



IMPACT OF COVID-19 PANDEMIC ON PHYSICAL INTERACTION AMONG UNIVERSITY
STUDENTS IN UTAR

BY

TAN KAI WEN

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TAN KAI WEN

DECLARATION

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

Name : TAN KAI WEN

Student ID: 19UJB06101

Signed : 

Date : 14 SEPTEMBER 2023

APPROVAL FORM

This research paper attached hereto, entitled Impact of Covid-19 Pandemic On Physical Interaction Among University Students in UTAR prepared and submitted by Tan Kai Wen in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Bachelor of Corporate Communication (Hons) is hereby accepted.

Yong

Supervisor

Ms. Yong Xin Yi

Date: 14/9/2023

ABSTRACT

In the current post-pandemic stage in Malaysia, students are returning to their campuses for physical classes, which means that students will have to attend classes in a classroom in the university facilities. There are major academic changes in university class availability and content distribution, where academics, students and management teams in universities operate as a consequence of the virus's growth and severity. This greatly affects the psychological habits and routines of a university student, as they develop new habits in their social life. Students who are used to online interactions during the pandemic may find it challenging to revert their social life back to normal. This research focuses on the impact of the pandemic on university students' ability to interact and communicate with others physically. This research investigates students who have been engaging in online events or online interactions, and also students who have not.

Keywords: Physical interaction, Pandemic, Impact, Covid-19.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	1
DECLARATION	Error! Bookmark not defined. TABLE OF CONTENTS
	3
CHAPTER I	5
1.0 Introduction	5
1.1 Background of Study	5
1.2 Problem Statement	7
1.3 Research Objectives	7
1.4 Research Question	8
1.5 Significance of study	Error! Bookmark not defined.
1.5.1 Theoretical Significance	8
1.5.2 Practical Significance	9
1.6 Definition of Terms	9
1.7 Conclusion	9
CHAPTER 2	10
2.0 Introduction	10
2.1 Definition of Theory	10
2.2 Social Media Usage Experiences of Young Adults during the COVID 19 Pandemic through Social Cognitive Approach to Uses and Gratifications	12
2.3 Theoretical Framework	13
2.3.1 Conceptual Framework	14
2.4 Conclusion	14
CHAPTER 3	
3.0 Introduction	15
3.1 Research Design	15
3.1.1 Quantitative Research	15
3.1.2 Descriptive Research	16
3.2 Research Instrument	17
3.2.1 Questionnaire Design	17
3.3 Population and Sampling	18
3.3.1 Sampling Method	20
3.4 Data Collection Method	20
3.5 Data Analysis	20
3.6 Conclusion	21
CHAPTER 4	
4.0 Introduction	21
4.1 Section A: Demographics	21

4.2 Section B: Usage of Social Media	24
4.3 Section C: Psychological Effects of Social Media	45
4.4 Conclusion	55
CHAPTER 5	
5.0 Introduction	56
5.1 Discussion on Major Findings	56
5.1.1 Analysis on Research Objectives	56
5.2 Limitations of Study	59
5.3 Recommendations For Future Research	60
5.4 Conclusion	60
REFERENCES	61
APPENDICES	
Survey Questionnaire	64
Raw Data	71

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The abbreviation COVID-19 stands for "Coronavirus Disease 2019" (Cennimo, 2023, para.1). The World Health Organization and the U.S. Center for Disease Control defined it this way to allow discussion on treatment, prevention, and information on this topic. Coronaviruses got their name from the crown-like shape of the cells and were first discovered in humans in 1965. There are several variants that impact both people and animals. Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome, or SARS (CoV-2), which first appeared in China in 2002, is one of the seven human-infecting viruses and is what causes the current form, COVID-19. This study is looking at the impact of covid-19 pandemic on physical interaction among university students in Malaysia.

A physical setting may not be an ideal medium for students to communicate after the pandemic. In this part of the study, there will be background of study, research problems, research questions, research objectives, significance of study, keywords and conclusion. This study is to explore and discover the factors that caused an impact or change in the frequency and willingness of physical interaction among UTAR students.

1.1 BACKGROUND OF STUDY

The first ever Coronavirus case was tested positive on 4 Feb 2020. It has been more than two years since the first tested case. Although the pandemic has been lifted for months, lesser and lesser students are physically interacting with one another in Malaysian universities. Even though it is currently the post-pandemic phase in Malaysia where most restrictions are lifted, there is a noticeable decline in the rate of physical interaction among students. Covid-19 pandemic phase forced students and lecturers to interact online, via online teaching and learning methods. Students may have gotten used to this form of interaction, through a virtual medium. After the pandemic, students are required to return

to campus to attend their classes. Students are to cope with the sudden change of interaction method, and the pandemic may affect the efficiency and capability of university students to interact with others.

As many new UTAR students are only starting to return to campuses for fully physical classes and meetings for a short period of time, the new students who started with online learning may be unfamiliar with physical interaction. However, these students may use other forms of interactions that were used during the pandemic. The pandemic may have caused a change in the ways students communicate with one another.

Some students may enjoy a physical setting in a learning environment; however, it may be a difficult environment to cope in for the new students who are unfamiliar with the campus and the environment. This study is not only to understand the factors that cause impact in physical interaction, but also to discover potential ways to improve students' physical interaction skills and lifestyles. However, the main objectives of this study are to discover the medium used for communication during the pandemic, and how it is affecting students in the post-pandemic phase.

This study aims to find out if students are interacting physically as much as they were before covid-19 pandemic. The pandemic has affected the students physically and mentally, where there may be underlying effects of the pandemic lifestyle that discourages interaction among university students. This study is suitable at this point of time because it has only been a short period of time since the pandemic was lifted.

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

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The research gap of this study is that this study is relatively new, as post pandemic has only begun for a few months. The research focus will be on the medium that students rely on, that causes reduction in physical interaction.

The research problem in this study is the pandemic has caused reduction in physical interaction among university students. During pandemic, students are forced to follow a norm, which is to attend classes and interact via online platforms. This is because we are to stay home and to reduce all forms of physical contact.

This leads to a need to understand the behaviour of students during pandemic and after pandemic through a form of survey, in order to understand the causes of the change.

1.3 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The main research objective in this study is to examine the impact of Covid-19 pandemic on physical interaction among university students in UTAR. During the pandemic, students use alternatives to replace the absence of physical interaction, and this has become a norm among students. This caused students to lose the willingness or ability to interact with one another physically.

RO1: To discover new norms that may cause reduction in physical interaction among university students in UTAR.

RO2: To determine the medium that acts as a replacement for physical interaction among university students in UTAR.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

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RQ1: What is the impact of Covid-19 pandemic on physical interaction among university students in Malaysia?

RQ2: Has online platforms changed the way university students interact with one another?

1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDY

This study aims to find out about students' physical interaction ability and frequency. A heavy use of a certain communication medium may result in reduction of physical interaction. Therefore, by conducting this study, the results may be useful for helping students gain skills in physical interaction and communication.

This study mainly focuses on the impact of covid-19 pandemic and examines what are the factors that reduced physical interaction among students. This study can also be used as a future reference for students to learn more about covid-19 pandemic and how it affected the students' lifestyles during the pandemic, and after the pandemic. This topic can also benefit fields of psychology who wish to examine the behaviour of students during and after the pandemic. Instead of pure communication channels, this study may explore some mental factors of the usage of these mediums as well. Therefore, this study uses the theory of Uses and Gratification.

1.5.1 THEORETICAL SIGNIFICANCE

The theory used in this study is Uses and Gratification. This theory is beneficial to this study as we are to look at potential mediums used by students during the pandemic that possibly affects their skills and frequency in physical interaction. Uses and Gratification theory is used to determine the potential motivation and purposes of using a certain form of

communication medium. This has a huge link towards the reduction of physical interaction, where the new norm may serve as a replacement.

1.5.2 PRACTICAL SIGNIFICANCE

This study is using a quantitative research method, via a google form to collect data from students in UTAR. The benefit of using quantitative research is that the answers are fixed and it is easier to group the answers, and by comparing the groups, a clear answer is shown.

1.6 DEFINITION OF TERMS

Physical Interaction: A form of give and take, sometimes a reaction or participation between one another (Chandra, 2013).

Pandemic: An illness that affects practically all of a region for a group of humans, animals, or plants (Cambridge, n.d.)

Impact: An effect that something has on a situation or person (Cambridge, n.d.)

Covid-19: A disease, also known as Coronavirus disease, which is caused by a virus called SARS-CoV-2 (WHO, n.d.).

