



THE INFLUENCE OF SENSATION SEEKING BEHAVIOUR AND SOCIAL MEDIA
ADDICTION ON HAPPINESS AMONG YOUNG ADULTS IN MALAYSIA

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**The Influence of Sensation Seeking Behaviour and Social Media Addiction on
Happiness among Young Adults in Malaysia**

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APPROVAL FORM

This research paper attached hereto, entitled “The Influence of Sensation Seeking Behaviour and Social Media Addiction on Happiness among Young Adults in Malaysia” prepared and submitted by “Ashwinie Nair A/P Sridharan Nair, Maria Peter A/P Micheal and Titus A/L David Rasahpandy” in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Bachelor of Social Science (Honours) Psychology is hereby accepted.

Date: 22nd November 2021

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Abstract

The happiness level among young adults has been degenerating across the globe and Malaysia has been ranked to be at a concerning place. This study aims to investigate the influence of sensation seeking behavior and social media addiction on happiness among young adults in Malaysia. The hypotheses of this present study are happiness level is low among young adults, sensation-seeking has a significant positive relationship with happiness, and social media addiction has a significant negative relationship with happiness among young adults in Malaysia. The sample size comprised 315 active social media users aged between 18 to 30 who lives in Malaysia and 30 participants in the pilot study. The study was conducted online via Qualtrics software. This descriptive research study involves Oxford Happiness Questionnaire, Brief Sensation Seeking Scale, and Bergen Social Media Addiction Scale. The data was gathered by identifying the target group on social media and promoting e-posters. Next, registration form alongside with informed consent and others were sent to the participants. The collected data was analysed using SPSS software. Results suggest a significant low level of happiness, high level of sensation-seeking behaviour with significant positive relationship with happiness, and significant negative relationship between social media addiction and happiness among the participants. All the results of this present study are in line with past studies. Sensation-seeking behaviour and social media addiction affect happiness and addressing any one of these possible influences is likely to contribute to the literature gap and increase happiness among young adults in Malaysia.

Keywords: sensation seeking, social media addiction, happiness, young adults


DECLARATION

We declare that the material contained in this paper is the end result of our own work and that due acknowledgement has been given in the bibliography and references to ALL sources be they printed, electronic or personal.

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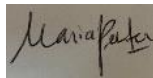


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List of Abbreviations

Etc.	And so forth
BSMAS	Bergen Social Media Addiction
BSSS-8	Brief Sensation Seeking Scale – 8 items
Df	Degree of freedom
FAS	Faculty of Arts and Social Science
E.g.	Example
N	Total number of populations
SD	Standard deviation
Sig	Significance probability
SMA	Social Media Addiction
SPSS	Statistical Analysis Software
SSB	Sensation Seeking Behavior
Std	Standard
UTAR	Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Background of Study

Individuals aged between of 18 to 25 years old are categorized as young adults (Walker-Harding et al., 2017; Scales, 2016). On the other hand, Benson and Scales (2004) define young adults as a group who are in the transition from adolescence to adulthood that is called young adulthood. It is widely accepted that young adulthood is the crucial stage where an individual is expected to go through several types of development, such as, social, emotional and cognitive maturation before stepping into adulthood. This is because adulthood involves many adult responsibilities, decision-making processes as well as behavioral risks that they gained during their adolescence and young adulthood may decrease during their adulthood (Bonnie et al., 2015). According to Wood et al. (2017), their findings suggested that young adulthood is the period of life that allows young adults to identify and explore the field of love, work and worldviews. As of 2016, young adults were believed to have covered 44% of the population which is almost half of Malaysian (MulticulturalNSW, n.d.), hence, it strengthens the reasoning of the target participant of this study.

Being a major part of the population, it is important to keep updated with their current well-being to ensure a highly satisfied citizen. In general, mostly likely to describe their feel of happiness through their current state of mind or they may be expressing their impressions toward life in a vague manner (Cherry, 2020). Novel coronavirus (nCov) now known as the COVID-19 virus was pronounced to be a pandemic on the 11th of March 2020 due to the increase in the number of cases at an alarming level worldwide (World Health Organization, 2021). Ever since then, people from all around the world have been compelled to adapt to the 'new normal' which means to adhere to the strict standard of procedures when some of the nations are going through lockdowns. Some of the new normal include staying at home,

wearing face masks in public, working from home, children being home-schooled with the blended learning method and many more (Corpuz, 2021). Unknowingly, this issue has been affecting people's happiness and well-being.

In our study, happiness is defined to be in dual perspective, namely cognitive and affective. The cognitive evaluation involves life satisfaction. This may comprise fulfilling of a person's desired act towards life (Tsurumi et al., 2021). To further relate, life satisfaction is one of the three elements of happiness's multidimensional concept in which the other two elements would be the occurrence of positive consequences and the decrease in negative consequences (Singh & Jha, 2008). In other words, happiness can be classified as the contentment that an individual feels through the realization of their wants in life in which they would be more aware and try to fulfill how they want their life to be compared to how life actually is (Veenhoven, 2006).

As for the affective evaluation, it focuses on the individual's current feeling of happiness as well as in the past (Traviswhite, 2013) and referred as an individual's emotions, moods and feelings (Albuquerque, 2010). Happiness is viewed upon as the general assessment of a person's life, considering all the happy and unpleasant events in their lives so far. Moreover, in this component, happiness can also be expressed to be the combination of pleasures and pains in life (Veenhoven, 2006). According to the Helliwell et al. (2021), there has been some slight changes in the level of happiness among all the countries from 2017 to 2020 in the World Happiness Report but this was not sufficient to alter the rankings of the countries profoundly. Nevertheless, the statistics of the Malaysian Happiness Index showed that in 2018, 6.32 out of 10 people are happy while in the year 2020, 5.38 out of 10 people are happy (Malaysia: Happiness Index, 2021). Hence, the drastic drop in happiness can be observed among people after the emergence of COVID-19.

When the government enforced lockdown in Malaysia due to the outbreak of the virus known as Corona, it has highly impacted people's life because they are restricted from going out and doing outdoor activities. This lockdown measure has led to an increase in depressive symptoms, anxiety, and severe stress among young adults (Stieger et al., n.d.). Anxiety and depression can be uncertain and harmful to oneself and the people around you. People are becoming worried about their health and well-being. The prolong condition of lockdown subsequently affects one's inner peace and reduce the level of happiness among young adults in Malaysia. Due to this COVID-19, people are becoming lazier as they have little space to move in the house, and this can affect a person's health by weight gaining and disrupt their emotional well-being.

In this lockdown, people are also experiencing loneliness, which impacts emotional well-being. People are reducing their regular contact with people like their friends or people who live outside their household. Physical separation from people and having no social interaction with others can increase the feeling of loneliness. For example, students who live on campus cannot visit their parents back in their hometown, and some parents who are working away from home have less chance to meet their family anytime soon. Loneliness is also significantly associated with anxiety, depressive symptoms during the COVID-19 pandemic. Due to all this, it can make a person's life boring and unpleasant. A study shows that young adults and educated individuals are more vulnerable to mental illness during this lockdown because the young adult's daily academic activities are disrupted. It raises their unhappiness, dissatisfaction with life, and unreachable goals and dreams that have vanished during the lockdown period (Sundarasan et al., 2020).

To add on it, this pandemic made the learning to be conducted via online. The impact of spending more hours on computer leads the youngsters to become more social addict. The current data shows Malaysia's internet users have increased by 738 thousand (2.8%) between

2020 and 2021 (Balakrishnan et al., 2013). Especially, young adults are very active in their social media like Instagram, Tik Tok, Facebook, etc. Many cases show that people are being scammed and cheated online. It also says that girls are easy victims to fall for this type of case. Other than that, influencers on social media are randomly promoting products that are not 100% trustable. This is to make money online, as many are jobless during the pandemic. In this way, it also affects young adults' life mentally and disturbs their happiness. It adds more anxiety and depressive symptoms to them (Balakrishnan et al., 2013). Given the sudden consequences, people are trying to comply with the pandemic control effects, working from home while taking care of kids, online learning, and many more. This sudden incident has impacted many lives. Malaysia is the 80th country according to the listing in happiness chart nationwide (Malaysia: Happiness Index, 2021).

Marvin Zuckerman, a psychoanalyst, studied sensation seeking and developed the Sensation Seeking Scale (Helme, 2006). When it comes to thrill and adventure-seeking, especially young adults, they love engaging in risky behaviors like playing challenging sports and other dangerous activities — for instance, rock climbing, bungee jumping, drag racing, and so on. Next, experience seeking. By doing an extreme or risky activity, they get satisfied and pleased with their behaviors (Helme, 2006). But some individuals highly discourage these behaviors because it is dangerous, and there is a chance to kill oneself accidentally or harm others (Hou et al., 2019). Besides that, disinhibition is some social activities like parties, drinking, illegal drugs, and sex. Lastly, boredom susceptibility. People who like ‘thrill’ can't tolerate repetitive experiences like routine work because it is boring for them.

Some researchs have been conducted on sensation seeking behaviours among young adults in Malaysia. Studies show that boys are more likely to have higher sensation-seeking behavior than girls (Siraj et al., 2021). For instance, disinhibition and stress are assumptions of online abuse for sexual aims in boys. Risk-taking is high in young adults because of their

peer's influences. To experience excitement and pressure from peers to do complex challenges. Young adults prefer doing dangerous behaviors when they are with their peers rather than alone because it allows them to be more daring when they have a group of people (Siraj et al., 2021).

Under sensation seeking among young adults, peers become an important part of young adults' life, since they are growing and experiencing different aspects of life. A negative peer influence is when peers tend to do something risky to another innocent person, leading to death. Young adults who have risky behaviors are often known to have an incorrect life route by consuming alcohol, smoking, drug use, shoplifting, and many more (Siraj et al., 2021). Moreover, there are also positive peer influences like encouraging and motivating their friends to attend and participate in religious activities, playing games, and so on. This kind of peer group typically shares love, sympathy, and understanding.

Furthermore, social media addiction has become powerful among young adults in Malaysia. Some reports revealed that 12% of social media users are prone to social media addiction (Andreassen et al., 2017). Interpersonal communication has become human beings' fundamental keys. Obsessive utilization of social media impacts an individual's daily life. With this, people will start depending on their life on social media and forget about reality. They will also become lazier and forget about their surroundings and the people around them. Face-to-face communication will decrease when young adults are constantly on their phones.

When someone is addicted to social media, they can develop problems such as relationship issues, emotional issues, health problems, and impaired performance in school or at their workplace. Social networking sites addiction is known to be a type of Internet addiction, where individuals portray an irresistible urge to use social media. Social media addicts are commonly too distracted by social media due to their irresistible urge to use social media constantly. Research concluded that the indicators of social media addiction can relate

to the way an individual feel, think and react. Research between the usage of social networking sites and mental health indicated a positive relationship while demonstrating a negative relationship between social media use and well-being (Andreassen et al., 2017).

The longer you spent time on social media, the higher the depressive symptoms are shown among young adults. Social media addiction also reduces the academic performance of young adults. This indicates that people who spend longer time on social media have higher chances of failing their syllabus—using social media for academic performance while multitasking work has also proven to reduce concentration on studies and spending more time on social media. Social media becomes uncontrollable and compulsive when unfavorable happens in social media. Social media has been negatively associated with subjective well-being while positively associated with insomnia, depression, and anxiety (Keles et al., 2019). This addiction also shows that when someone spends too much time online, they move less, and they do not include any physical activity in their daily routine. This can also cause a person to have social anxiety, depression, and insomnia in adults (Blasco et al., 2019). Research investigating social media addiction focuses primarily on Facebook addiction (Balakrishnan et al., 2013). Thus, social network addiction is positively correlated with depression, anxiety, and insomnia.

At the same time, a frequent social media user is not considered a social media addict. Thus, they do not necessarily have mental health issues developed for being a regular social media user. The critical difference between typical social media involvement and social media addiction that many people occasionally experience is that when social media becomes uncontrollable and compulsive, the latter is associated with adverse consequences. Many changes occurred in the youngsters' lifestyle during this pandemic. Researchers are keen to know if these changes could contribute to the change in the happiness rate among youngsters. Hence, this research is designated to answer the following questions:

1. What is the level of happiness among young adults in Malaysia?
2. What is the relationship between sensation seeking behaviour and happiness among young adults in Malaysia?
3. What is the relationship between social media addiction and happiness among young adults in Malaysia?

Problem Statement

In Malaysia, Covid-19 cases have been rapidly growing by days. On the 9th of July 2021, Malaysia was holding a number of 9,180 cases, which was shocking to the Malaysian citizens after a long lockdown period (Khalid, 2021). Over the past year, coronavirus has been planting fear in every individual. It has been the hottest headline in almost every country. Coronavirus has fuelled a wide range of emotions among us. As humans, our coping mechanism has dropped because we have stayed at home for too long. Some people out there are experiencing unemployment, disturbance in education, isolation, and many more. All these have been highly affecting people's mental health (Hazim, 2021). The feeling of being trapped in your own house is very upsetting.

Happiness is known to be a positive emotion that brings upon some sort of satisfaction among people. Happiness amongst youth is not as widespread as what many would assume during the pandemic. Some studies have revealed a decrease in the happiness level among young adults. Compared to earlier studies, the latest studies have found a change in the happiness level among young adults, where according to a study conducted by Becky Tinsley (2020), it was found that students in higher education in the United Kingdom were feeling less happy, lower levels of satisfaction and life worthwhile following a Student Covid Insights Survey (SCIS). Moreover, following the World Happiness Report 2021 by Helliwell

et al. (2021), Malaysia was ranked to be at the 81st placed out of all the 149 countries in the world after the emergence of Covid-19.

