

Information letter on participation in research

Introduction

Dear reader,

You are invited to take part in a scientific research study entitled "The Relationship Between Mental Health and Quality of Life." Participation is entirely voluntary. If you decide to participate, we will ask for your online informed consent.

Before you decide whether you would like to participate, please read the following information carefully. It explains the purpose of the study and what your participation involves. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the researcher using the contact details provided at the end of this document.

1. Study Purpose

The aim of this study is to gain a better understanding of the relationship between mental health and quality of life. This is important because it helps identify which improvements in mental health are most likely to enhance people's quality of life. The findings may contribute to the development of prevention programs and mental healthcare services.

2. Study Background

Approximately one in five people experience mental health problems at some point in their lives. This can have a major impact not only on the individual and their loved ones but also on society as a whole. In the Netherlands alone, mental healthcare costs exceeded €5 billion last year, with approximately 1.5 million people receiving treatment. But how do we decide which treatments should be reimbursed?

One way is through economic evaluations, in which the costs and benefits of different treatment options are compared. An important outcome measure in these evaluations is quality of life. However, measuring quality of life accurately is not straightforward. Several questionnaires are available, but the most suitable one depends on the situation. As a result, it is not yet fully understood how mental health relates to the different aspects of quality of life.

This study aims to improve our understanding of the relationship between mental health and quality of life across different individuals, helping us better understand how improvements in mental health may also improve quality of life.

3. What Does Participation Involve?

If you decide to participate:

- You will be asked to complete a one-time online questionnaire. The questionnaire includes questions about your mental health and quality of life.
- No personally identifiable information will be collected, meaning your participation is completely anonymous.
- Completing the questionnaire will take approximately 10 minutes.

4. Possible Benefits and Risks

Benefits

- Your participation contributes to scientific knowledge about mental health and quality of life.
- You help Open Universiteit students develop their research skills.

Risks

- Completing the questionnaire requires an investment of approximately 10 minutes of your time.
- Some questions about your mental health or quality of life may be emotionally uncomfortable, particularly if you are currently experiencing mental health difficulties.

5. Voluntary Participation and withdrawal

Participation in this study is entirely voluntary. Choosing not to participate will have no negative consequences for you.

If you decide to participate, you are free to withdraw at any time, including while completing the questionnaire, simply by closing the survey. You do not need to provide a reason for withdrawing. Any data collected up to that point may still be used for research purposes.

6. End of Participation

Your participation ends once you have completed the questionnaire.

7. Data Handling and Storage

No personal or contact information will be collected, stored, or used in this study. However, we will ask you to provide several demographic characteristics, including your age, gender, and nationality. These data cannot be traced back to you, meaning your participation remains fully anonymous. Your identity will never be identifiable in reports or publications resulting from this study.

The anonymized data may be shared with other researchers for future scientific research. These shared data will not contain any information that could identify you. Therefore, any future use of the data will have no consequences for you, and your anonymity will always be protected.

7.1 Confidentiality

The demographic information collected cannot be used to identify you and will be securely stored by Open Universiteit. Access to the research data will be limited to Dr. Pieter Rohrbach (principal investigator) and psychology students at Open Universiteit who are conducting their thesis research under his supervision.

7.2 Data Retention

The research data will be stored securely by Open Universiteit for a minimum of 10 years.

8. Questions or Further Information

If you have any questions before, during, or after participating in this study, you may contact the principal investigator:

Dr. Pieter Rohrbach

Email: pieter.rohrbach@ou.nl

9. Informed Consent

After you have had sufficient time to consider the information provided, you will be asked whether you wish to participate in this study.

By providing your online consent, you confirm that you have read and understood the information above and agree to participate in this research study.

On the welcome page of this research, you will be asked to indicate whether you consent to participating in this study.