1.7 CONCLUSION

This part of the study talked about introduction, where the parts of this study are introduced. Next, we included background of study, where the brief explanation of this study is included. The research problem, research questions and research objectives are included. The research problem is the purpose of this study. Research questions are to determine the field of research in this study. Research objectives are the goals we hope to achieve through

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this study. For the significance of study, it is split into three parts. The first part is methodology significance.

It explains the significance and benefits of the study's topic. The second part is theoretical significance, which explains the benefits of the theory used. The third part, which is of practical significance. It explains the benefits of quantitative research. Next, keywords include the definition of the important words in this study. In the next part of this study, there will be an elaboration of the theory used in this study and the past research done by others in this similar setting.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

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2.0 INTRODUCTION

In this section of the study, there are two major parts to look at. The first part of this section is the understanding of the theory used in this study. The definition of the theory and the usage of the theory is included in this section. The second major part is the findings of past research. Past research is important as it provides us information as secondary research, allowing us to confirm the legitimacy of our results, and to help refine the studies based on this field.

2.1 DEFINITION OF THEORY

The theory used in this study is The Uses and Gratification (U&G). In The Uses and Gratification Theory, it is used to explain the behaviour of a media's audience for their own fulfilment. In this theory, the audience are the active members in the scenario, where they choose to consume information from selected media for gratification (Communication Theory, n.d., para. 1).

From this theory, researchers can produce results from categories of needs of the audiences. These 5 needs are cognitive needs, affective needs, personal integrative needs,

social integrative needs and tension free needs. These are the needs that audiences seek from the media that they consume (Communication Theory, n.d., para. 2).

The first of the five needs are cognitive needs. This need is the need of receiving information and knowledge. This type of need differs for different people, as people have different interests and also requirements. For example, some people use the Internet to search for educational knowledge. Some others use social media to acquire the latest news and such (Communication Theory, n.d., para. 3).

The second is effective needs. Affective needs are the emotional aspect of needs. People use a certain form of medium to feel various emotions. One of those are the emotions from watching a drama. Some people who couldn't receive enough affective needs through physical interaction may use media as a replacement (Communication Theory, n.d., para. 4).

Next, the third need is personal integrative needs. This is when people need to seek reassurance of themselves. People use online shops and social media to make sure that they are up to date with the latest trends (Communication Theory, n.d., para. 5).

The fourth need is social integrative needs. Social integrative needs are by far the need with the biggest impact that has been discovered, especially during times like the pandemic. This is the need that focuses the connection with relationships that people have. These relationships can be between family members, spouses and friends. Other than direct contact with relationships, some people also use media to engage in some activities that help in bonding with the relationships (Communication Theory, n.d., para. 6). An example of this is to follow a certain artist online because their friends are into this artist. This creates an opportunity for mutual interests.

Finally, there are tension free needs. To many, the media is viewed as a different world that they can indulge themselves in, which helps them take a break from reality. People in media, especially on social media, often share moments of their lives with their friends and other audiences. Some people watch these content from these “content creators” as they make content that satisfies the audiences. Some people watch the lives of others through social media, possibly because they are more interesting than the audiences’ own lives. Other than that, shows on media also have a similar impact on people. Many shows nowadays are creative and interesting, which gets people hooked on to these shows. These media possibly relieve tension from people, where they feel at ease when consuming this content (Communication Theory, n.d., para. 7).

2.2 SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE EXPERIENCES OF YOUNG ADULTS DURING THE COVID 19 PANDEMIC THROUGH SOCIAL COGNITIVE APPROACH TO USES AND GRATIFICATIONS

This is past research about social media usage. This is a past research done by Oya Onat Kocabiyik, in the year 2021. In this study, it is said that young adults have indulged themselves in social media during covid-19, and that social media dependence is slowly becoming a problem. Although social media is described as a good way to partially replace physical interaction, excessive use of social media has been proven to cause several negative effects such as depression and low self-esteem (Kocabiyik, 2021, p. 448).

The reason why young adults have low self-esteem or low confidence levels is because social media is a platform where users use it to share their life and also interests. However, many social media “influencers” who have many followers tend to only show the best moments of their lives. Normal people who see these influencers may compare their lives to these influencers’ lives. While the content on social media may be interesting to watch, people may also feel discontented when they watch this content and feel inferior.

2.3 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK



Figure 2.0 Theory of Uses and Gratification

Source: Bahfiarti & Arianto (2022)

Uses and Gratification is a model founded in the early 1940s by Katz and Blumber. It is used to understand the reasons behind the use of a specific communication medium and media. Not only that, but this model is also created to find out the effects of using these media, by a certain target group of audience (Kasirye, 2021).

According to Figure 2.0 Theory of Uses and Gratification, we can see that this theory looks at several factors, including the frequency of usage, as well as the duration and the consistency of usage of the media. The other three factors below, seeking information, social interaction and education are the causes and possible purposes of using these media. However, some positive purposes of usage may cause negative results. One example is the usage of media to catch up with friends' lifestyles. However, seeing friends doing better in life than oneself can cause negative emotions.

2.3.1 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

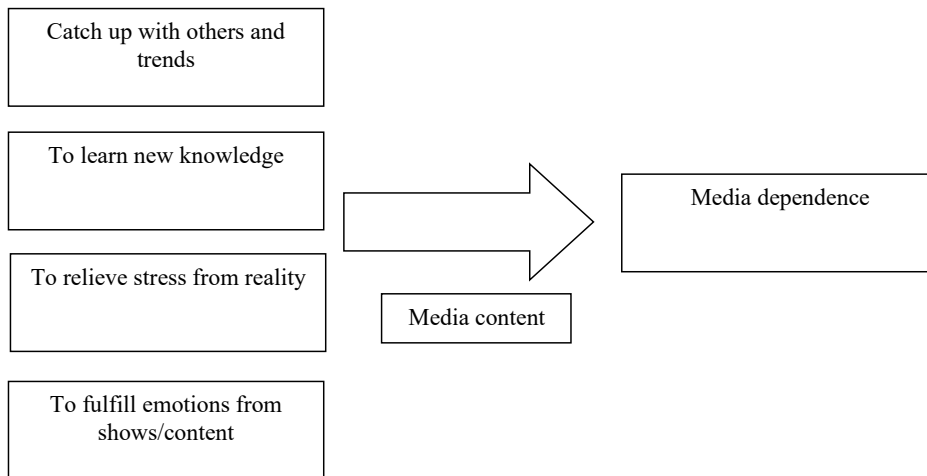


Figure 2.1: Conceptual Framework

2.4 CONCLUSION

This chapter concluded the previous study done on impact of social media on young adults, and the definition of theory, which is uses and gratification. In the next chapter, methodology will be covered as the main topic.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

3.0 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the methodology used in this research, which consists of research design, research instrument, research sampling, data collection method, construct measurement and data analysis method.

3.1 RESEARCH DESIGN

A research design is a plan, structure, or strategy that is used as a guide for a research project, from start to finish (Jansen, 2023). Jansen (2023) stated that a suitable research design acts as a blueprint for reliable and consistent results throughout a study. Research design is a big picture of research, in which it helps govern the entire research process. A research design determines how information is gathered, and how reliable the information is to the research.

3.1.1 QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH

In the social sciences, quantitative approach is the most used method for the research **framework (reference)**. It is a method of collecting data using assumptions and strategies, to collect a range of numerical data. Some numerical data is innately quantitative, such as age and income. Other data also take forms of numerical structure, such as a scale form. Quantitative research has multiple forms of methodologies such as commonly used questionnaires, quantitative observations and so on. Qualitative research, on the other hand, mainly revolves around detailed observations such as interviews.

According to Charlesworth Author Services (2021), there are four main steps in developing quantitative research. The first step is to develop the main questions of the research. This step is to create understanding towards the purpose of the study. This should be the first step of any research, regardless of its method. The second step is to find out the

methods used for this study. This step is where researchers find out about how they will answer their question from part one. This refers to the methodology of the study. The third step is to identify and list the variables. The two main variables are independent variables and dependent variables. Independent variables are the components that researchers can control in a study. On the other hand, dependent variables are the components used to measure during the research. Dependent variables are usually different for each participant in the study, and these data usually provide answers to the research questions. The fourth step is to construct a hypothesis. In this part, an expectation is developed where researchers predict the results of a research study. A hypothesis should be backed with evidence from past research and relevant studies. After the fourth step, put all the information together, and construct a research instrument that helps collect data from a sample population. According to Charlesworth Author Services (2021), compare the results to the initial hypothesis, and the result of the study will determine the accuracy of the hypothesis.