There was a drastic decrease in Malaysia's Happiness Index of 6.32 to 5.38 points from the year 2018 to 2020 with an average point of 5.48 points when comparing with all the other countries (Malaysia: Happiness Index, 2021). Based on research conducted in Malaysia during the pandemic, students who are mostly young adults were found to have lower happiness than the older students. This can also be linked to the results stating that younger students were recorded to have a higher level of depression compared to older students. Moreover, students who are from the central region of Malaysia were found to be less happy than those from the East coast region, the Northern region and the Southern region due to the implementation of the Movement Control Order to help curb the spread of Covid-19 (Yunus et al., 2021).

To help us with the research on happiness, sensation seeking was chosen to be one of our independent variables because it is known to be involved in every aspect of a person's life such as, social attitudes, creativity, humor, food choices, relationship satisfaction before and after marriage and many more. This is more likely to happen among people with higher sensation seeking behaviours (Munsey, 2006). To further explain this, a study conducted by Tekin and team in 2017 found that people who are in the transition period from adolescence to adulthood, especially university students are inclined towards the exposure of risky behaviours and attitudes, in which, males were discovered to have higher levels of sensation seeking compared to females in terms of gender playing a role in risk-taking behaviours. The transition period of college students is found to be a struggle for them and as a result of it, they tend to get involved in maladaptive health behaviours, such as, binge drinking, substance abuse, and many more. This act also turned out to be prevalent during their college times than any other period. Moreover, these behaviours were found to be causing crucial health effects,

educational difficulties or even causing suicide and deaths (Graziano et al., 2014). Adding on, it can be hypothesized that sensation seeking has a higher tendency to influence risky taking behaviours among youths. For example, young adults with a high sensation seeking are more likely to explore the contents on the Internet that are able to trigger their arousal level (Rezaei et al., 2020).

Apart from that, we also chose social media addiction as the second independent variable in our study and to reason with this, young people ought to be victims of social media as it tends to provoke harmful behaviours such as aggression, personality disorder, unhealthy diet, substance abuse and many more among them (Hawi & Samaha, 2016). A study found that 80% of university students were more likely to spend more than an hour using social media and this was further supported with the other studies claiming that social media addiction is positively related to loneliness, emotional problems, extraversion, openness, narcissism, and many more (Bilgin & Tas, 2018). Moreover, a study conducted in Nigeria had discovered that tertiary institution students were found to feel disturbed whenever they are unable to access their social network at least twice a day and also that most of the students tend to spend more time on social media. These findings were further supported by a research in India stating that 98% of the students in Coimbatore were found to be addicted to social media chatting (Idubor, 2015).

To add on, a case study conducted by Nazir et al. (2020) discovered statistics mentioning that cyber fraud via social media is the most prevalent complaint that the Malaysia Computer Emergence Response Team (MyCERT) under Cyber Security Malaysia (CSM) has received on a yearly basis. There was also a remark by the CSM chief executive saying that women are the most vulnerable victims to cyber criminals as they tend to publicize their life on social media whenever they feel lonely, bored or even looking for a partner. A study conducted by Yahya et al. (2018) found that young adults in Malaysia were

prone to use social media at an average of 19 hours of being online in a week. To further support this, Malaysians were discovered to have been sitting for longer hours on their social media rather than meeting their friends face-to-face (TheStar, 2015). Social media has been the preferred method for Malaysians to update everything about themselves without having proper face-to-face conversation with their families and friends, hence resulting in sabotaging their relationships with them (Yahya et al., 2018). Although there have been many studies on social media addiction, it is vital to do more research on it now as there has been a substantial increase in the duration of time spent on social media. Individuals are likely to spend at least 65 minutes on average especially during the pandemic while in the previous years, people were prone to spend an average of 54 minutes and 56 minutes (Tankovska, 2021).

Research Questions

This study is proposed to answer the following question:

1. What is the level of happiness among young adults in Malaysia?
2. What is the relationship between sensation seeking behaviour and happiness among young adults in Malaysia?
3. What is the relationship between social media addiction and happiness among young adults in Malaysia?

General Objective

To determine the relationship of sensation seeking, social media addiction and happiness among young adults in Malaysia during COVID-19 pandemic.

Specific Objectives

1. To determine the level of happiness among young adults in Malaysia.
2. To determine the relationship of sensation seeking and happiness among young adults in Malaysia.
3. To determine the relationship of social media addiction and happiness among young adults in Malaysia.

Hypotheses

1. Happiness level is low among young adults in Malaysia.
2. Sensation seeking has a significant positive relationship with happiness among young adults in Malaysia.
3. Social media addiction has a significant negative relationship with happiness among young adults in Malaysia.

Significance of Study

Happiness is one the most common subject being studied among Malaysians, but the role of sensation seeking and social media addiction has not correlated so much in the past. Researchers could look deeper into the ‘missing pieces’ and to provide an exhaustive study on the relationship of sensation seeking and social media addiction towards happiness among young adults in Malaysia.

The findings of this study will benefit researchers in the future to understand the happiness level among Malaysians, specifically young adults. As for research, it will help them to uncover critical areas of this study that many researchers might not be able to explore as this study has its own specialization. The greater demands for young adults with high in sensation seeking behaviour that needs more life-changing approaches about themselves

(Leung & Konijin, 2007). Thus, organizations like school and even parents will be derived from the results, will be able to train their students and kids better.

The findings of this study will help the researchers in the future to deepen their understanding on sensation seeking and social media addiction as the factors influencing happiness among young adults. Social media addiction or compulsive use of social media is a growing mental health problem (Kuss et al., 2013). Therefore, this study could assist researchers to study other psychological behaviors or mental health problems related to social media addiction or sensation seeking. Additionally, the findings of this study could assist other researchers to understand about the culture of Malaysians by assessing the results and other important details in the study.

Young adults could also benefit from this study and its results. The findings of this study could allow young adults to understand the relationship of social media addiction and sensation seeking towards happiness. Besides that, parents could also manage the social media usage for their children as well as maintaining the level of happiness based on the results of this study. In the future, educational institutions could possibly adapt the findings of the study to understand about the behaviour of the students associated with sensation seeking and how it affects the happiness level. Thus, individuals, families, societies, researchers, and nations as a whole could use this study as a guidance and carry out further procedures.

Definition of Terms

Happiness

Conceptual Definition. Happiness is an emotion in positive psychology resulted by a mental evaluation of events of positive emotion associated with low negative effect, high repetition of a positive effect, and a high level of life satisfaction (Diener et al., 2018).

Operational Definition. In our study, happiness refers to the respondents' scores on The Oxford Happiness Questionnaire (Hill & Argyle, 2002) where higher score indicates higher level of happiness.

Sensation Seeking

Conceptual Definition. Sensation seeking is a personality trait shown in the tendency of which a person seeks for variety, unique, intense and complex sensations, experiences, and taking risks in order to experience them such as risky driving and extremely dangerous sports (Zuckerman, 2007).

Operational Definition. In our study, sensation seeking refers to the respondents' score on The Brief Sensation Seeking Scale (Hoyle et al., 2002) where higher scores indicating higher sensation seeking tendencies.

Social Media Addiction

Conceptual Definition. Social media addiction is the obsession, habit and compulsion on social media which includes internet-based social media applications that would disrupt the daily lifestyle such as undergoing psychological and physical discomfort, avoidance of social activities and failure to control the behaviour (Griffiths, 2005; Kuss et al., 2014).

Operational Definition. In our study, social media addiction refers to the respondents' score on The Bergen Social Media Addiction Scale (Andreassen et al., 2016) where higher scores indicate higher level of social media addiction.

Young Adults

Conceptual Definition. According to Erik Ericson's Stages of Psychosocial Development in the 1950 and 1963, the age group of 18 to 40 years old falls under the young adulthood stage.

Operational Definition. In our study, we will be focusing on individuals aged between 18 and 30 years old.

CHAPTER 2

Literature Review

Introduction

This chapter presents the existing literatures on happiness among young adults during the pandemic. This chapter also illustrates how sensation seeking behaviour and social media addiction also intersects with young adult's happiness. Through the review of happiness, hedonism theory will be emphasised further in the theoretical framework.

Happiness Level among Young Adults

People's happiness has dropped drastically ever since the year of Covid-19 begun (World Health Organisation, 2021). It has only worsened as soon as lockdown has implemented to prevent the spread of the virus. Income, unemployment, and health risk during the pandemic has only been playing with people's emotions. According to World Health Organisation (2021), people are becoming unhappy as the current phenomenon continues. Along with that, mental health is bad among groups that are already experiencing mental health problems (World Health Organisation, 2021).

As an effect of the pandemic, postgraduate students were discovered to be less happy and more worried than the undergraduate students. This can also relate to the outcome mentioning that students who receive higher allowance than the rest tend to be happier and they are also inclined to feeling worried. These happier students with less worries are likely to study at home, unlike the students who are less happy and more worried in which, this group prefers to be more engaged with their communication devices. Exercising was found to increase the tendency of happiness among students who are more stressed (Rith & Piantanakulchai, 2020). Greyling et al. (2020) discovered an adverse effect on well-being and mental health with the help of 'Google Trends' for their research. There was a significant rise

in pursuit of sadness, worry and loneliness. Furthermore, the restrictions of movement, restriction to the access of alcohol and also the closure of schools have caused an adverse effect on the happiness of citizens in South Africa.

Similarly, a study conducted among participants from Italy, Korea, United Kingdom and United States, almost half of the Italian participants and 30% of the Chinese participants were found to be unhappy (Long, 2021). Apart from this, there has been evidence claiming that people's subjective well-being has seen a reduction between the beginning of March and the beginning of May 2020 due to the adaptation of 'new normal' during the COVID-19 pandemic (Zacher & Rudolph, 2021). University students were found to have been appreciating happiness because happiness is a fundamental characteristic, which is usually obtained from peers, family and health (Chamuah & Sankar, 2018).

Factors Contributing to Happiness

There are many factors that influence an individual's happiness. Some studies have indicated there is a gender difference in happiness level. Male students portrayed a higher level of happiness compared to female students and students from the art faculty were found to have greater level of happiness compared to students from the science faculty (Chamuah & Sankar, 2018). The other contributing factor is religion. Following a study by Francis et al. (2016), there has been a substantial positive link between assertiveness towards Christianity and the level of happiness. Furthermore, a strong positive correlation was revealed among religion and happiness in which it was claimed that people who are more religious tend to be happier especially when Oxford Happiness Inventory for happiness and Francis family of attitude scaled for religion were used for this study (Francis et al., 2016).

Evidence has revealed that people who are more religious incline towards being happier compared to those who are less religious. To add on, when religiosity is distinguished

with intrinsic religiosity and extrinsic religiosity, it was exposed that intrinsic religiosity is positively correlated with happiness while extrinsic religiosity has an adverse effect on happiness (Abdel-Khalek, 2019). According to study conducted by Winzer et al. (2018) in Thailand, a relationship was discovered between the perspective of Buddhism and a higher level of happiness. Moreover, happiness of a religious person depends on the occurrence of meditation which explains that individuals who meditate on auspicious days tend to be happier whereas individuals who constantly meditate might be the ones who encounter struggles in their daily lives and these people tend to be less happy in their lives.

Another factor that contributes to happiness would be social support. A study discovered that social support promotes self-esteem, confidence level, happiness and a sense of belonging. This factor directs individuals to confront any stressful events in life by relieving and managing the stress and this boosts their positive emotions while preventing negative temperament to induce their subjective well-being. It is also revealed that social support provides assistance in an individual's social growth and mental health since it is effective in boosting happiness level among them. Moreover, a strong positive association was observed between social support and subjective well-being of the children who are left behind. The social support that mostly affects the happiness level of the left behind children would be friends and family (Weili & Xu, 2016). Social support was found to be associated with happiness among individuals who have spinal cord injury. This factor indirectly increases the happiness of spinal cord injury patients with the help of resilience as the mediator. People who have more social support turn out to have greater resilience that results in greater subjective well-being (Bhattarai, 2021).

Adding on, there was a study among elderly which indicated that empty-nested people recorded to have greater social support tend to incline towards the feel of happiness and satisfaction. In this study, it was proven that there is an association between social

support and subjective well-being along with self-worth being the mediator. To further explain, self-worth is known to induce more positive emotions and reduces negative emotions. Meanwhile, as an attempt to strengthen the relationship between social support and subjective well, self-reported health was used as a moderator in this study (Su et al., 2020).

Physical activity was also claimed to have been a factor of happiness. Zhang and Chen (2018) revealed that there was a relationship between physical activity and happiness among adolescents. Korean adolescents who were involved in moderate or vigorous intensity physical activity for a certain number of days per week had a positive correlation with happiness. Moreover, adolescents with normal weight had 1.4 times the likelihood of being happier while those who are overweight had the likelihood of 1.5 times given that they involve in physical activity minimum once a week. Likewise, a substantial greater level of happiness was discovered among adolescents who were engaged in physical activity more than twice a week (Zhang & Chen, 2018). In another study, leisure time physical activity had a positive association with the subjective well-being of workers. There have been claims revealing that physical activity has the potential to boost positive emotions and mental conditions. To further explain, it can be said that the work environment tends to get pretty hectic at times and sometimes employees require physical activities during their leisure time to help uplift their mood. This leisure time physical activity provokes the brain to increase norepinephrine, serotonin and dopamine levels, and these hormones are linked with the feeling of happiness (Wiese et al., 2017).

Consequences of Happiness

Several studies have revealed the consequences of happiness. Findings from a study discovered that happier people tend to be more constructive, creative, supportive and healthier. The feel of happiness does not only refer to feeling good, but it also aids both

society and an individual. In terms of health, it is both directly and implicitly associated with greater levels of happiness. Positive feelings have the likelihood to boost a better immune system in response to diseases while negative emotions have adverse effects on the cardiovascular, immune and endocrine system. Individuals who are inclined towards feeling happy are expected to be engaged in good health behaviours and habits which also includes having a more nutritional diet by consuming more fruits and vegetables (Diener & Tay, 2017).

