist fasting practices result in an increase in good mental health for students of Bodhicitta Buddhist High School.

To determine whether or not there is an influence of vegetarian variables on mental health, the t-test formula is also used. The t-value of the vegetarian variable t count was 3.357 with a significance level of 0.001, while the t-value of the table for the two-party test with $k = 14$, $\alpha = 0.05$ obtained a t-value of 2.145. Then it can be seen that t count the value of $3,357 >$ the table is worth 2,145. The values in the distribution t), this means that the tcount is greater than the t of the table then the hypothesis is fulfilled. Thus the second hypothesis in this study is accepted, meaning that there is a significant influence between vegetarians (X2) and mental health (Y). From this study, it can be concluded that vegetarian practice can have a positive influence on mental health. This means that optimal and sustainable vegetarian practices result in improved mental health for students of Buddhist Bodhicitta High School.

There is a direct influence of Buddhist and vegetarian fasting on mental health. The results of this calculation used multiple regression analysis and obtained F count 23.959, where the significant value was 0.000 so that H1 was accepted and H0 was rejected because F count $>$ F table, namely (F count $23.959 >$ F table 3.74). It can be concluded that Buddhist and vegetarian fasting has a direct

and close influence on mental health. The constant value is 21.29, which indicates that mental health is 21.29 units if the Buddhist and vegetarian fasting variables remain unchanged (the values of x_1 and x_2 are 0). With an adjusted R determination coefficient of 0.754, it can be concluded that 75.4% of the relationship between fasting for Buddhism and vegetarianism and mental health is explained, with the remaining 24.6% being influenced by factors not included in this study. From this study, in conclusion, the practice of fasting Buddhism (vikala bhojana) and vegetarian can have a direct positive influence on mental health. This means that the optimal and sustainable practice of Buddhist fasting (vikala bhojana) and vegetarianism results in an improvement in the mental health of Bodhicitta Buddhist High School students.

DISCUSSION

Comparison of control group and experiment

The average mental health score in the control group was 51,620 and the experimental group 77.87. where the average mental health of the experimental group had a higher average of 26.25 compared to the average mental health of the control group and a significance value of $0.000 <$ 0.05, so it can be concluded that there was a significant difference in mental health in the experimental group (who were given Buddhist and vegetarian fasting treatment) compared to the control group (without any practice).

The Effect of Buddhist Fasting (X1) on Mental Health (Y)

To determine whether or not there is an influence of Buddhist fasting variables on mental health, the t-test formula is also used. The t count value of the Buddhist fasting variable is 4.521 with a significance level of 0.001, while the t-value of the table for the two-party test with $k = 14$, $\alpha = 0.05$ obtained a t-value of 2.145. It can be seen that t count the value of $4.521 >$ ttable is worth 2.4, this means that the t count is greater than the t table then the hypothesis is fulfilled. Thus the first hypothesis in this study is accepted, meaning that there is a significant influence between Buddhist fasting (X1) and mental health (Y). The Beta standardized coefficients value is 0.617 or 61.7%. This means that mental health is influenced by Buddhist fasting by 61.7% and the remaining 38.3 is influenced by other variables that are not studied in this study. In addition, the value of the Buddhist fasting coefficient is 0.799, which means that if the Buddhist fasting variable (X1) increases by 1%

with the asumsi of constant and vegetarian values (X2) is 0, then mental health increases by 0.799 units. This gives the meaning that Buddhist fasting has a direct positive impact on mental health.

This is consistent with studies conducted by Babamahmoodi et al.³¹ Fasting can improve mental health where fasting can reduce stress, anxiety and depression. Undoubtedly, a person's ability to succeed in life is contingent upon the development of their physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual faculties; also, a student's mental health is impacted by their inclination toward strongly held religious ideas. As well as research by Nasiri et al.³² that fasting and performing religious rituals can improve mental health and reduce aggression in society. Consequently, it must encourage younger age group to practice fasting and enjoy the benefits of fasting practices.

From this study, it can be concluded that the practice of Buddhist fasting can have a direct positive influence on mental health. This means that optimal and continuous Buddhist fasting practices result in an increase in good mental health for students of Bodhicitta Buddhist High School.