Quantitative Research is applicable to this research to identify the impact of covid-19 pandemic on physical interaction among university students in UTAR. This is because quantitative research uses numerical data that can be used to analyze on a large-scale sample, which is dependent on observable data from a fixed set of assumptions (University of Texas, 2023). This creates consistency in data, and is also inclusive of clear outliers.

3.1.2 DESCRIPTIVE RESEARCH

According to Librarianship Studies (2022), descriptive research is where the setting is fixed and without changing the variables presented in a situation in the study. It is more focused on “what” in an environment, derived from the current situation, rather than “why” something happens. The situation of the environment is not questioned but used to collect information and viewpoints. In short, the subjects of research are not manipulated, and information is collected from the subjects as it is.

3.2 RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

To learn about the impact of covid-19 pandemic on physical interaction among university students in UTAR, an online questionnaire will be used in this quantitative research. Online questionnaires are useful when collecting large amounts of data in a sample population to find averages and trends. Google Form will be used to conduct the online questionnaire, targeting young adults in the age range of 18 to 30. This age range covers most university students.

Prior to answering the questionnaire, all respondents will be briefly informed of the objectives of the study, as well as personal data protection declaration. A section of consent for taking part in the survey will be included right before the answering sections. This is to ensure that all the respondents are aware of the information taken from them, while completing the survey.

3.2.1 QUESTIONNAIRE DESIGN

The questionnaire consists of three sections, each with questions that help with the research study. These three sections consist of Demographic Questions, Usage of social media, and Psychological Effects of Social Media.

Section one was created under Demographic Questions, which consists of five questions. All five questions are multiple choice questions, including age, gender, ethnicity, email address, and the current course that the respondents are undertaking. Section two was created to find out about the usage of social media by university students. Respondents are required to answer eight questions that fall under section two, with two other questions being optional. Section three, the last section, was created to identify the psychological effects that social media has on university students. In this section, a 5-Point Likert scale was used, and it consists of ten questions. A 5-Point Likert scale is a scale with 5 options, ranging from

both ends of extremes. This scale is used when a researcher assumes that respondents will have linear reactions, ranging from one extreme to the other, such as “very bad” to “very good” (Mcleod, 2023, para. 3). Respondents were asked to rate how much they agreed or disagreed with each statement, with scores ranging from: (1) "Strongly Disagree," (2) "Disagree," (3) "Neutral," (4) "Agree," and (5) "Strongly Agree."

3.3 POPULATION AND SAMPLING

According to Chron (2020), a target population is a target group of people that researchers wish to collect data from, in hope to understand them. In this study, the target population is university students in the age range of 18 to 30 years old.

The target population is chosen based on a few factors. First of all, the target population for this study is in the age range of 18 to 30 years old. According to Malaysia Education (n.d.), students usually start their degree course at the age of 19 to 20, and degree courses usually take three to five years depending on the field of study. Some students further their studies in postgraduate programmes, where they study for master's or PhD after a bachelor's degree, for another one to five years. This means that it is safe to assume that the average age range of tertiary education students is 18 to 30 years old. According to Commission Factory (2023), the most active users in Malaysia on applications such as Instagram, Facebook and Messenger are in the age range of 25 to 34 years old, which is around 34% of the total users. The runner-up age range for the most active users in Malaysia is at 18 to 24 years old, rounding up to 22% of the total users in Malaysia (Commission Factory, 2023, para. 20.). Although 25 to 34 year old users are the most active on social media, this study aims to target social media users who are also university students (Commission Factory, 2023, para. 20.). Hence, the best age range for this study is 18 to 30 years old.

The sampling location for this study is specifically at Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR) in Malaysia. Malaysia is a country with many opportunities for research related to social media, as it is ranked top 10 in the world for the usage of the internet in 2023 (Commission Factory, 2023, para. 1). A total of 96.8% of the total population in Malaysia has access to the internet (Commission Factory, 2023, para. 1). With internet penetration rate like this, it is no doubt that Malaysia is a good location for social media research, especially at the post-pandemic phase.

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To ensure that the data gathered from the questionnaire is reliable and accurate, the respondents must be active users of social media, and have experience interacting frequently using social media during their time in UTAR. With these criteria, their responses will be accepted.

A sampling size is the total number of individuals participating in the research. As it is a small sampling location, the sampling size will not be a big number. However, a certain number of respondents are still needed for dependable and credible data. According to Quantilope (2022), determining the number of respondents in a quantitative research depends on the target population. 100 respondents are usually the minimum number of respondents for good research results (Fox, 2023, para. 12). Therefore, the sampling size for this study will be targeting 100 respondents for the online questionnaire.

3.3.1 SAMPLING METHOD

The sampling method used is voluntary response sampling. Voluntary response sampling is suitable for this research as it is more efficient to send out questionnaires to a mass audience in UTAR and wait for the responses from students. Rather than selecting the

respondents based on criterias, it is more natural to have students randomly selected to answer the survey questionnaire (McCombes, 2019, para. 31).

3.4 DATA COLLECTION METHOD

In this study, primary data will be used as the source of information. Primary data refers to first-hand collected data by the researcher in a study, by using uniquely designed surveys, interviews and so on, to solve a problem or to reach an understanding of a topic (Benedictine University Library, 2023). A digital copy of a questionnaire is distributed online through social media and social platforms such as WhatsApp and Instagram, to gather respondents from UTAR. This method is efficient for targeting the audience needed for this study, as it saves up time and expenses, such as printing expenses. The questionnaire is created and distributed using Google Form.

3.5 DATA ANALYSIS

In this study, descriptive analysis will be the method used to analyze the data collected. Descriptive analysis is finding relationships and comparing between old data and the newly collected data (Harvard Business School, 2021). Descriptive analysis is used to find possible trends by using data from different timelines. Google questionnaires often use descriptive analysis to display data, usually in a chart form. Due to the compatibility of descriptive analysis with google forms, it will be used to display and summarize the data in this study, and to search for relationships between variables. Pivot tables and pivot charts will also be used in this research for data analysis. Pivot tables is a data analysis method by using sample data and summarizing them into values that readers can understand (Gupta, 2023, para. 2). Pivot Charts are pivot tables displayed in chart forms.

3.6 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, the parts covered are research design, research instrument, population and sampling, data collection method and data analysis. The next chapter will be looking into the gathered data.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

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4.0 INTRODUCTION

Google Form was used to collect data from a total of 100 respondents. An analysis of the data will be explained and analysed in this chapter. All responses from the respondents will be used for analysis in this chapter.

4.1 SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHICS

In this section, the demographics of the respondents will be displayed and analysed. The first question of this section will not be displayed, as the content is the respondents' email addresses. Therefore, the analysis in this section will begin with question two.

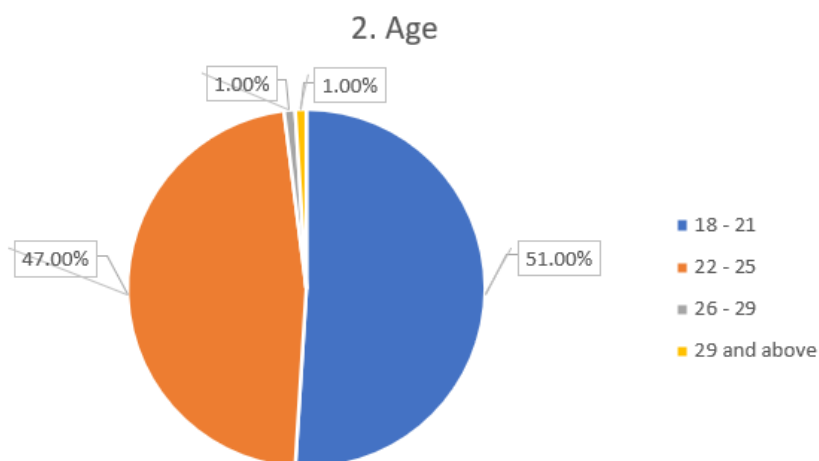


Figure 4.1.0: Age Groups of Respondents

The age groups of the respondents who have completed the survey questionnaire are shown in Figure 4.1.0. The highest count of the age groups is aged 18 to 21. Out of 100 respondents, 51 of them are aged between the ages of 18 to 21. The age groups of the respondents are quite close, as the second highest count of age groups is aged 22 to 25. 47 respondents fall under this category.