Apart from that, according to Kaur and Sharma (2021), happiness is also known to improve social competence among preschool children. It allows the children to build strong social support, social trust and create safe social relationships which provokes the children to develop a long-lasting positive relationship with their friends, teachers, and also helps in settling social issues. Furthermore, the preschool children are introduced to better prospects in experiencing educational scholastic and feeling more psychologically competent due to the relationship between happiness and social competence. Happiness helps the children to comprehend the feelings of their peers, confronting nonverbal skills. Despite that, a significant relationship was found between happiness and emotional competence. Children who are happy tend to portray higher levels of emotional competency. With this, the children are able to strengthen psychological relationships with people other than their family members. They will be able to differentiate between proper and improper behaviours that are socially acceptable as well as gaining substantial skills like perseverance, stamina and their competency in resolving social problems. Happiness and emotional competence were found to be playing a role in the holistic growth of the children (Kaur & Sharma, 2021).

Happiness has also been affecting employees at their workplaces. Employees can accommodate well and complete any tasks given to them when they are happy. There are high chances for employees to easily conquer any challenges that they face during their work.

Furthermore, they would tend to appreciate any accomplishments or failures as an attempt to enhance their performance and try to reach their maximum potential. When the employees are happy, they can accustom themselves to the norms at their workplace and also work independently (Abdullah et al., 2016). Adding on, happiness was explained to be associated with a teacher's psychological state. The happier they are, the harder they will strive to achieve their goals by the way they feel, think, and act towards it. This positive emotion has also seen an inclination towards quality, inventiveness and inventive attitude among the teachers. Evidence has proved that trust and confidence level of the teachers had increased due to the presence of happiness at their workplace. The subjective well-being of the teachers has a positive association with their efficacy level as well and also that greater happiness prompts the teachers to alter their attitude and assure themselves so that they are able to enhance teaching and the student's knowledge (Abdullah & Ling, 2016).

Happiness can bring both positive and negative consequences on an individual. However, when there is a lack of happiness, things may turn upside down for an individual. Their mental health may get affected in which they are likely to fall into depression. This may increase people's negative emotions which might affect their social relationships and importantly themselves. One might drop out of school, not want to get committed in relationships, be vulnerable to violence or substance abuse and many more (Diener & Tay, 2017). People who are vulnerable to depression are likely so because of the lower level of happiness. This caused them to be feeling quite restless, difficulty to sleep and many more. Lack of happiness can also lead to the cause of anxiety in which these individuals will have to be confronting constant occurrence of thoughts or concerns. This may also provoke them. Individuals who are less happy have the tendency to become victims to stress. It can be psychologically and physically draining to them and they might face health related issues later. However, all these mental disorders can be overcome with the appropriate amount of

happiness intervention. The happier they are, the more likely they will be suffering from mental disorders (Mahakud & Yadav, 2015).

Relationship between Social Media Addiction and Happiness

Social media has been becoming more prevalent especially among youngsters nowadays. One of the reasons could be the modernization of technology. Nowadays, information can be accessed at our fingertips with the development of smart gadgets. As days pass by, it can be said that many of us are becoming more vulnerable to the use of social media in which some are prone to addiction. Little did they know that social media addiction has some repercussions towards their physical and psychological health.

Brailovskaia et al. (2018) examined the relationship of the Facebook addiction disorder with the rate of Facebook use, narcissism, depression, anxiety symptoms and subjective happiness. This study was conducted among 520 participants aged between 17 to 64 years old in Germany. The findings of this study revealed a positive correlation between Facebook addiction disorder and happiness. This may be so because individuals keeping in touch with their friends and family, sharing their happenings in life as well as gaining any good criticism are prone to feeling happier which also instigates them to increase their use of Facebook. However good it might be, the overuse of Facebook might still have some bad repercussions on their psychological well-being (Brailovskaia et al., 2018).

Adding on, there was also a study by Gerson et al. (2016) to determine if personality characteristics moderated on the relationship between social comparison on Facebook and happiness level which is assessed through their life satisfaction and eudemonic well-being. 337 participants from the age of 18 to 70 years old were involved in this study. The findings of this study proved that a higher use of Facebook seems to have a positive relationship with the two measures of subjective well-being, and this had contradicted one of their hypotheses

(Gerson et al., 2016). There was research conducted in Thailand to assess the activities done at home and subjective well-being among foreign college students during the COVID-19 outbreak. An online self-administered questionnaire was provided to 42 foreign students from Sirindhorn International Institute of Technology. It was found that students who spent more time on social networking sites are prone to being happier and they tend to be less stressful (Rith & Piantanakulchai, 2020).

A study was conducted by Ping et al. (2020) to determine the association between the usage of social media and the happiness level among university students. Not only that, but this research also focuses on factors of the use of social media which also leads them to study on the repercussions of social networking sites on the happiness of 340 university students in Malaysia. The findings of this study mentioned that the students use social media as an escape from their academic stress by chatting, sharing intriguing videos or articles. It was also found that they feel a sense of joy using social media because it allows them to get in touch with their family and friends. Despite that, some of the participants from the interview stated that happiness has nothing to do with social media because it comes down to the duration spent on the Internet. They disclosed that the more they are present online, the less happy they are (Ping et al., 2020).

There was research which was conducted by Khodabakhsh and Ahmadi (2020) to determine the association between the use of social media and subjective well-being during the COVID-19 pandemic along with resilience being the moderator for this study. 277 young adults aged between 20 to 40 years old who had access to smart phones, social media and the Internet were involved in this study. At the end of the study, it was found that there was a substantial association between the use of social media and subjective well-being among the participants. However, the correlation between the two variables was negative and this proves that when there is an increase in the use of social networking sites, the level of subjective

well-being is prone to decline. This can be due to the factor that the participants are exposed more to the information on the pandemic while reading or watching the contents on social media and this is seemed to be affecting people who are frequently on social media. The constant publications on the risk and danger imposed by the outbreak on social media have decreased their subjective well-being (Khodabakhsh & Ahmadi, 2020).

In another study that was carried out by Jenkins et al. (2020), they were researching on the effects of the use of social media on the well-being and behaviour among adolescents in London. The outcomes of this study revealed that participants who were engaged in higher use of social media was related with them having a weaker health-related quality of life among females. Females are more prone to depressive symptoms and weaker well-being due to the higher use of social media. Moreover, female adolescents from the age of 10 to 18 years old were found to be unhappy almost daily as they spend more time on social networking sites and this seems to influence their self-esteem, friends and family (Jenkin et al., 2020).

Apart from that, Yavuz (2019) conducted research in Turkey to determine the repercussions of Internet addiction on subjective well-being among adolescents studying in sports secondary school. The elements of social media and websites which promotes a platform for people to communicate with other as well as access news or information have been playing a role in addiction subject to higher usage among not only adults but also among children in preschools. This is known to be worsening the well-being of individuals (Yavuz, 2019). A study conducted by Turel et al. (2018) aimed to investigate the relationship between the symptoms of social networking sites and well-being by having sex and neuroticism as the moderator. A total of 215 Israeli college students were involved in this study and the findings of this study revealed that there was a negative association among the addiction symptoms of social networking sites and well-being in which the well-being in

females is more affected by the addiction symptoms of social media and also females with higher neuroticism were found to have a strong negative relationship between the addiction symptoms of social media and well-being.

In conclusion, it is fair to mention that social media addiction can be either positively or negatively associated with happiness. Social media addiction is also prone to individuals of any age from pre-schoolers to elderlies. As days pass by, social media addiction can be said to be a concerning factor on an individual's mental health due to the vast development of technology.

Relationship between Sensation Seeking Behaviour and Happiness

The relationship between sensation seeking and happiness has not been studied deeply in much research. Many often, sensation seeking is always related to life satisfaction, well-being and positive affect, emotional regulation and mood which also mean happiness.

Sensation seeking is defined as a personality characteristic shown in the tendency of which a person seeks variety, unique, intense and complex sensations and experiences as well as taking risks in order to experience them (Zuckerman, 2007). On the other hand, happiness is defined as a result of life and different from many preconditions for a good and happy life (Veenhoven, 2003). Although not many researchers have studied thoroughly and directly about the relationship between the two variables, sensation seeking has always been associated with other terms as stated above, namely life satisfaction, well-being and positive affect, emotional regulation and mood.

On the other hand, another study investigated the role of resilience, sensation seeking, hopefulness and social support on stress tolerance among 272 teachers in an exclusive secondary school in Nigeria. One of the main results revealed that sensation seeking was an important factor of stress tolerance and happiness among the exclusive secondary school

teachers. On top of that, resilience, sensation seeking, positivity, and social support were proven to be equally affecting stress tolerance among exclusive secondary school teachers using the multiple regression analysis. Therefore, this study reveals that the sensation seeking is a predictor of happiness (Opeyemi, 2016).

The goal of a study by Celik and Kocak (2018) is to determine the control effect of sensation seeking within the association amongst general self-efficacy and life satisfaction among young adulthood. The term life satisfaction and well-being in this study can be associated with the level of happiness. 455 tertiary education students that consists of 273 females and 169 males participated in this study. All of the participants were studying at Sakarya University, Turkey their age range was from 18 to 21 years old. The findings of the study revealed a positive association between general self-efficacy, life satisfaction and sensation seeking. To add on it, sensation seeking was found to have a considerable impact on life satisfaction as well as boosting general self-efficacy's potential to determine life satisfaction in the regression analysis and this reveals that sensation seeking has a control effect on the association between general self-efficacy and life satisfaction.

A study by Yoneda et al. (2019) suggested that sensation seeking predicts positive outcomes which includes psychological well-being and happiness. A total of 662 adolescents and young adults from the age of 14 to 28 participated in this study where 52% of them were females and 48% of them were male. This study investigated how sensation seeking and impulsivity were related to many factors, including happiness. One of the main results of this study is that in young adults, the results were not significant as only 38% recorded to be happy while others, that is 62% where uncertain about the outcome. The results also revealed that there are different trajectories for sensation seeking with happiness. Although the results are insignificant, most of the positive emotions recorded among young adults. Therefore, this

study can be said not valid enough to support if sensation seeking will predict happiness among young adults.

In conclusion, the relationship between sensation seeking and happiness were only conducted in few studies and there is a lack of research to provide evidence about the significance of the relationship between sensation seeking and happiness. With few research done previously, we can say that sensation seeking has a different relationship with happiness in terms of age, gender as well as cultural background. The relationship varies across few research that have been performed in the past 5 years.

Sensation Seeking Behaviour and Social Media Addiction

The stronger association during adolescence may reflect an increased experience of sensation seeking in the context of cognitive control ability still due to normal brain maturation (Weisskirch, n.d.). Individuals with high sensation seeking during adolescence may be exceptionally high on sensation-seeking compared to individuals of other ages with more sensation-seeking than average.

The tendency in sensation seeking is higher in men compared to women (Weisskirch, n.d.). The excessive use of pornography was the only non-meditating factor is likely to control the frequency of display in the model, as the frequency of collection directly affects the problems associated with excessive use (Weisskirch, n.d.). Of course, in an uncontrolled frequency model, excessive use is significantly mediated in men. These results indicate that conscientious men may use pornography to escape negative emotions. In this study, increased sensory seeking was associated with obtaining sexual orientation materials from the Internet, apparently high arousal activity (Borgogna et al., 2019). Furthermore, the dimension of sensory seeking intensity is related to obtaining sexual orientation materials.

According to Li et al. (2018), the influence of parenting styles on Internet addiction has decreased among young adults aged from 16-30 years old. Similarly, parents also lose control when their children leave for college to study. Parents have no control over their kids when they start living on their own. Thus, the kids can develop risky behaviors such as drinking alcohol or trying drugs under the influence of peers.

Based on Simsek et al. (2019), high school students' social media addiction level is significantly higher than college students. Thus, high school students aged 13 to 17 years old are more addicted to social media than older college students. Factors like age group characteristics, education level, increased test anxiety can be influential in this regard because preparing for the college entrance exam is a painful task (Simsek et al., 2019).

A study has mentioned that males' addiction to social media is significantly higher than females' addiction in the University of Sharjah. This difference may be related among men using social media platforms to gain new friendship among individuals with similar hobbies (Alnjadat et al., 2019). The results also revealed that the likelihood of conventional both social and cultural norms are accustomed to Middle Eastern women and due to this, they tend cover their identity and personal data to avoid from revealing their use of social networks (Alnjadat et al., 2019).

Then, a study conducted in an Asian culture mentions that people love the anonymous function online as it provokes students to connect without any restrictions on social media, especially during any unpleasant feel towards real life. On social media, students can get satisfaction through exchanging knowledge, conveying their feelings with others, and obtaining constructive comments (Lou et al., 2017). Thus, this produces a substantial threat of social media addiction.

Theoretical Framework

The word 'hedonism' means 'pleasure' in ancient Greek (Rossi, 2018). Hedonism can be found in other different perspectives. Moral philosophy indicates that a pleasant life should consist of the feel of happiness. Psychology presents the theory that the pursuit of pleasure is the primary motivational factor for human behavior. A hedonist is a person who adopts a positive attitude towards happiness and reaps the fruit of joy if possible (Rossi, 2018). In parallel to this, asceticism is known to be the engagement of the moral rejection of happiness and ascetic conduct. Some praise it for being naturally healthy, while others equate hedonism with excessive luxury and moral decline. The complex emotions on hedonism are showed on the emotions that revolves around the word. On the bright side, hedonism can be related to taste and the skills of a better life, however, hedonism can be further related with addiction which is a reckless behaviour and a touch of narcissism.

The use of social media is significantly and positively predicting happiness among young adults. A study involving 311 college students showed a positive correlation between social media and happiness. In another study involving 209 participants, social media can positively predict college students' satisfaction. Similarly, there was a positive association between the duration of the use of Facebook and the subjective well-being of 300 secondary school students (Dogan, 2016). Internet use, mainly social media use, provides freedom to the people in terms of communication and social interaction. In this case, social media use indicates the positive relationship across the use of social networks and happiness.