The Effect of Vegetarianism (X2) on Mental Health (Y)

To determine whether or not there is an influence of vegetarian variables on mental health, the t-test formula is also used. The t count value of the vegetarian variable was 3.357 with a significance level of 0.001, while the t-value of the table for the two-party test with $k = 14$, $\alpha = 0.05$ obtained a t-value of 2.145. Then it can be seen that t count value of 3,357 > the table is worth 2,145. The values in the distribution t), this means that the tcount is greater than the t of the table then the hypothesis is fulfilled. Thus the second hypothesis in this study is accepted, meaning that there is a significant influence between vegetarians (X2) and mental health (Y). The Beta standardized coefficients value is 0.458 or 46 %. This means that mental health is influenced by vegetarians by 46% and the remaining 54% is influenced by other variables that are not studied in this study.

In addition, the value of the vegetarian coefficient is 0.473, which means that if the vegetarian variable (X2) increases by 1% with the asumsi of the constant value and the Buddhist fasting (X1) is 0, then mental health increases by 0.473 units. This gives the meaning that vegetarianism has a direct positive effect on mental health.

This is consistent with the research conducted by Shen.³³ The results of the study showed that the vegetarian group had a lower incidence of mental disorders with the non-vegetarian group. This shows that a vegetarian diet can be a prevention of mental disorders. This is consistent with the findings of Iguacel et al.³⁴ showed that vegetarian practices had low anxiety scores and showed better mental health quality. Results of the research of Lee et al.³⁵ that vegans and vegetarians who follow a high-quality plant-based diet are protected from depression symptoms; in these cases, a plant-based diet may lower the chance of developing depressive symptoms. As well as the research of Jedut et al.³⁶ that vegetarians have better health standards than non-vegetarians. Where low saturated fatty acids and high consumption of fruits and vegetables will bring better health benefits.

This study's findings indicate that vegetarian practice can have a positive influence on mental health. This means that optimal and sustainable vegetarian practices result in improved mental health for students of Buddhist Bodhicitta High School.

The Effect of Buddhist and Vegetarian Fasting on Student Mental Health

After conducting the training with the help of SPSS and statistical analysis, it was shown that there was a direct influence of Buddhist and vegetarian fasting on mental health. The results of this calculation used multiple regression analysis and obtained an F count of 23.959 with a significance value of 0.000. is a strong reason to accept H1 and reject H0 that, because the value of F count > F table i.e. (f count 23.959 > F table 3.74). It can be concluded that Buddhist and vegetarian fasting has a direct and close influence on mental health. The constant value is 21.29, which indicates that mental health is 21.29 units if the Buddhist and vegetarian fasting variables remain unchanged (the values of x1 and x2 are 0). With an adjusted R determination coefficient of 0.754, it can be concluded that 75.4% of the relationship between fasting for Buddhism and vegetarianism and mental health is explained, with the remaining 24.6% being influenced by factors not included in this study.

Actually, the meaning of fasting is to restrain lust, where lust is the enemy of every human being.³⁷ Fasting also has many benefits such as physical health and even mental health. Where it has been scientifically determined, fasting can provide time for rest for the digestive

organs, including the digestive enzyme system. Where the state of not fasting, the digestive enzyme system continues to be active to digest food, so that the remaining dregs accumulate and can even be bad for the body. Therefore, during fasting, the digestive system can stop and give time for the body's cells, especially digestion, to repair the cells. Fasting also provides great benefits to the mental, fasting is a practice of self-control against various pressures or impositions that can cause depression and stress. Fasting can improve mental health where fasting can reduce stress, anxiety and depression.³⁸ The benefits of a vegetarian diet include improved physical health and happier emotions when morally upright attitudes are adopted.³⁹ Compared to the non-vegetarian group, the vegetarian group in the study experienced a decreased prevalence of mental problems.³³ This shows that a vegetarian diet can be a prevention of mental disorders. Semi-vegetarians tend to show more depressive symptoms than vegetarians.⁴⁰

From this study, it can be concluded that the practice of fasting Buddhism (vikala bhojana) and vegetarian can have a direct positive influence on mental health. This means that the optimal and sustainable practice of Buddhist fasting (vikala bhojana) and vegetarianism results in an improvement in the mental health of Bodhicitta Buddhist High School students.

CONCLUSION

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