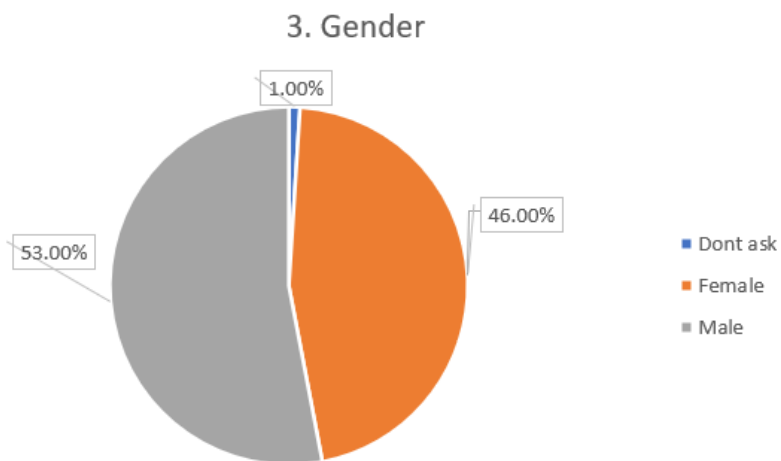


Figure 4.1.1: Number of Male and Female Respondents

The genders of the respondents who have completed the survey questionnaire as shown in Figure 4.1.1. There are almost an equal number of male and female respondents. There are a total of 53 male respondents, and 46 female respondents out of 99 respondents. One respondent chose not to provide their gender information.

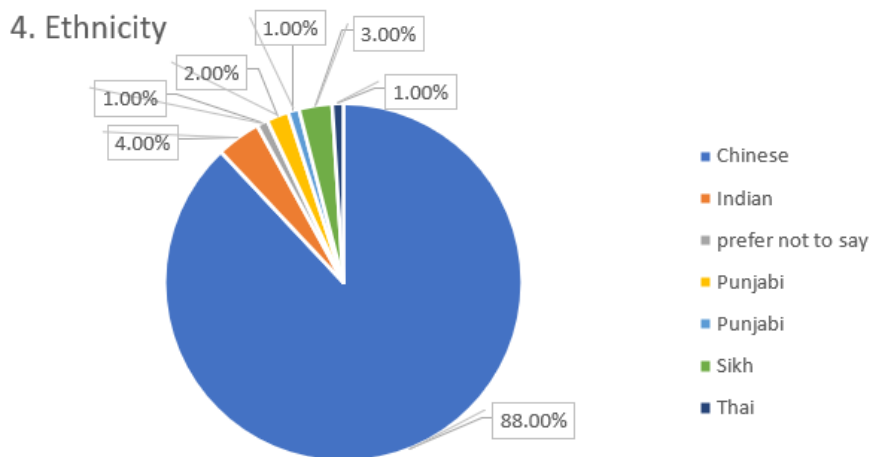


Figure 4.1.2: Ethnicity of the Respondents

Figure 4.1.2 shows the ethnicity of the respondents. A total of 88% of the respondents are Chinese, which makes up the majority of the respondents. A total of 4% of the respondents are Indians, and a total of 3% of the respondents are Sikh. Other minority ethnicity groups that make up the respondents of the survey questionnaire are Punjabi and Thai. One percent of the respondents choose not to provide information on their ethnicity.

4.2 SECTION B: USAGE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

In this section, the information about the usage of social media of the respondents will be analysed.

1. Which types of social media do you use? Select all that apply:

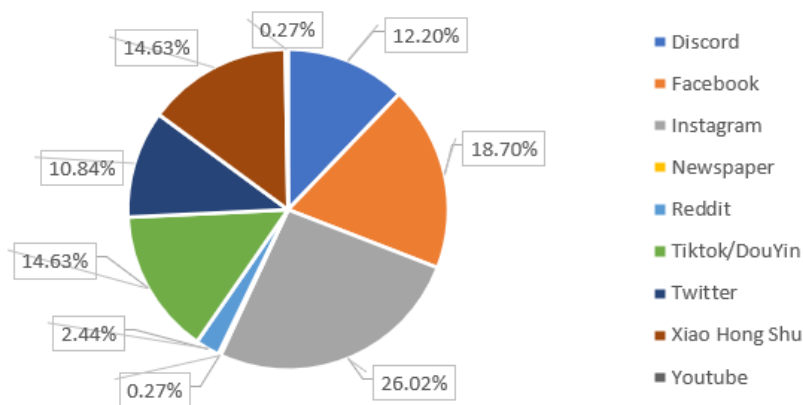


Figure 4.2.0: Types of Social Media Used By The Respondents

Among the 100 respondents, most of them use Instagram and Facebook, with 26.02% and 18.70% respectively. Discord and Xiao Hong Shu are two other social media applications used by many university students, with 12.20% and 14.63% of the total respondents respectively.

Tiktok and Douyin are put together as they are classified as the same application, just in different regions. Tiktok Douyin is used by 14.63% of the respondents. Twitter is another application that is used by 10.84% of the respondents. Other applications such as Reddit are not widely used by university students in Malaysia, taking up less than five percent of the total respondents.

2. What is (are) the purposes for you to use social media?
Select all that apply:

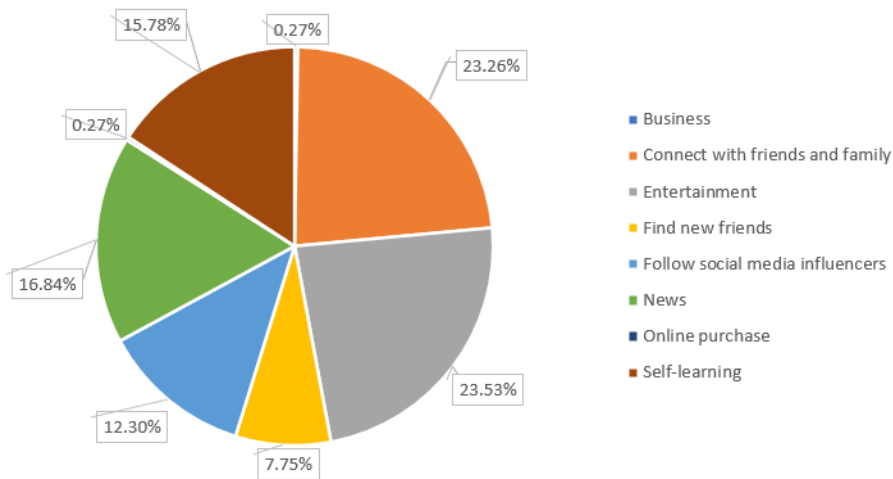


Figure 4.2.1: Purposes of Usage of Social Media By The Respondents

Based on figure 4.2.1, most of the respondents use social media for entertainment, and to connect with friends and family, with 23.53% and 23.26% respectively. 15.78% of the respondents also use social media for self-learning, and 16.84% of them use social media for news. 12.30% of the respondents use social media to follow social media influencers. Minority of respondents also use social media for search of new friends, business and online purchases.

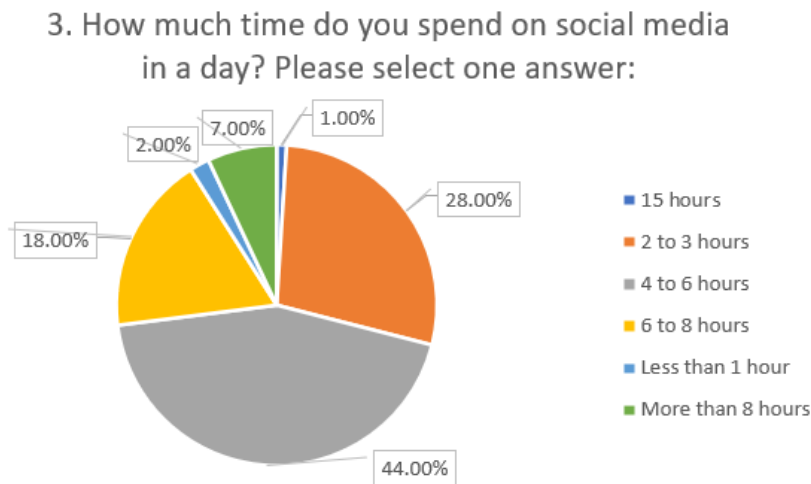


Figure 4.2.2: Time Spent by Respondents On Social Media In A Day

A total of 44% of the respondents spend four to six hours a day on social media. Four to Six hours range is reported to be the average time spent by the respondents on social media daily. Surprisingly, more respondents spend less time than average social media, as compared to more than average time. 28% of the respondents spend two to three hours on social media daily, whereas 18% of the respondents spend six to eight hours on social media daily. 7% of the respondents spend more than eight hours on social media daily. One respondent even reported to be spending 15 hours on social media daily, which means they are spending time on social media almost the entire time when they are not sleeping.