Moreover, other studies show that the use of social networks harms the well-being of college students. To further explain, social network usage is not considered a source of happiness. Baltaci (2019) showed a negative correlation between the Internet and joy, and Internet use also harms college students' satisfaction. Addiction to the negative correlation between Facebook usage and happiness, Facebook usage also spoils college students'

enjoyment. There is a negative correlation between problematic Facebook use and pleasure. Inappropriate Facebook use will also negatively predict the happiness of college students. The Internet disrupts social relationships and isolates people in society; due to social networks, individuals cut off their natural connection with the environment and participate in their virtual relationships, which will harm people's mental health (Hou et al., 2019).

Social networking sites' addiction can cause several problems related to the social life, mental and physical health which are likely to occur in all age groups. Longer time spend on social networks and, therefore, have difficulty fulfilling their responsibilities (Hou et al., 2019). The reasons behind social media addiction can also be found among other addictions. Severe social media use can cause some significant setbacks, particularly among youngsters and addicts on these symptoms are similar to drug addiction. (Baltaci, 2019).

Furthermore, sensation-seeking behavior is also known as risk-taking, gives young adults a sense of excitement (Rezaei et al., 2020). This is because young adults want to explore various novel activities as part of the transition towards adulthood. Adolescents who strongly perceive the behavior and actions of their peers have the potential to be involved in dangerous activities (Rezaei et al., 2020). Studies show that different TV and videos in social networks describe people who harm dangerous activities (Rezaei et al., 2020). This goes beyond the model of safe behavior and shows that risky behaviors do not have harm, which also motivates teenagers to participate in harmful behavior.

As stated above, several factors influence social media addiction and sensation-seeking behaviour. The theoretical framework chosen for this study portrays different views to examine the association between sensation-seeking behavior and social media addiction on Malaysia's young adults' happiness. Further research has been conducted to understand how the influence of sensation-seeking behavior and social media addiction can affect a young

adult's enjoyment based on their age and gender. While there has been little focus on ethnicity and the influence of sensation-seeking behavior and social media addiction.

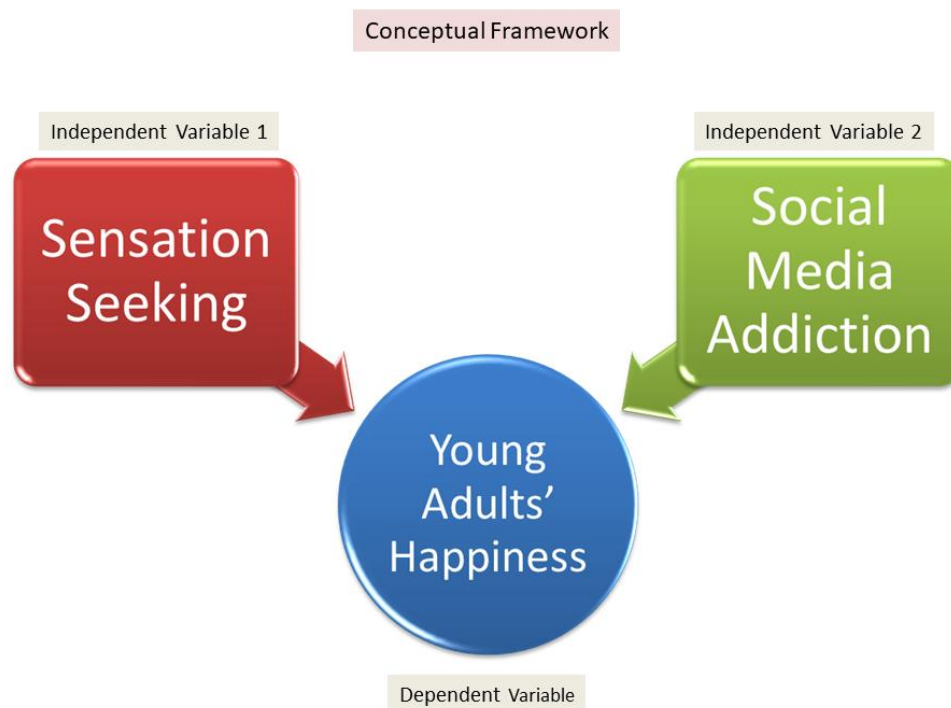
Conceptual Framework

As the theoretical framework explained, Hedonism theory is used to develop the conceptual framework of our study. The 'pleasure' could be associated with sensation seeking and excessive usage of social media. Therefore, the pleasure that plays the central role in happiness could be said in a way where sensation seeking and social media addiction influences happiness. Similarly, in our study, we investigate the relationship between sensation seeking behavior and social media addiction and their effect on happiness among young adults in Malaysia. Firstly, we study the sensation seeking behavior among young adults in Malaysia using the Brief Sensation Seeking Scale where we evaluate the tendency for sensation seeking behavior. Secondly, we study the social media addiction among young adults in Malaysia using the Bergen Social Media Addiction Scale where we evaluate the addiction.

Finally, we study the level of happiness among young adults in Malaysia using The Oxford Happiness Questionnaire. The very last step in the framework is to see if the sensation seeking behavior and social media addictions influence the happiness among young adults in Malaysia or not. Through this process we will be able to answer our research objectives. The conceptual framework will allow us to determine the relationship of sensation seeking, social media addiction and happiness among young adults in Malaysia during the COVID-19 pandemic. Specifically, the conceptual framework will allow us to determine the level of happiness among young adults, to determine the relationship between sensation seeking and happiness among young adults, and to determine the relationship between social media addiction and happiness among young adults in Malaysia.

Figure 2.1

Conceptual Framework of the Influence of Sensation Seeking and Social Media Addiction on Happiness among Young Adults in Malaysia.



In a nutshell, not much research has been conducted on the association between sensation seeking and happiness while the results of some studies on the association between social networking sites' addiction and happiness are observed to be quite inconsistent. Hence, we hope the current study on the sensation seeking and social media addiction on happiness among young adults in Malaysia will be able to contribute to the literature gap in the Malaysian context.

CHAPTER 3

Methodology

Introduction

This chapter focused on the research design, research subject, research procedure, and research instrument.

Research Design

This present study was quantitative research, which allows a numerical and statistical analysis of data (Savci et al., 2017). This was because the results attained from this research, which are numerical and statistical analysis of data is made possible to know more and understand the respondents and their social world. The objective data that resulted from this quantitative study will be assessed through statistics and numbers which makes this study to be replicated by other researchers through the systematic and scientific method. The outcomes of the quantitative study will be able to find patterns and averages, to make predictions, as well as to generalize the results to a wider population.

Since Malaysia has been undergoing phases of lockdown due to the Covid-19, our study had been conducted virtually through an online survey. The online survey consisting of three survey questionnaires was distributed across multiple social media platforms. We shared the poster and links on various social media platforms like Whatsapp, Instagram, and Facebook to reach our target participants. This type of survey method is one of the most famous types of surveys among young adults, specifically undergraduate students and working young adults. It is common yet popular as the use of technology has been advancing day by day. Moreover, we chose this type of survey as it is easily accessible by the respondents. The participants could answer the survey using their mobile devices, laptops, or any technology devices that have an internet connection. The responses will be easier to be

analysed and reviewed since this was a survey questionnaire distributed online. Furthermore, the participants were given sufficient amount of time so that they are not forced to answer within a limited time, and the data collection was unbiased, reliable and increase in generalisability. This type of survey is also cheaper compared to other forms of survey distribution methods and the data collection will be faster.

A cross-sectional design had been applied in our study because we looked at population data during a specific period (Cheung et al., 2011). The study is only conducted at a single point in time and occurs only once. Moreover, it does not involve manipulating variables and this study also allowed researchers to look at the various characteristics at once (age, gender, etc.). We used validated scales as a researched instrument, and the data collected was based on the questionnaire distributed to the respondents. This study adopted a descriptive research design. As researchers, we intended to gain a better understanding of the study population, that is young adults in Malaysia. The descriptive research design usually explained the characteristics that we were studying. It focuses on what happens on the analysed subject rather than why a phenomenon is on the researched topic (Apuke, 2017).

Research Sample

The target population of our study was young adults from the age of 18 to 25 years old. We had been focusing on young adults in Malaysia regardless of their race. Young adults were discovered to cover almost half (44%) of the Malaysian population in 2016 (Multiculturalnsw, n. d.). Hence, we found it crucial to keep track of their current state of well-being, especially during the pandemic where we adapted to the 'new normal'. As of the second quarter of 2021, Malaysia consists of 32.66 million citizens compared to 32.58 million citizens in the second quarter of 2020, in which there were 16.77 million and 15.88 million citizens were males and females respectively in 2021. Based on the numbers, the

young adult and the adult population sat as the highest number and percentage of people in Malaysia with seventy-four million. To add to it, 20.9 million (69.8%) of the population were Malays, 6.7 million (22.4%) were Chinese, 2.0 million (6.8%) were Indians and 0.3 million (1.0%) belong to other ethnic groups (Mahidin, 2021). According to Ci (2020), the human development index (HDI) of Malaysia was 0.810, and this places Malaysia at the 62nd rank out of 189 nations and regions.

Sampling Method

Our study adopted the purposive sampling method to recruit the participants of the targeted population in the study. This method is also known as the judgement method, selective sampling method, or subjective sampling by other researchers. We proceeded with this sampling technique in our study since we relied on some of the inclusion criteria that had to be met by the respondents before answering the survey questionnaires. This sampling method was under the non-probability sampling method because the respondents that meet all the inclusion criteria will be selected based on the judgment of the researchers. The purposive sampling method was efficient in a way because the researchers did not have to filter out many responses from participants that do not meet the inclusion criteria. Therefore, this sampling method saved time and a lot of energy compared to many other sampling techniques.

Sample Size

The sample size of our study was determined G*power analysis, where we first determined the effect size of the study which was 0.05. G*power analysis is a tool that researchers use to specify the sample size required for their study with the help of effect size

(Heidel, 2021). The effect size was obtained for both independent variables using the formula below:

$$f^2 = \frac{r^2}{1 - r^2}$$

Then, the average of the effect sizes was calculated and keyed into the G*power analysis which determined 312 participants as the sample size for this study (refer Appendix A). The sampling method that was chosen for this study was purposive sampling. It is a method where researchers choose their target population based on specific characteristics (Dudovsky, n. d.). In that case, this sampling method was applicable for our study as we had chosen our target population based on the age criteria of 18 to 30 years old, which consisted of young adults.

In short, the inclusion criteria of the samples had been:

- As long as the young adults are living in Malaysia regardless of their nationality
- Aged between 18 to 30 years old
- Must be a social media user for more than one platform (E.g., Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, TikTok, etc.) as they will be more well-versed in understanding the influence of social media

The exclusion criteria of the samples were:

- Do not live in Malaysia
- Not a social media user including those who do not have any social media accounts

Pilot Study

A pilot study was conducted among 30 young adults in Malaysia online before proceeding with the final data collection. The pilot study aimed to ensure that the reliability of the research instruments was satisfactory before we proceeded with the data collection of our research. For this pilot study, we had recruited 30 participants and was completed within a week. The analysis of the reliability of the research instruments for reliability or Cronbach's

alpha coefficient is considered reliable and valid for values more than 0.60. If the pilot study results seem reasonable and dependable, this study shall proceed to the final data collection using the sample size calculated.

The pilot study was done in a week from preparing the survey form using Qualtrics software up until collecting the responses. The survey was distributed across various social media platforms such as WhatsApp, Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook using the QR code and the survey link. Later on, the data was analyzed to determine the reliability of the pilot study.

Reliability for Pilot Study

The reliability of the scales was analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). According to Mohamad et al. (2015), the acceptable range of Cronbach's alpha coefficient would be above 0.67 where less than 0.67 means poor reliability, 0.67 to 0.80 is fairly reliable, 0.81 to 0.90 means good reliability, 0.91 to 0.94 signifies a very good consistency while above 0.94 indicates outstanding reliability of the scale. In this case, referring to Table 1, Brief Sensation Seeking Scale had a fair reliability. This can be due to the lower number of items on the scale (Nawi, 2020) in which this instrument only has 8 items in total.

Table 3.1

Reliability of the Scales

Scale	Number of items	Cronbach's Alpha, α	
		Pilot Test	Actual Study
Brief Sensation Seeking Scale	8	0.67	0.80
Bergen Social Media Addiction Scale	6	0.73	0.79
The Oxford Happiness Questionnaire	29	0.89	0.91

Research Procedure

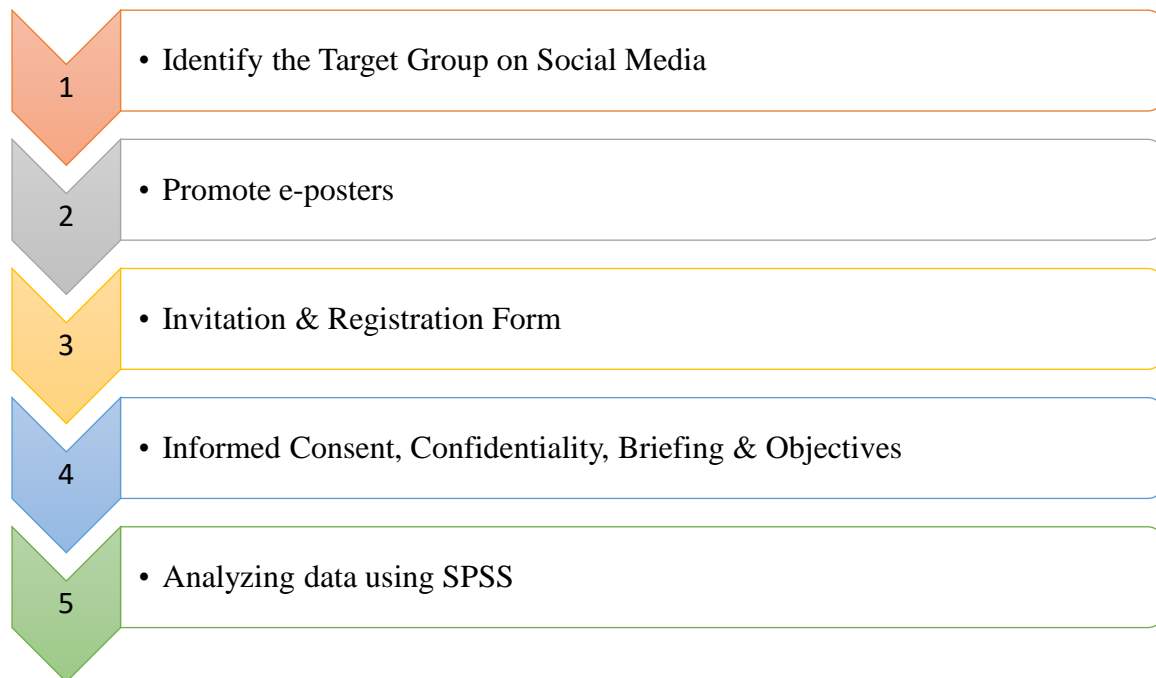
As Malaysia was still in the Movement Control Order as of 10 August 2021, the entire study had been conducted online. Upon feedback and guidance from our supervisor and examiners, we applied for ethical clearance. The referral number given to us was U/SERC/223/2021 from the ethical board upon approval of our research (refer to Appendix F). Then, we conducted a pilot study among 30 participants. The study was conducted via an online survey through the distribution in social media platforms such as WhatsApp, Facebook, and Instagram. If the reliability of the study were satisfactory, we would further continue with the data collection. We targeted to collect data from 312 young adults who represent all ethnicities in Malaysia, such as Malays, Chinese, Indians, and others. This was to increase the generalizability of our study. This process of approaching the respondents began by narrowing down the age group for the participants. We focused on young adults from the range of 18 to 30 years of age throughout Malaysia who were studying, working, unemployed, or studying and working simultaneously. Secondly, we promoted our study on social media platforms such as Facebook and Instagram using e-posters.