4. How do you access social media? Select all that apply:

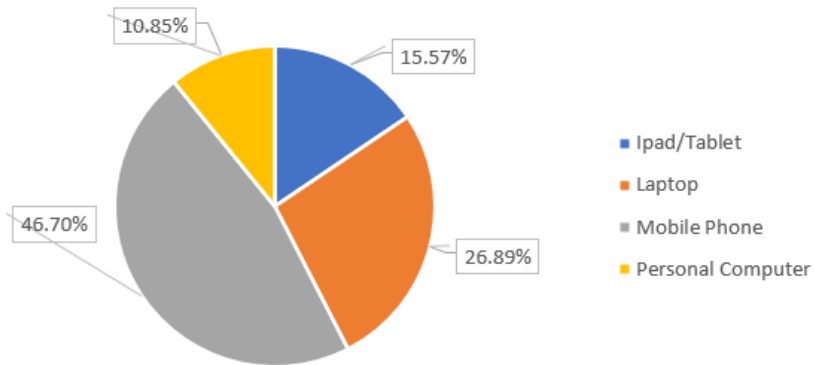


Figure 4.2.3: The Devices Used by Respondents To Access Social Media

Based on figure 4.2.3, 46.7% of the respondents access social media on mobile phones, which covers almost half the sample size. It seems that more than half of the respondents do not use their mobile phones to use social media. The second most used device for social media is a laptop, in which 26.89% of the respondents use to access social media. The other devices used by the respondents to access social media are personal computers and tablets, with 10.85% and 15.57% respectively.

5. Have you ever made new friends or connections through social media platforms?
Please select one answer.

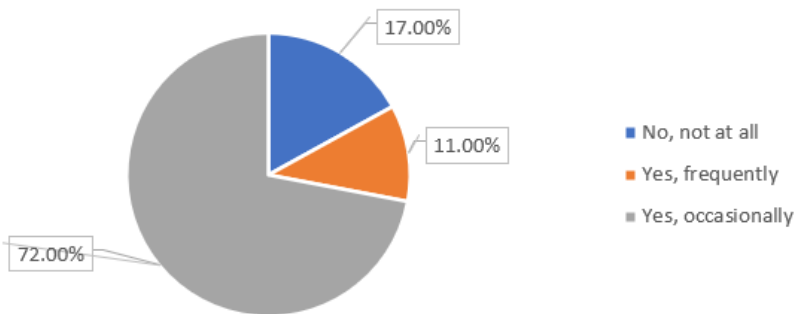


Figure 4.2.4: Frequency of The Respondents Making New Connections Through Social Media

Based on Figure 4.2.4, 72% of the respondents are occasionally making new friends and connections on social media. 17% of the respondents claim to not make new connections or new friends at all on social media. Only 11% of the respondents frequently make new friends and connections on social media.

6. Do you actively engage in discussions or express your opinions on social media? Please select one answer. (If Yes, proceed to question 7. If No, proceed to question 8.)

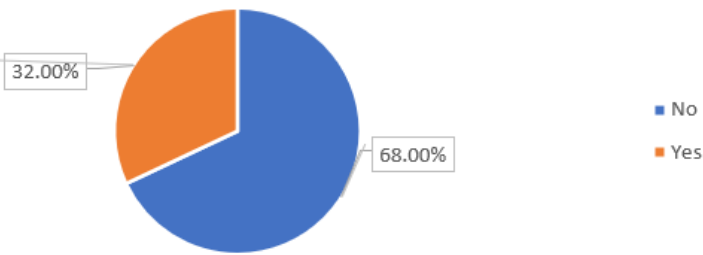


Figure 4.2.5: Participation of Respondents in Social Media Discussions

Figure 4.2.5 shows that 68% of the respondents are actively participating in discussions on social media. 32% of the respondents may express opinions on social media, but not actively.

Question 7. What makes you engage in discussions or express your opinions on? Provide a short answer. There are a total of 39 responses on this question.

Because I want to let my opinions be known, who knows there are people out there that actually agree with me.
Comment
Convenient
Data collection and analysis

Different opinions
Exchanging different opinions and points
friends and family posts
Friend's group chats, forums.
Fun
gain supporters from people who share the same opinions
good communication
I don't usually
I text a lot of social media. It's a form of social interaction for me.
If there are people with similar mindset, my comment may increase the amount of similar opinions
Interest in a particular hobby. Engaging in proper discussions with differing opinions help to grow a community in terms of connections and knowledge.
Interesting lo
It's fun
Mostly discussions with friends
No I am less to express my opinion on social media
Not much, more of an audience
nothing

rarely
Social media provides us the opportunity to express our personal opinions freely.
Something that related to my experience
Spreading Awareness
That thing make me too angry
Things i am interested on which allows me to freely express my thoughts
To answer the questions asked by the author
to gain more knowledge
To know their perceptions towards the matter. Understand their opinion, thats how we broaden up our view towards certain information.
to support friends and family, or when i see interested things
Trending topics that pique my interest
When I can relate to the posts, or when I find them intersting
When I feel like showing off or when I need to rant
When something opposed my beliefs or perspective
When the discussions are interesting and helpful.
When the discussions tend to provoke my emotions
When the topics are relatable to me

When the topics interest me

Figure 4.2.6: Reasons for Respondents To Participate In Online Discussions

Based on Figure 4.2.6, there are a total of 39 responses. There are many reasons why one would join in online discussions. The respondents who actively participate in online discussions are often driven by interests of topics.

Question 8. Why do you prefer not to join in discussions on social media? Provide a short answer. There are a total of 69 responses on this question.

to avoid irrelevant arguments
A lot of keyboard warriors with no real life experiences
Avoid argue
avoiding conflicts and negativity, or simply wanting to maintain a more passive role in consuming content rather than actively engaging in conversations
Bcs too dangerous if the people don't like you and you give bad comment later the people find you out then you will trouble.
Because I don't think social media is a good platform for me to express my opinion
Because it will leave a network footprint and I don't like to have argument with people online.
Because maybe sometime your opinion others people can't accept it.

Because not everyone agrees with your opinion. Sometimes also scared to involve myself in crime.
Because sometimes we tend to make mistakes in communication
Cant be bothered
cuz it may leak my privacy
depends on mood
Discussions on social media are often extremely biased and it may attract unwanted attention or fights online.
Don't have personal opinions to share
Even though engaging in discussions is good, its also good sometimes to not engage in anything, you'll never know who you might offend or so, lurking and watching the drama occur is better than being in the drama
Feel like it's not my business and maybe a waste of time
Freedom of speech has led to too much freedom for everyone online to give their opinions without thinking of the possible consequences. To avoid getting into any trouble, I prefer to avoid being part of a discussion.
Got distracted easily
I am not that active on social media.
I do not want to convey the wrong message to others.
I don't find it important to add in my take in discussions most of the time.

I don't want to comment on social media it's troublesome for me
I like
I like to just watch content, rarely want to comment.
I personally feel like its pointless in putting my opinion in social media/
I prefer observe than express
I prefer observing and reading's other's opinion and I'll only express my opinion if needed.
I prefer to keep my opinions to my self as there are chances that I might say the wrong thing
I prefer to read than to participate
i prefer to receive info from social media
I would prefer not voice my own opinion on social media where anyone could access to it
Idk what to say
If im lazy i wont join
if im not as interested, then i wouldn't join in discussion,
I'm not a socialising person
I'm too lazy
It can lead to misunderstanding
It doesn't interest me

Lazy
Lazy
like to watch more than participate
Might say the wrong things.
Most of the time, I don't feel like commenting
no opinion to discuss
Not interested in the topic
Not necessarily
Not really want to involve in dispute and receive hate full speech
Not really want to speak out something on the platform
people in online community doesn't provide good feedback
People say whatever they want online, it's sometimes better to not involve
Prevent being cyberbully
Sometimes I just want to watch
Sometimes it is better to keep my opinion towards myself
Sometimes it's difficult to express your opinion as you might encounter some negative feedback.
That's because I don't feel comfortable sharing my opinions to many people

To safeguard my own privacy
Unless the content makes me want to leave a comment, I usually wouldn't.
usually discuss with friends only
Usually not a constructive discussion
Waste of time
Waste of time and energy
Waste of time debating with anonymous users who have bigger ego than their real selves because they are voicing their opinions via a digital persona
When communicating via social media, people often do not display the capacity for rational thinking and tactful speech.
When it's irrelevant to my interests.
When the topic isn't what I want to see
When the topics are not interesting for me
will get influenced by others
You might become the target for people to attack you or cyberbully you

Figure 4.2.7: Reasons for Respondents To Participate In Online Discussions

Based on Figure 4.2.7, there are a total of 69 responses. There are many reasons why one would choose not to join in online discussions. Most of the respondents wish not to voice out, or claim to be lazy to join in discussions on social media. Some respondents also claim that it is a waste of time and energy to participate in online discussions.

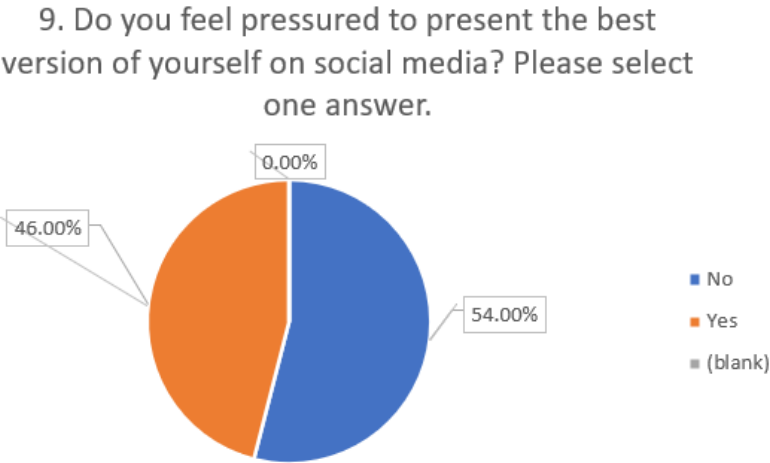


Figure 4.2.8: Respondents Opinions on Presenting The Best Version of Oneself On Social Media

According to figure 4.2.8, more than half of the total respondents do not feel pressured to present the best version of themselves on social media, up to 54% of the total respondents.

Question 10. What makes you feel that way? Provide a short answer. There are a total of 98 responses on this question.

-
Beauty standards

Because everything need to be good . For example, the influence in Instagram, they everyday need to think capture ,after that need to make up need to change clothes cannot have same ootd in Instagram, later also want post reels. In my opinion, too tired.
Because I don't care what people think of me online
Because I feel I'm always the best in what I do
Because I have a supportive family and groups of friends that knows me the best and will never judge me.
Because I only will show the positive thing online and I did not find any difficulty for me to show the best version of myself.
Because I'm not a confident person.
Because it's a public space
Because the area is quite
Competitive
Coz of digital footprint
cuz not a lot of confidence
Cuz social media cannot perfectly express my though
Cuz social media make me feel relax
Depending on the type of platform, for instance on LinkedIn, I would present my best self for professional purposes. For person social media accounts, then I wouldn't bother
Digital footprint

Digital footprint, and people judge.
Doing my own things without anyone bothering me
Don't care about how others think
Don't know
Downside or weakness of yourself may be easily enlarged by audience
Everyone looks good on social media
Everyone shows their best online
Everyone uses social media to show their best sides to not only show others, but also for ourselves to record memories of our lives. Of course it is good that we try our best to show ourselves when we feel the best, and look the best.
fear of getting judge, felt exposed
I am a more honest guy and like to get real with others
I barely show what person I am in social media
I believe no one needs to be perfect on social media. However, i do believe that we should respect others and not behave with a hater mentality.
I don't care about this matter.
I don't feel pressured as I don't care about others
I don't feel pressured since I believe that everyone prefers showing the best side of themselves like what I did on social media

I don't think I need to be pressured as no one really cares about what you are doing
I don't have best version
I don't have many followers also
I don't show much of myself online.
I feel pressured for validation, seeking approval via perfection online.
I feel unsecured
I felt that it is inappropriate to do so
I just love being myself
I only care about the people closest to me
I post on social media for commemoration
I think for me, social media is for entertainment purposes, not a platform for one to present oneself. It's not a must to present the best of yourself, but of course, if one feels more enjoy to present oneself on social media, is totally not a problem.
I think social media is a tool to connect one another, and it would be uncalled for if everyone is only trying to present the best version of themselves.
I wouldn't want people to dig out the terrible version of me years later.
I'm using social media to stress-relieving
Ignore others' opinions
introvert here

It depends on the users actually, some users can easily manipulated by the things they see in social media, for me, I know my limits.
it feel like people would say some bad things about me
It is viewed by public.
its kind of a yes no situation here, we all know that we have this mental barrier saying if i'm actually good enough for others, but if you really think about it, no matter how good you are, there is always someone who thinks you could be better and honestly speaking, ones you get rid of that mindset, no pressure will be presented, its the best version of yourself, what more are you not proud off, the only thing left for you to do is to beat that best version of yourself and be better than the best.
It's my account after all, just to keep a memory
Just be myself
Just do yourself, no need worries about others people mind
Like to recognize people in relative life
many people online will see
Most are my friends
my image is important, and social media can be viewed by public
My life, my way. As long don't involve in unnecessary hassle
Nah just be yourself
no confidence

No one deserves to know how I'm living my life entirely
No one forces me to do so, I want it myself so I don't feel pressured.
No show, no pressure
No, just browse no post
No,because social media can let me feel relaxing
Not an influencer
Not certain
Not enuf lengzai
Not everyone is perfect, we don't need to care about how's others look at us.
Not necessarily to be the best version but will still hope to have a good image.
Not pressured, but it's good to show the good side of myself
not really pressured, i think its not necessary to present the best version. Just as a entertainment will do
Other people will judge you based on what you present on social media.
People cannot show expressions through social media so i cant feel the pressure
People might judge you
People might judge you
People online likes to criticize.

People only show their best on social media. The number of followers and quality of content posted on one's platform is used as a social benchmark for social status and overall life success.
people will judge if you don't show the best version of yourself
People will see
Posting photos and videos is just one of the ways I save my memories, it's not really my concern whether people like it or not, I mean not everyone will pay attention to me anyways even if I try to show my best version
protect my image
Public space has many eyes.
scared of many people
Self image is important
Social media doesn't define me
Social media has grown to be a platform that focuses more on individuality rather than community. People want to stand out, to show off. I am no different, but I still try to behave 1:1 like real life.
Social media has unspoken standards when it comes to appearance
Social media is a competitive place.
Society preferences
There's a lot of comparisons between each individual

To make me feel like I have everything figured out
tons of people are watching you online
Unless you have private accounts, everyone can see what you're up to
Usually I have to choose what to post, and it hard for me to choose
You are the best version of yourself.

Figure 4.2.9: Respondents Opinions on Presenting One's Best Self On Social Media

The respondents have multiple opinions on presenting one's best self on social media. Around 60% of the respondents feel pressured to show their best online due to the lack of confidence, fear of the public's eye and also digital footprint. The remaining 40% of the respondents believe that one should not be pressured as social media is not a place where they display themselves entirely.

4.3 SECTION C: Psychological Effects of Social Media

In this section, the information about the psychological effect that the respondents experience from using social media will be analysed. The questions in this section are in a 5-Point Likert Scale format. The scale of each question consists of five sections ranging from one through five where one represents 'Strongly Disagree', two represents 'Disagree', three represents 'Neutral', four represents 'Agree' and five represents 'Strongly Agree'.

1. I feel uneasy with the absence of social media for a long time.

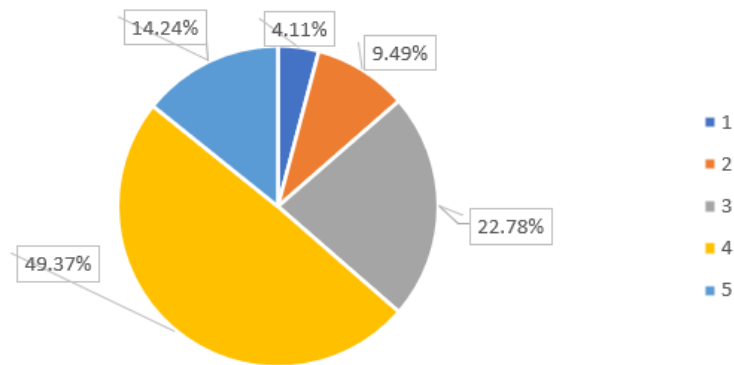


Figure 4.3.0: Respondents' Dependence on Social Media In General

Based on figure 4.3.0, almost half of the total respondents feel uneasy with the absence of social media for a long time, at 49.37%. 22.78% of the respondents feel neutral towards the uneasiness during the absence of social media. 14.24% of the respondents feel very uneasy with the absence of social media. With more than half of the respondents in total, 63.61% of the respondents feel uneasy with the absence of social media for a long time by picking "Agree" and "Strongly Agree".