Next, we had created an online survey using a Qualtrics software. The contact details of the researchers were attached so that the participants could contact if there were any problems or questions. Finally, after the respondents had provided their approval to this study, we sent out participants' informed consent, confidentiality, briefing, and research process. Also, the participants can withdraw from the survey whenever they wish to as if they feel uncomfortable finishing the study. Withdrawing from the survey has no penalty given. After that, the completed data were collected using Qualtrics, and all the researchers were able to assess the responses, but the data had been only used for the study alone. The collected data would then be analyzed using a statistical software called SPSS, in which the

data would also be interpreted into graphs and tables for further discussion. Lastly, no token had been given to the participants as this research was self-funded.

Figure 3.1

Flowchart of the Procedure to Approach the Respondents for the Study.



Research Instrument

In this study, we had collected the demographic details of the participants at the beginning of our online survey such as age, gender, ethnicity and many more. We also used The Oxford Happiness Questionnaire to measure happiness, the Brief Sensation Seeking Scale (BSSS – 8) to measure sensation-seeking behaviour and Bergen Social Media Addiction Scale to measure social media addiction among young adults in Malaysia.

The Oxford Happiness Questionnaire

The Oxford Happiness Questionnaire (Hills & Argyle, 2001), used to evaluate the level of happiness among young adults in this study. This questionnaire had a total of 29 items with a 6-point Likert scale that stretches from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 6 (*strongly*

agree). Some of the sample items included were “I don’t feel particularly pleased with the way I am”, “I always have a cheerful effect on others”, and “I usually have a good influence on events”. This instrument consisted of several reverse items which are items 1, 5, 6, 10, 13, 14, 19, 23, 24, 27, 28 and 29. The total score of this scale was used to indicate the happiness level among young adults, where higher scores indicated a greater level of happiness.

Moreover, this scale had a firm reliability where Cronbach’s alpha coefficient is 0.91 (Hills & Argyle, 2002).

Brief Sensation Seeking Scale (BSSS-8)

Brief Sensation Seeking Scale (Hoyle et al., 2002), also known as BSSS-8 was used to measure the sensation-seeking tendencies among young adults in Malaysia. There were eight items in BSSS-8 in which the respondents were required to answer a 5-point Likert scale that stretches from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). This instrument consisted of 4 sub-scales that are Experience Seeking (1, 5), Boredom Susceptibility (2, 6), Thrill and Adventure Seeking (3, 7), and Disinhibition (4, 8). Some sample items included were “I would like to explore strange places” and “I would like to try bungee jumping”. There were no reverse-scored items in this instrument. This will be easy to compute and calculate the average score for this scale. Moreover, the total scores had a range of 8 to 40, where greater scores indicated higher sensation-seeking tendencies. This instrument had a relatively good reliability coefficient, and Cronbach’s alpha coefficient is 0.79 (Celik & Turan, 2016).

Bergen Social Media Addiction (BSMAS)

The Bergen Social Media Addiction Scale (BSMAS; Andreassen et al., 2016) was utilized to evaluate social media addiction among young adults, and it consisted of 6 items in total. The six items were assessed against a 5-point Likert scale that stretches from 1 (*very*

rarely) to 5 (*very often*). Some of the sample items were “How often during the last year have you spent a lot of time thinking about social media or planned use of social media?”, “How often during the last year have you felt an urge to use social media more and more?” and “How often during the last year have you used social media to forget about personal problems?”. The total score of this scale ranged from 6 to 30, and this showed that if the participants scored higher than 3 for four items out of 6, it indicated that they are an addict. There were no reverse scores present in this instrument. As Cronbach’s alpha coefficient was 0.88, this showed that the scale had a solid reliability (Andreassen et al., 2016).

Data Processing and Data Analysis

Based on Research Question 1, a descriptive table was used to represent the data in our research. The samples and measures in a study will be represented in graphic analysis as any quantitative data. The analysis normally includes demographic information of the participants like age, gender, ethnicity, social media user for more than one social media application (Yellapu, 2018).

As for Research Question 2 and Research Question 3, Pearson Correlation Coefficient was used to analyze the direction along with the strength of the direct association between two variables. As for the strength of the relationship, an absolute value of 1 implies a perfect linear relationship while the correlation close to 0 is no linear relationship (Schober et al., 2018). Then, for the direction, if both the variables are increasing or decreasing together, the coefficient is positive. If one is positive and the other is negative, the coefficient is negative (Schober et al., 2018).

CHAPTER 4

Results

Introduction

This chapter directs on the descriptive statistics and inferential statistics of the respondents.

The statistical results and interpretation of skewness, kurtosis, Kolmogorov-Smirnov test and Pearson correlation coefficient were presented in this chapter.

Descriptive Statistics

Normality of Data Distribution

According to the results in Table 4.1, the skewness value for sensation seeking behavior, social media addiction and happiness was -.150, .064 and -.266 respectively. This indicates that sensation seeking behavior and happiness are negatively skewed while social media addiction is positively skewed. As for the kurtosis value, sensation seeking behavior, social media addiction and happiness were reported to be -.212, -.438 and .623 respectively. Since, the skewness and kurtosis values of the data falls at an acceptable range of ± 2 , hence, the data is considered to be normally distributed (Muzaffar, 2016).

Table 4.1

Skewness and Kurtosis Value of the Variables

Variables	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
Sensation Seeking Behavior	-.150	.137	-.212	.274
Social Media Addiction	.064	.137	-.438	.274
Happiness	-.266	.137	.623	.274

The results demonstrated in Table 4.2 describes the Kolmogorov-Smirnov's normality test. The findings reveal that sensation seeking behavior and social media addiction $D(315)=.052, p=.043$ and $D(315)=.065, p=.003$ respectively, are not normally distributed because their significance value is less than .05. Happiness was reported to be $D(315)=.046, p=.200$ which indicates it is normally distributed.

Table 4.2

Kolmogorov-Smirnov's Normality Test

Variables	Kolmogorov-Smirnov			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Sensation Seeking Behavior	.052	315	.043	.993	315	.122
Social Media Addiction	.065	315	.003	.990	315	.023
Happiness	.046	315	.200	.989	315	.020

Apart from that, the histograms for all the variables (refer to Appendix B) were discovered to be normally distributed excluding sensation seeking behavior because this variable was found to be skewed to the right.

Defining and Processing of Statistic Outlier

A statistical outlier is defined to be a point that diverges away from the usual overall pattern of a scattering. The outlier indicates an error that might alter the results of a study (Renze, 2021). According to the Q-Q plots in Appendix C, sensation seeking behavior and happiness were reported to have outliers for case number 203 and 248 respectively. These case numbers had a value of 8 and 1 respectively.

Demographic Information

The demographic information of the participant has been demonstrated in Table 4.3. A total of 315 respondents had participated in this study which includes 113 males (35.9%) and 202 females (64.1%). All these participants' age ranged between 18 to 30 years old where the average age of the participants was 22.70. The respondents comprise of 25 Malay participants (7.9%), 120 Chinese (38.1%), 154 Indians (48.9%) and 16 of them were from other races (5.1%). In this study, most of them were students (64.8%), while 22.2% were employed, 8.6% were unemployed and 4.4% were self-employed. As for their highest educational level, there were 225 undergraduates (71.4%), 34 STPM or A-Levels holder (10.8%), 34 postgraduates (10.8%), 19 SPM or O-Levels holders (6.0%) while 3 of them had other educational level (1.0%).

Table 4.3

Demographic Information of the Respondents

	N	%	Mean	SD
Age	315		22.70	2.68
Gender				
Males	113	35.9		
Females	202	54.1		
Race				
Malay	25	7.9		
Chinese	120	38.1		
Indian	154	48.9		
Others	16	5.1		
Occupational Status				
Employed	70	22.2		

Unemployed	27	8.6
Self-Employed	14	4.4
Student	204	64.8
Educational Level		
SPM/O-Levels	19	6.0
STPM/A-Levels/Pre-U	34	10.8
Undergraduate	225	71.4
Postgraduate	34	10.8
Others	3	1.0

Frequency Distribution of Variables

The frequency distribution of the variables that includes sensation seeking behavior, social media addiction and happiness were demonstrated in Table 4.4. To categorize the data into two different levels, the median score was utilized as the cut-off score for each of the scale in this study. Hence, it can be said that participants who reported lower than the median are perceived to be under the low-level category while those who have reported higher than the median are perceived to be under the high-level category.

Happiness Level among Young Adults in Malaysia

Research question 1: What is the level of happiness among young adults in Malaysia?

H1: Happiness level is low among young adults in Malaysia.

The level of happiness of young adults can be observed in Table 4.4. Based on the results in Table 4.2, 241 participants (76.6%) were reported to have a lower level of

happiness while 74 of them (26.4%) had a higher level of happiness. Thus, this proves that our alternative hypothesis is true.

Table 4.4

Frequency Distribution Table for the Variables

	N	%	Mean	SD	Median
Sensation Seeking Behavior			26.20	5.88	26
Low (≤ 26)	159	50.4			
High (> 26)	156	49.6			
Social Media Addiction			17.63	4.61	17
Low (≤ 17)	161	51.1			
High (>17)	154	48.9			
Happiness			4.02	0.68	4
Low (≤ 4)	241	76.6			
High (> 4)	74	23.4			

Inferential Statistics

Sensation Seeking Behavior and Happiness

Research Question 2: What is the relationship between sensation seeking behavior and happiness among young adults in Malaysia?

H₂: Sensation seeking behavior has a significant positive relationship with happiness among young adults in Malaysia.

Pearson Correlation Coefficient test was carried out to analyze the relationship between sensation seeking behavior and happiness. According to the findings demonstrated in Table 4.5, there was a statistically substantial positive relationship between sensation

seeking behavior and happiness, $r(313) = .186, p < 0.001$. This indicates that our alternative hypothesis has been proven.

Social Media Addiction and Happiness

Research Question 3: What is the relationship between social media addiction and happiness among young adults in Malaysia?

H₃: Social media addiction has a significant negative relationship with happiness among young adults in Malaysia.

To analyze the relationship between social media addiction and happiness, Pearson Correlation Coefficient test was performed. Based on the results demonstrated in Table 4.5, a significant negative relationship was reported between social media addiction and happiness, $r(313) = -.125, p = 0.026$. Hence, this result approves our alternative hypothesis.

Table 4.5

Correlation between Variables

Variables	1	2	3
Sensation Seeking Behavior	1		
Social Media Addiction	.160**	1	
Happiness	.186**	-.125*	1

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .001$

Summary of the Results

The findings of the study shows that all the null hypotheses were rejected. The findings are summarized by research questions as in Table 4.6.

Table 4.6

Summary of the Results Based on the Research Questions of this Study.

Research Questions	Hypotheses	Results	Decision
RQ1: What is the level of happiness among young adults in Malaysia?	H ₁ : Happiness level is low among young adults in Malaysia.	76.6% of the respondents had a total score of less than or equals to 4 which indicates a lower level of happiness.	Reject null hypothesis
RQ2: What is the relationship between sensation seeking behavior and happiness among young adults in Malaysia?	H ₂ : Sensation seeking behavior has a significant positive relationship with happiness among young adults in Malaysia.	$r(313) = .186$, $p < 0.001$ Sensation seeking behavior and happiness are positively correlated.	Reject null hypothesis
RQ3: What is the relationship between social media addiction and happiness among young adults in Malaysia?	H ₃ : Social media addiction has a significant negative relationship with happiness among young adults in Malaysia.	$r(313) = -.125$, $p < 0.05$ Social media addiction and happiness are negatively correlated.	Reject null hypothesis

CHAPTER 5

Discussion and Conclusion

Happiness Level among Young Adults

The result for the first research question proves that the happiness level among young adults in Malaysia is low. Thus, the lower the subjective well-being of young adults, the lower the happiness level. Since the inception of Covid-19, people's well-being has plummeted. Things got worse when the lockdown was implemented to protect Malaysian citizens from the deadliest coronavirus. Along with that, income, unemployment, and health risks during a pandemic have only worsened people's emotions, and people will become more unhappy as the current phenomenon continues. (World Health Organization, 2021).

According to World Health Organization (2021), groups with mental health problems like depression, anxiety, and stress badly reduces their happiness during the pandemic. Based on Rith and Piantanakulchai (2020), the pandemic revealed that young adults were more miniature when they received lower allowances than individuals with higher funding.