2. I depend on social media to know what my friends are up to.

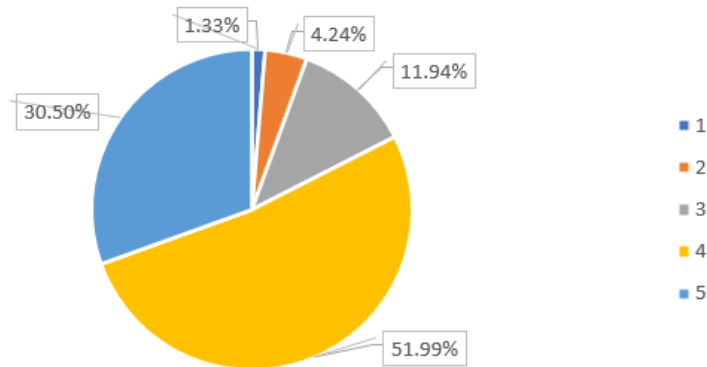


Figure 4.3.1: Respondents' Dependence on Social Media For Connections

Based on figure 4.3.1, a total of 51.99% of the respondents agree that they depend on social media to know about their friends' activities. 30.5% of the respondents strongly agree that they depend on social media to know what their friends are up to. This means a total of 82.49% of respondents depend on social media for friends' updates.

3. I prefer using social media to interact with my friends, more than physically.

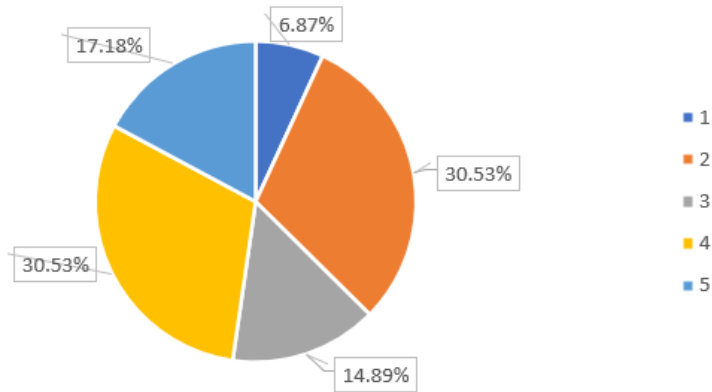


Figure 4.3.2: Respondents' Preference of Interaction Methods

Based on figure 4.3.2, more respondents are siding towards using social media to interact with their friends online, at 30.53% for 'Agree' and 17.18% for 'Strongly Agree'. However, the preference may vary with individuals, as the other 30.53% of the respondents disagreed with the preference.

4. I choose to contact my friends via social media, although I can meet the person physically.

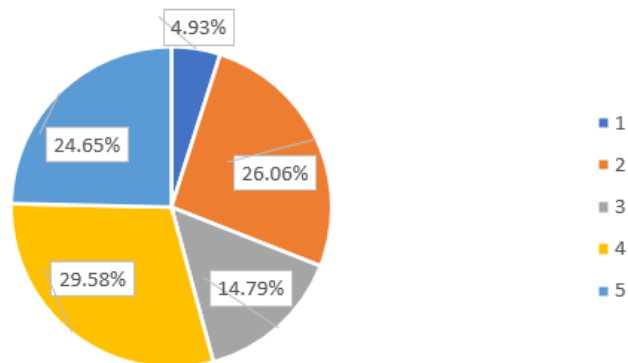


Figure 4.3.3: Respondents' Preference of Contact Methods

Based on figure 4.3.3, more respondents are siding towards using social media to contact their friends instead of visiting them physically, which 29.58% of the respondents picked 'Agree' and 24.65% of the respondents picked 'Strongly Agree'. Contradictingly, 26.06% of the respondents picked 'Disagree', which means that the contact method may vary for every individual.

5. I put trust in the information and news that I come across on social media platforms.

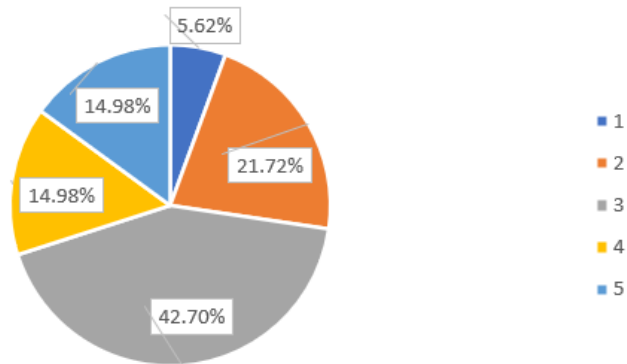


Figure 4.3.4: Respondents' Trust in Information On Social Media

Based on figure 4.3.4, most respondents have a neutral take on how much trust they put in the information they see on social media, at 42.7% of the total respondents. 21.72% of the respondents claim to not put trust in the information they see on social media.

6. I have experienced negative emotions (e.g., anxiety, jealousy, low self-esteem) as a result of using social media.

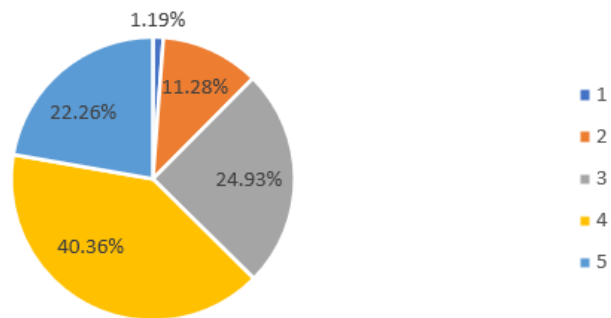


Figure 4.3.5: Negative Experiences Faced by The Respondents on Social Media

Based on figure 4.3.5, 40.36% of the respondents agreed on facing negative emotions on social media and 22.26% of the respondents strongly agreed to have faced negative emotions on social media. That totals up to 62.62%.

7. I find it difficult to talk to my friends face-to-face after the lockdown.

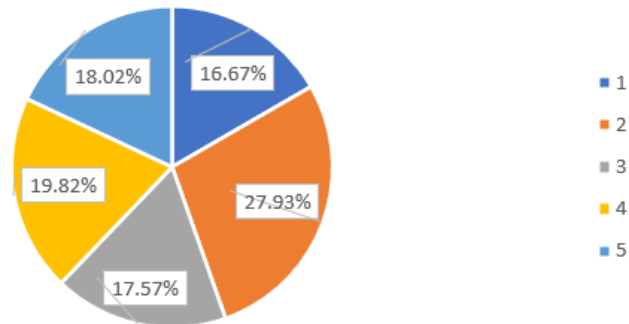


Figure 4.3.6: Difficulty of Face-To-Face Communication Post-Lockdown

Based on figure 4.3.6, 27.93% of the respondents disagree with having difficulties communicating with their friends on a face-to-face basis. That is the highest percentage of all options. Although that may be the case, all options through one to five have a similar number of respondents.

8. I prefer to stay at home over going out, despite having the lockdown lifted.

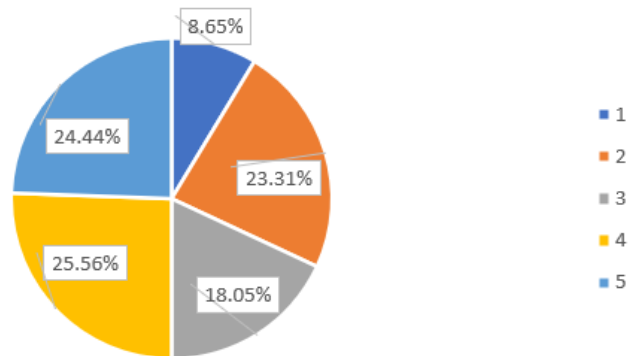


Figure 4.3.7: Preference of Respondents on Outing Post Lockdown

Based on figure 4.3.7, a total of 25.56% of the respondents prefers to stay home over going out, and 24.44% of them strongly prefers to do so. 31.96% of the total respondents either claims to prefer going out over staying at home, or strongly prefers to do so. The remaining 18.05% of the respondents have neutral take on this.