Our results are also in line with Greyling et al. (2020) where they discovered adverse effects on well-being and mental health with the help of "Google Trends" for research. The pursuit of sadness, anxiety and loneliness has increased significantly as restricted movement, restricted access to alcohol, and school closures are affecting the well-being of young adults (Greyling et al., 2020). Another study conducted by Zaremohzzabieh et al. (2019) mentioned that various social relationship types like family, friends, etc., have a significant relationship with Malaysian individuals' happiness levels. They also emphasized that attachment relationships with either family, peers, or even both are assumed to have a positive and happy life. However, some young adults were separated from their families and peers due to the lockdown with this current situation. With that, various factors like social situations, social relationships, and wealth can fluctuate an individual's happiness level.

Sensation Seeking Behavior and Happiness

The results show that the results predicted by researchers are true because as assumed, the sensation seeking behavior has a significant positive relationship with happiness among young adults in Malaysia. The statistic of study shows that the results are in accordance with the hypothesis and proven right using the Pearson Correlation Coefficient test. This particular result regarding the sensation seeking behavior and happiness is definitely in line with past studies. Research by Helme (2006) suggests that doing an extreme sport or any type of sensation seeking behavior increases the happiness level among individuals as they experience a greater level of satisfaction and a sense of pleasure. Sensation seeking behavior or the pursuit of stimulation was found to have a positive relationship with happiness, psychological well-being, mental health, and eudemonic well-being (Ravert & Donnellan, 2020). The significant positive relationship also occurs with participants from the young adults age group compared to participants from the other age group. The study conducted and the results obtained are certainly in line with past studies.

Another study that would strengthen the stand of which sensation seeking behavior is positively related to happiness is by Aini (2021) that suggested a higher level of sensation seeking behavior among travelers allows them to have a greater level of satisfaction and accomplishment, proving that sensation seeking behavior influences the level of happiness. Findings of another study show that sensation seeking behavior has a positive relationship with happiness since the participants can find sensation, pleasure and happiness through willingness to take risks and involve in extreme activities that could be dangerous which are considered sensation seeking behavior (Aini, 2021). Although there is a lack of studies to support the hypothesis, the researchers believe that with the given amount of data and sources, it is strong enough to say that the assumptions are supported by the previous studies. Future researchers could study more on the types of sensation seeking behavior as it is a wide

topic and focus on a specific type of sensation seeking behavior as young adults are prone to boredom, involving themselves in multiple sensation seeking behaviors. The instrument used to study the sensation seeking behavior that is the Brief Sensation Seeking Scale (2002) also known as BSSS-8 established by Hoyle et al. (2002) can be adapted to produce a newer edition of the scale with detailed items and varieties of sensation seeking behaviors.

Social Media Addiction and Happiness

The association between social media addiction and happiness were found to have a significant negative relationship among young adults in Malaysia. The results tabulated through the Pearson Correlation Coefficient test proves that when social media addiction is high, the level of happiness is low among young adults in Malaysia. The results shown are definitely in line with the previous studies conducted by various researchers across the globe since the alternative hypothesis of this study is true. A social media addiction or excessive usage of social media demonstrates a negative relationship towards happiness and well-being (Andreassen et al., 2017). The past study suggests that social media addicts are generally too distracted with the consumption of social media, smartphones, and the internet due to their irresistible urge to use social media constantly. This allows them to disrupt their everyday routine and some research also shows that a higher level of social media addiction leads to depression, anxiety disorders and most importantly a significant low level of happiness among young adults.

According to Keles et al., (2019) excessive use of social networking sites or in other words, social media addiction has been negatively related to subjective well-being and happiness. Social media addiction allows an individual to isolate themselves from the world in an enclosed room, showing higher tendency to be affected with mental health problems as well as happiness. Individuals spend too much time on the internet, scrolling through their

phones across multiple social media platforms which causes them to be relatively less happy (Blasco et al., 2019). Research investigating social media addiction focusing primarily on Facebook addiction shows significant negative relationship towards happiness among young adults in Malaysia (Balakrishnan et al., 2013). It is known for a fact that social media addiction is an unhealthy behaviour that leads to less happiness in an individual. Alongside happiness, future studies should also focus on mental health issues as it is concerning among young adults, especially when it comes to social media addiction affecting the individual's life such as social anxiety, depression, and insomnia.

Theoretical Implication

The current study adapted the Hedonism theory as a guide to comprehend the relationship between sensation seeking behaviour and happiness along with relationship social media addiction and happiness. According to the theory, hedonism can be related to an individual who adopts a positive attitude towards happiness. Within the context of psychology, hedonism can be said to be the pursuit of pleasure which is the primary motivational factor for a human behaviour (Rossi, 2018). On the other hand, hedonism can also be related to addiction that is known as a reckless behaviour and narcissism such as smart phone addiction and many more (Hyun et al., 2014).

According to the results of this study, both the sensation seeking behaviour and social media addiction were discovered to be correlated with happiness. Hence, the result of this study can be fully supported by the Hedonism theory. This research was able to fill in the knowledge gap of social media addiction being negatively correlated with happiness. Commonly, it can be assumed that people tend to frequently use social media for the pleasure of obtaining new friends, expressing their emotions online, gaining new insights of all the happenings around the world and many more. All these aspects are presumably to provide

pleasure for them. However, in our study, the results demonstrated that the more addictive the person is, the more likely for him or her to feel less happy.

Practical Implication

Limited number of studies have been performed on the three variables which are sensation seeking behaviour, social media addiction and happiness. The findings of this study could provide an insight to researchers in Malaysia in allowing them to determine effective interventions boost the happiness level of young adults in Malaysia. This is said so because the results demonstrated 241 participants to have a lower level of happiness in Malaysia which is about 76.6%. Hence, the happiness level of young adults in Malaysia requires more attention from the public. Furthermore, the researchers could look deeper into the psychological behaviors or mental health problem that could be related to sensation seeking behaviors and social media addiction using the data of this study since nearly half of the respondents were reported to possess greater level of sensation seeking behaviour and social media addiction.

Moreover, the findings of this study may be assessed by researchers to look into the cultural aspects of the young adults in terms of sensation seeking behaviour and social media addiction. Apart from that, young adults can further enlighten the influences of their sensation seeking behaviour and social media addiction on happiness which might help them in managing their behaviour. To assist with that, the results of this study could also give awareness to the parents on their children's social media usage and happiness level in which they could provide the necessary to their children to boost their happiness level.

Limitations and Recommendations

The study has to be seen in the light of some limitations. The first limitation of this study is conducting an online survey. The survey is solely conducted online due to the pandemic. The problem faced during the online survey is that the participants are less likely to stay fully engaged in a survey that takes 8-10 minutes. Some participants left the survey halfway because they might have felt the survey was lengthy. Then, repeated requests to complete the survey can be perceived as annoying by the participants. Without any identification tool or personal identification concerns, it is impossible to know if the right person does the sample providing answers according to our research criteria. For example, the survey can be done by their family members, friends, etc. There may be other concerns such as the participants doing the survey for more than one time in which we might not be aware of it. Since the survey is conducted online, the survey link was shared to various social media like Instagram, WhatsApp, Facebook, Telegram and many more. Even though having various social media platforms to share our survey, our response rate was still low. Thus, we have to pick our participants according to our research criteria and personally reach out to them one by one to do our survey.

Furthermore, time constraint was also one of the limitations because it was challenging to find eligible participants for our criteria. Some individuals actually read our message but did not bother to show interest in our study. We were experiencing several participants who left the survey halfway and some who did not agree to participate in our survey. After filtering out, we also had participants who were not eligible to participate in our survey, like individuals aged more than 30 years old and participants below 18 years old. With that, we had to keep searching for participants online. Therefore, looking for participants has taken up some time to further our research as the deadline was close. Another limitation is opinion arising from participants' perspectives on demographic biases.

Participants pointed out to add more options under the gender section in the survey like “Others” such as non-binary, binary, transgender, etc. This is to ensure the inclusiveness of everyone even though we were not aware of it or even given a thought before designing the survey when filling out the survey, where sometimes options are limited to LGBTQ+ people because they are forced to choose an option from only male or female in the survey. The last limitation is lacking available data. To be precise, it was challenging to find the exact statistics for young adults in Malaysia. Therefore, we had to include a provided age range from their website, 18 to 30 years old to be known as young adults in Malaysia.

For future researchers who wish to design this study again, several changes can be made. Most essentially, this study should go for a more extended period to capture the involvement through the whole research process to disseminate so we can find more potential participants for the study. Next, future researchers can address the same research in a new context, location and culture. This is to see if the results can vary from our findings. They can also focus on any new theories or other recent models in the research problem. Other suggestions for future researchers are when collecting demographic details, it is essential to include all identities in. This can be a potential step towards making outstanding equity for LGBTQ+ individuals. Also, it is necessary to briefly explain to participants of why the data is being collected and how it will be used and how their information will be always protected. Typically, identity information can be used against LGBTQ+ people so to make sure it will not be used for any discriminatory purposes. Thus, all questions regarding sex, gender or sexuality must be optional.

Conclusion

This research project titled “The Influence of Sensation Seeking Behaviour and Social Media Addiction on Happiness among Young Adults in Malaysia” was submitted to fulfil the requirements for the bachelor’s undergraduate course of the group project members. The objective of the study has been met and successfully accomplished within the span of the research study done among young adults in Malaysia. The relationship of sensation seeking behaviour, social media addiction and happiness among young adults in Malaysia was determined especially during the tough times of the COVID-19 pandemic. The specific objectives were also fulfilled which were to determine the level of happiness among young adults in Malaysia, to determine the relationship of sensation seeking and happiness among young adults in Malaysia along with determining the relationship of social media addiction and happiness among young adults in Malaysia. All the objectives were successfully met and through hard work, creativity, and teamwork, especially among the three group members for this study with supervision, guidance, and assistance from the supervisor.

The number of participants that participated in this research project was 315 which was more than the targeted sample through sample size that was 312. The present quantitative study conducted online during the COVID-19 pandemic allowed researchers to analyse the study remotely in order to curb the spread of the coronavirus disease. The cross-sectional design allowed the researchers to study the target population that is young adults aged between 18 to 30. Moreover, the descriptive research was adapted to give an explanation for characteristics that are studied upon and focuses on the research subject’s happiness. The purposive sampling method was used to recruit participants based on the inclusion criteria.

The final results of this present study have proven that the hypotheses predicted by the researchers based on previous studies were all supported. The results were all in line with past studies by various researchers across the world. The happiness level among young adults

in Malaysia is significantly low since only 26.4% of the respondents shown a higher level of happiness. At the same time, the relationship between sensation seeking behaviour and happiness was statistically significant and had a positive relationship. Similarly, a substantial negative correlation was reported between social media addiction and happiness which was in line with the hypothesis of the current study. In conclusion, the results of the study had acknowledged all the hypotheses to be true.

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Appendix A

Effect Size and G*Power Analysis

1. Sensation Seeking and Life Satisfaction / Happiness (Celik & Kocak, 2018).

Table 2
Correlation Analysis and Descriptive Statistical Results

Variables	1	2	3
Life satisfaction	1		
General Self-efficacy	.38**	1	
Sensation seeking	.02	.29**	1
\bar{X}	23.00	28.09	25.02
SD	6.83	5.49	6.53

** $p < 0.01$

$$\therefore r = 0.02$$

$$f^2 = \frac{r^2}{1-r^2} = \frac{(0.02)^2}{1-(0.02)^2} = 0.0004$$

2. Social Media Addiction, Social Anxiety and Happiness (Baltaci, 2019)

Table 1. Pearson correlation coefficients and descriptive statistics

Variables	1	2	3	4
1. Social Media Addiction	1			
2. Social Anxiety	.427*	1		
3. Happiness	-0.298*	-0.457*	1	
4. Loneliness	.185*	.506*	-0.453*	1
Arithmetic Mean	53.14	36.6	23.75	12.58
Standard Deviation	12.31	17.22	3.6	3.19
Skewness	.025	.405	-0.303	.633
Kurtosis	-0.600	.278	.041	.120

* $p < .01$

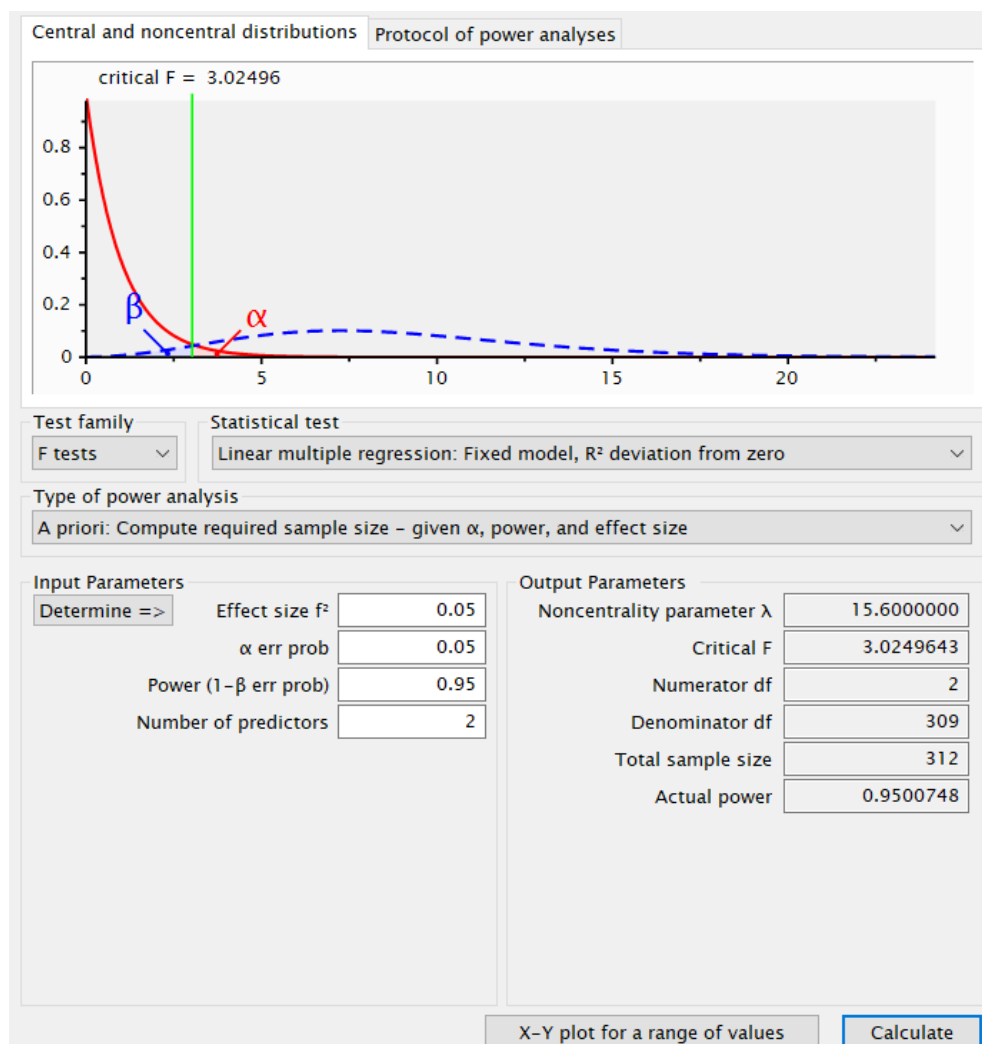
$$\therefore r = -0.298$$

$$f^2 = \frac{r^2}{1-r^2} = \frac{(-0.298)^2}{1-(-0.298)^2} = 0.097$$

Average Linear Regression / Effect Size:

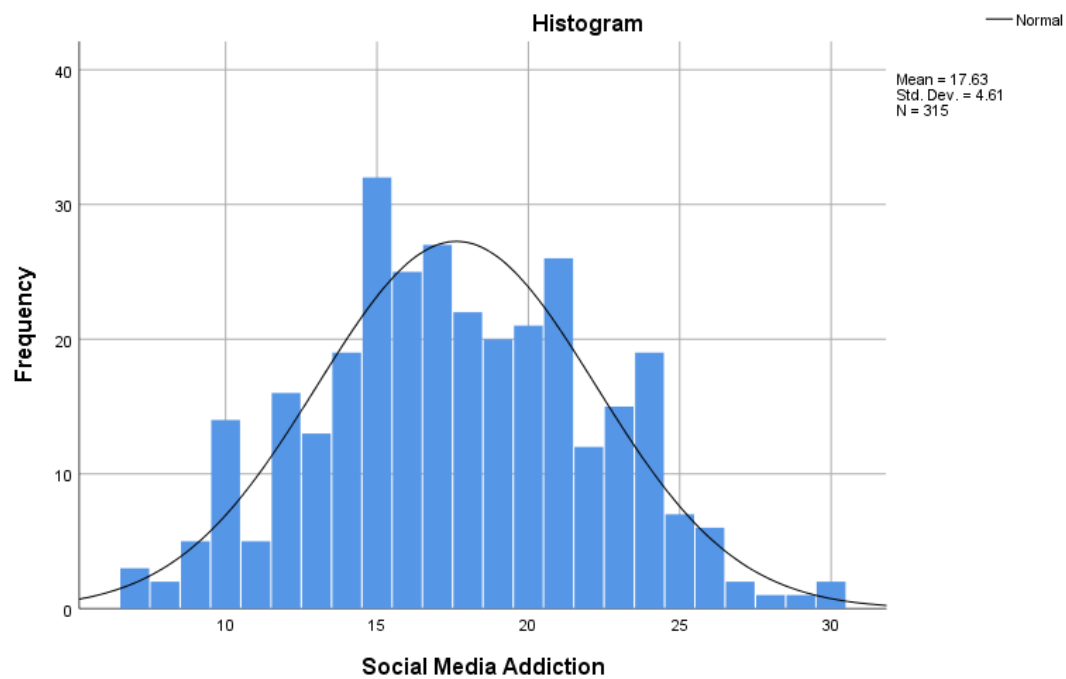
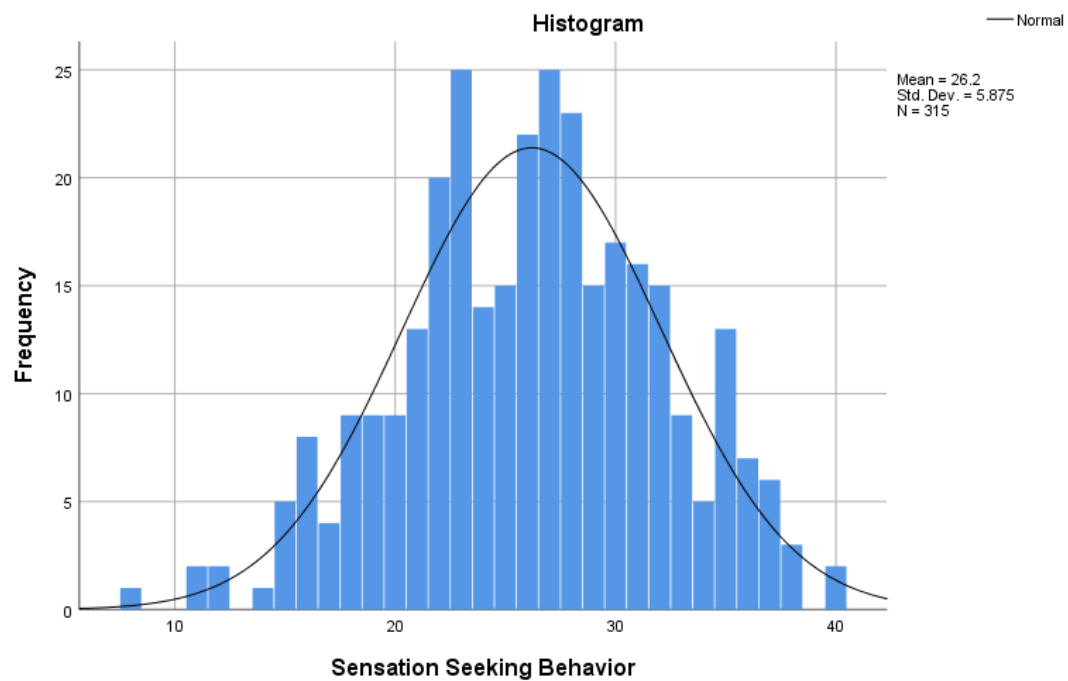
$$f^2 = \frac{0.0004 + 0.097}{2} = 0.048 \approx 0.05$$

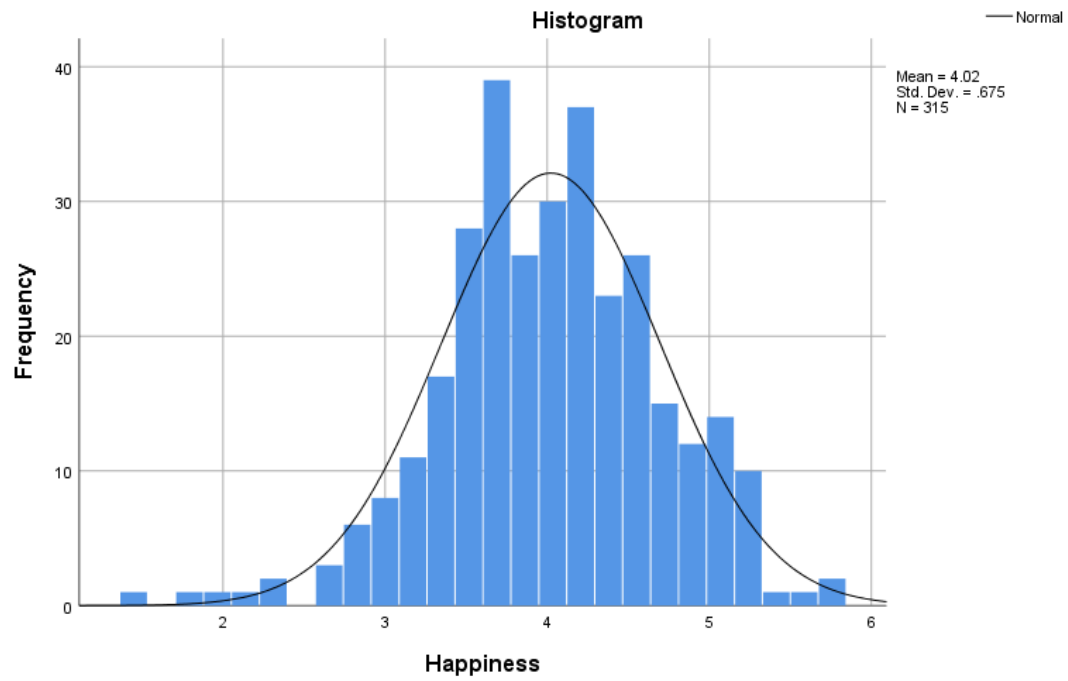
∴ Estimated Total Sample Size: 312



Appendix B

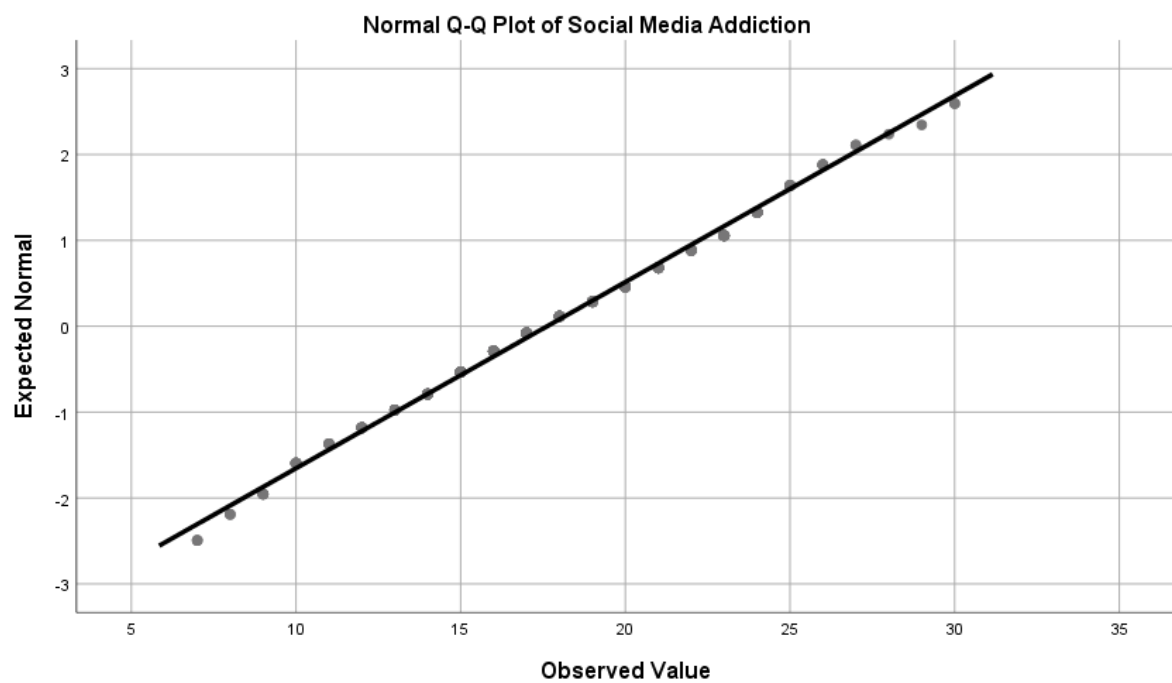
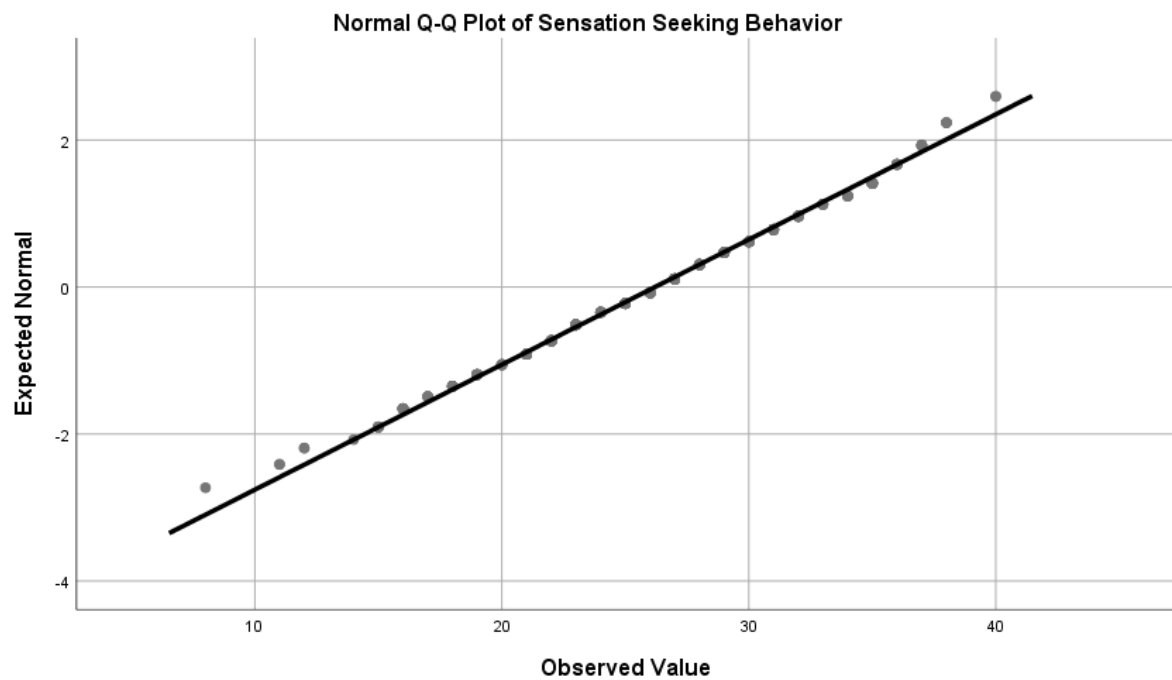
Histograms for Sensation Seeking Behavior, Social Media Addiction and Happiness

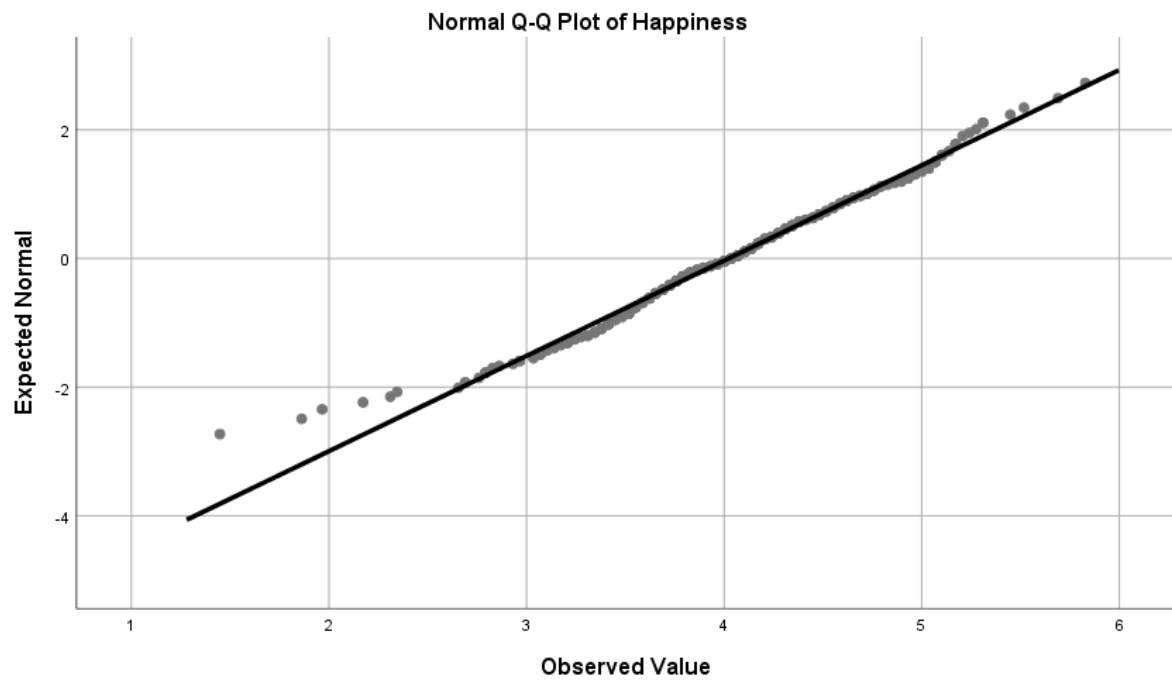




Appendix C

Q-Q Plots for Sensation Seeking Behavior, Social Media Addiction and Happiness





Appendix D

Questionnaire

The Influence of Sensation Seeking Behavior and Social Media Addiction on Happiness among Young Adults in Malaysia

We are Year 3 undergraduate students pursuing Bachelor of Social Science (Honours) Psychology at Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman. You are invited to participate in our study entitled 'The Influence of Sensation Seeking Behavior and Social Media Addiction on Happiness among Young Adults in Malaysia' as long as you fulfill the criteria:

- a) Must live in Malaysia***
- b) Aged between 18 to 30 years old***
- c) Must be a social media user for more than one platform***

Personal Data Protection Statement

In accordance with Personal Data Protection Act 2010 ("PDPA") which came into force on 15 November 2013, Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman ("UTAR") is hereby bound to make notice and require consent in relation to collection, recording, storage, usage and retention of personal information. Notice:

1. The purposes for which your personal data may be used are inclusive but not limited to:-

- For assessment of any application to UTAR
- For processing any benefits and services
- For communication purposes
- For advertorial and news
- For general administration and record purposes
- For enhancing the value of education
- For educational and related purposes consequential to UTAR
- For the purpose of our corporate governance
- For consideration as a guarantor for UTAR staff/ student applying for his/her scholarship/ study loan

2. Your personal data may be transferred and/or disclosed to third party and/or UTAR collaborative partners including but not limited to the respective and appointed outsourcing agents for purpose of fulfilling our obligations to you in respect of the purposes and all such other purposes that are related to the purposes and also in providing integrated services, maintaining and storing records.

Your data may be shared when required by laws and when disclosure is necessary to comply with applicable laws.

3. Any personal information retained by UTAR shall be destroyed and/or deleted in accordance with our retention policy applicable for us in the event such information is no longer required.

4. UTAR is committed in ensuring the confidentiality, protection, security and accuracy of your personal information made available to us and it has been our ongoing strict policy to ensure that your personal information is accurate, complete, not misleading and updated. UTAR would also ensure that your personal data shall not be used for political and commercial purposes.

5. This project will be supervised by **Miss Sarvarubini A/P Nainee** and she shall be contacted at **sarvarubini@utar.edu.my** 6. For further enquiries, you may contact: **Ashwinie Nair A/P Sridharan Nair** (ashwinie05@1utar.my), **Maria Peter A/P Micheal** (mariapeter@1utar.my) or **Titus A/L David Rasahpandy** (1998titus@1utar.my).

Consent Form for Research Participation and Personal Data Protection

NOTE: This consent form will remain with the UTAR researchers for their records. I understand I have been asked to take part in the research project specified above by UTAR students for the

purpose of their **UAPZ3023 Final Year Project II** assignment. I have read the Explanatory Statement, which I keep for my records.

I understand that:

- a) I will be asked to complete a questionnaire about The Influence of Sensation Seeking Behavior and Social Media Addiction on Happiness among Young Adults in Malaysia.
- b) My participation is voluntary, that I can choose not to participate in part or all of the project, and that I can withdraw at any stage of the project without being penalised or disadvantaged in any way.
- c) I may ask at any time for my data to be withdrawn from the project.
- d) No information I have provided that could lead to the identification of any other individual will be disclosed in any reports on the project, or to any other party.
- e) I will remain anonymous at all times in any reports or publications from the project.
- f) It is my sole responsibility to look after my own safety for the above project. In the event of any misfortune or accidental injury involving me, whether or not due solely to personal negligence or otherwise, I hereby declare that UTAR shall not be held responsible.

By submitting this form, I hereby authorise and consent to UTAR processing (including disclosing) my personal data and any updates of my information, for the purposes and/or for any other purposes related to the purpose.

I acknowledge that if I do not consent or subsequently withdraw my consent to the processing and disclosure of my personal data, UTAR will not be able to fulfil their obligations or to contact me or to assist me in respect of the purposes and/or for any other purposes related to the purpose.

Informed Consent

Acknowledgment of Personal Data Protection Notice

- ☐ I have been notified by you and that I hereby understood, consented and agreed per UTAR above notice. (1)
- ☐ I disagree, my personal data will not be processed. (2)

A Demographic Information

1. Age

B 2. Gender

☐ Male (1)

☐ Female (2)

C 3. Do you currently live in Malaysia?

☐ Yes (1)

☐ No (2)

D 4. Current state of residence in Malaysia

E 5. Ethnicity

☐ Malay (1)

☐ Chinese (2)

☐ Indian (3)

☐ Others (4)

F 6. Occupational Status

- ☐ Employed (1)
- ☐ Unemployed (2)
- ☐ Self-employed (3)
- ☐ Student (4)
-

G 7. Education Level

- ☐ SPM/O-levels (1)
- ☐ STPM/A-levels/Pre-U (2)
- ☐ Undergraduate (3)
- ☐ Postgraduate (4)
- ☐ Others (Please specify) (5) _____
-

H 8. Are you a user of at least two social media platforms? (E.g. Facebook, Instagram, Whatsapp, TikTok, Twitter, etc.)

- ☐ Yes (1)
- ☐ No (2)

Q1 Section A

Choose your desired answers based on the statements.

	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neither Disagree or Agree (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)
1. I would like to explore strange places (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. I get restless when I spend too much time at home (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. I like to do frightening things (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. I like wild parties (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. I would like to take off on a trip with no pre-planned routes or timetables (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. I prefer friends who are excitingly unpredictable (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. I would like to try bungee jumping (7)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. I would love to have new and exciting experiences, even if they are illegal (8)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

End of Block: Section A: Sensation Seeking Behavior

Q2 Section B

Below you find some questions about your relationship to and use of social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and the like). Choose the response alternative for each question that

best describes you

How often during the last year have you . . .

	Very Rarely (1)	Rarely (2)	Sometimes (3)	Often (4)	Very Often (5)
. . . spent a lot of time thinking about social media or planned use of social media? (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
. . . felt an urge to use social media more and more? (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
. . . used social media to forget about personal problems? (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
. . . tried to cut down on the use of social media without success? (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
. . . become restless or troubled if you have been prohibited from using social media? (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
. . . used social media so much that it has had a negative impact on your job/studies? (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

End of Block: Section B: Social Media Addiction

Q3 Section C

Below are a number of statements about happiness. Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each by rating the statements.

23. I don't find it easy to make decisions. (23)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
24. I don't have a particular sense of meaning and purpose in my life. (24)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
25. I feel I have a great deal of energy. (25)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
26. I usually have a good influence on events. (26)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
27. I don't have fun with other people. (27)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
28. I don't feel particularly healthy. (28)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
29. I don't have particularly happy memories of the past. (29)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

End of Block: Section C: Happiness

Appendix E

Turnitin Originality Report



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Abstract

The happiness level among young adults have been degrading across the globe and Malaysia has been ranked to be at a concerning place. This research aims to investigate the level of happiness among young adults in Malaysia and attempts to study the relationship between sensation seeking behaviour and happiness, and the relationship between social media addiction and happiness among young adults in Malaysia. This present study predicts that the happiness level is low among young adults, while sensation seeking has a significant positive relationship with happiness, and social media addiction has a significant negative relationship with happiness among young adults in Malaysia. This study sample comprised of 115 young adults aged between 18 to 30 across the country who lives in Malaysia and is an active social media user for more than one platform. In this quantitative study, researchers adapted the cross-sectional design and descriptive research design to answer the research questions. Results suggest that the level of happiness is significantly low among young adults in Malaysia. Besides that, a higher level of sensation seeking behaviour was associated and has a significant positive relationship with happiness, and social media addiction has a significant negative relationship with happiness among young adults in Malaysia. The results in line with past studies allows the study to appraise its hypotheses. Sensation seeking behaviour and social media addiction affect happiness and addressing any one of these possible influences is likely to contribute to the literature gap and increase happiness among young adults in Malaysia.

Keywords: sensation seeking, social media addiction, happiness, young adults

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Appendix F

Ethical Approval Letter for Research Project



UNIVERSITI TUNKU ABDUL RAHMAN
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Re: U/SERC/223/2021

4 October 2021

Dr Pung Pit Wan
Head, Department of Psychology and Counselling
Faculty of Arts and Social Science
Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman
Jalan Universiti, Bandar Baru Barat
31900 Kampar, Perak.

Dear Dr Pung,

Ethical Approval For Research Project/Protocol

We refer to the application for ethical approval for your students' research projects from Bachelor of Social Science (Hons) Psychology programme enrolled in course UAPZ3013/UAPZ3023. We are pleased to inform you that the application has been approved under Expedited Review.

The details of the research projects are as follows:

No	Research Title	Student's Name	Supervisor's Name	Approval Validity
1.	The Influence of Sensation Seeking Behavior and Social Media Addiction on Happiness among Young Adults in Malaysia	1. Ashwinie Nair a/p Sridharan Nair 2. Maria Peter a/p Micheal 3. Titus a/l David Rasahpandy	Ms Sarvarubini a/p Nainee	4 October 2021 - 3 October 2022
2.	Academic Self-Efficacy, Perceived Social Support and Perfectionism as Predictors in Academic Procrastination among E-learning Undergraduates in Malaysia during COVID-19 Pandemic	1. Chee Vane Yen 2. Foong Kar Whey 3. Tay Xiao Ying	Ms T'ng Soo Ting	
3.	A Study of The Relationship Between Perceived Stress, Sleep Quality and Life Satisfaction Among Malaysian Working Adults During Covid-19 Pandemic Outbreak	1. Chin Kah Leng 2. Kuganeshwari a/p Muthu 3. Tan Cher Shan	Dr Gan Su Wan	
4.	The Mediating Role of Self-esteem in The Relationship Between Parenting Style and Academic Dishonesty Among Undergraduates in Malaysia	1. Khoo Zhi Yin 2. Melanie Soo Yu Teng 3. Ong Li Ying	Pn Natasha Amira Binti Hushairi	
5.	A Study of the Effects of Fear of Covid-19, Locus of Control, and Gender on Depression among Undergraduates in Malaysia	1. H'ng Zhuang Hang 2. Wong Ker Yin 3. Yau Chiow Yee	Dr Pung Pit Wan	



The conduct of this research is subject to the following:

- (1) The participants' informed consent be obtained prior to the commencement of the research;
- (2) Confidentiality of participants' personal data must be maintained; and
- (3) Compliance with procedures set out in related policies of UTAR such as the UTAR Research Ethics and Code of Conduct, Code of Practice for Research Involving Humans and other related policies/guidelines.
- (4) Written consent be obtained from the institution(s)/company(ies) in which the physical or/and online survey will be carried out, prior to the commencement of the research.

Should the students collect personal data of participants in their studies, please have the participants sign the attached Personal Data Protection Statement for records.

Thank you.

Yours sincerely,



Professor Ts Dr Faiz bin Abd Rahman
Chairman
UTAR Scientific and Ethical Review Committee

c.c Dean, Faculty of Arts and Social Science
 Director, Institute of Postgraduate Studies and Research