9. I prefer online meetings with my classmates for assignments, more than physical meetings.

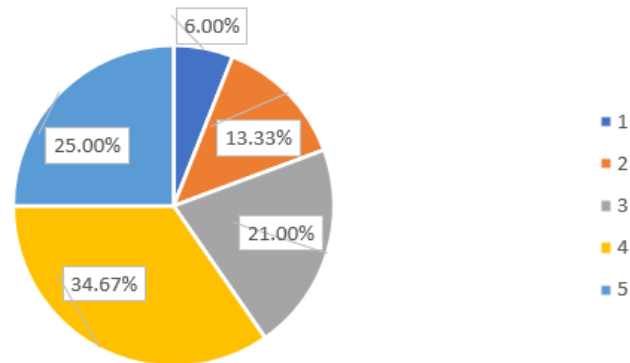


Figure 4.3.8: Preference of Respondents on Assignment Meetings

Based on figure 4.3.8, we can see that 34.67% of the respondents agree with the preference of online meetings for assignments, and 25% of the respondents strongly agree on the same preference.

10. One of the first things I do after waking up is to check social media platforms on my devices.

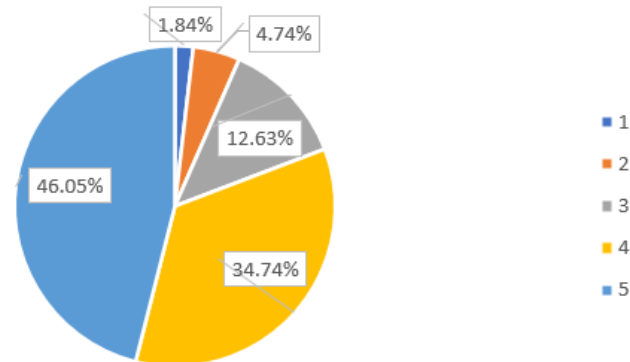


Figure 4.3.9: The Respondents' Morning Habit of Checking Social Media Platforms

Based on figure 4.3.9, we can see that 46.05% of the respondents strongly agree that one of the first things they do after waking up is to check social media platforms on their devices. 34.74% of the respondents agree with having the same habit.

4.4 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, three topics are covered, which are three sections of the survey questionnaire used, namely Demographics, Usage of Social Media, and Psychological Effects of Social Media. In total, 100 sets of responses to the survey questionnaire were received. The descriptive analysis method is used in this chapter to clearly demonstrate the research findings and data analysis with the usage of pivot tables and pivot charts. The discussion and conclusion will be covered in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

5.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter will cover discussions of the research results that were analysed in the previous chapter. In this chapter, limitation of study, suggestion for additional research and the conclusion will also be covered.

5.1 DISCUSSION ON MAJOR FINDINGS

In this part, the results of the survey questionnaire will be used to discuss how social media affects physical interaction of university students in UTAR. In this study, there are two research objectives, which are 'to discover new norms that may cause reduction in physical interaction among university students in UTAR', and 'to determine the medium that acts as a replacement for physical interaction among university students in UTAR.' In this section, the research objectives will be discussed with the responses from the survey questionnaire.

5.1.1 ANALYSIS ON RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The first research objective is to discover new norms that may cause reduction in physical interaction among university students in UTAR. From the survey questionnaire, an analysis can be made with the respondents' answers. Excluding the demographic section, the first section of the questionnaire includes questions about the usage of social media.

The findings of the survey questionnaire indicates that 96% of the respondents use Instagram, and 69% of the respondents use Facebook. 54% of the respondents use TikTok and Xiao Hong Shu. 45% and 40% of the respondents use Discord and Twitter respectively. Only nine percent of the respondents are using Reddit. Applications like Instagram and Facebook have multiple functions that work very well, whereas other applications tend to focus on one or two functionalities.

For example, Instagram and Facebook have uploading functions, where users can upload posts with short captions, as well as 'stories' that allow users to display images and videos for 24 hours. Not only that, these applications also have well built messaging platforms, along with a 'reels' system similar to Tik Tok/Douyin's short videos function. On the other hand, applications such as Twitter and Discord are text-focused applications with forums and tweets. Applications like Tik Tok and Douyin are short-video focused applications. Users are more likely to choose applications with all of these functions built in, hence Instagram and Facebook are more widely used.

For the time used on social media daily, a total of 44% of the respondents reported to be using social media for four to six hours, with another 28% of the respondents reporting to have two to three hour usage of social media. Another 18% of the respondents reported to be using social media for six to eight hours daily.

For the purposes of social media, 88% of the respondents are using social media mainly for entertainment and 87% of the respondents to also connect with family and friends. 63% of the respondents also use social media for news. 59% of the respondents use social media for learning too. Based on these statistics, the respondents are using social media to look at what others are doing, and the things happening around them. This may be a habit developed and strengthened with the lack of outer exposure due to the pandemic.

These respondents all use mobile phones, along with 57% of the respondents who also use laptops, and 33% of those who also use tablets to access social media. Out of the respondents, 72% of them are occasionally making new friends and connections online. This shows that the pandemic may have caused the students to use social media for connection making.

Many respondents have given their views on online forums and social media discussions, such as comments. 68% of the respondents choose not to participate in these

discussions due to many reasons. Few of the reasons include to stay out of trouble, and to not involve in discussions that do not interest them.

However, of the respondents who participated in discussions, they think that online discussions allow them to share their own opinions, and find people with similar opinions. Social media is working as a community of opinions and interests.

According to another research in Malaysia regarding psychological effects that students in Malaysia faced during covid-19, students who lived alone had the highest anxiety levels as compared to the ones staying with family and friends(Sundarassen et al., 2020,p. 8). These students are more likely to depend on social media to socialise and feel less lonely. However, as 68% of the respondents don't actively engage in discussions, there is a possibility that they have different ways of communicating with friends and family.

The second research objective is to determine the medium that acts as a replacement for physical interaction among university students in UTAR. According to the survey questionnaire, 39% of the respondents feel uneasy with the absence of social media for a long time. Social media could be a replacement for physical interaction, as 39% of respondents are dependent on it. However, 40% of the respondents disagree that they prefer using social media to communicate, as compared to using physical interaction. 37% of the respondents strongly disagree that they find it difficult to interact with friends face-to-face after the lockdown. This shows that university students still prefer face-to-face communication after the lockdown.

However, it may depend on the purpose of physical interaction. Based on the survey questionnaire, 26% of the respondents prefer online meetings for assignments over physical meetings. As Covid-19 is the first pandemic with social media, social media has become an important factor for human interaction for not only students, but also businesses and groups (Kushner, 2020). According to another study, students with more connection with others via

social media or online media devices are reported to be healthier mentally and physically during covid-19 (N.S., Ahmad, 2022).

From these studies, a conclusion can be made. These studies have been looking into the behaviour of individuals during covid-19, and during the post-pandemic phase. According to these studies, individuals including students are dependent on social media for interaction, and to have better well-being. On the other hand, the current study shows that students are less dependent on social media, and incline more towards physical interaction. University students may have declined face-to-face interaction skills due to the sudden change of environment from the pandemic to post pandemic phase. However, coming to the end of the third quadrant of 2023, students no longer fear face-to-face communication as they are starting to get used to it. This acts as a contrast between the previous studies and the current one, where the behaviours of students have changed over time.

5.2 LIMITATIONS OF STUDY

There are certain limitations of study in this research. First of all, the background of students are unknown, such as social activity during lockdown and personalities. This can affect the accuracy of the test results. Not only that, the lack of supervision for the survey questionnaire is also a limitation of study. Survey questionnaires cannot be supervised, and some respondents may not pay full attention while answering the survey questionnaire. Also, this study uses a small sample of study for the vast number of university students. This causes a possible inaccuracy in test results due to factors like geographical location, university regulations, and so on.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

In this section, recommendations for future research will be given to improve future study. Future survey questionnaires should include social activity related questions to further understand the respondents' behaviour during lockdown, and their willingness to interact before, during and after the lockdown. Other than that, qualitative research methodology could possibly be used in future research, along with fine-tuned questions to understand each respondents' thoughts and behaviour. Lastly, the sample size could be increased from 100 respondents to 150 to 200 respondents for better results.

5.4 CONCLUSION

This study has concluded and has provided more insights towards effects of social interaction of UTAR students. This study highlighted two research objectives which are, to discover new norms that may cause reduction in physical interaction among university students in UTAR, and to determine the medium that acts as a replacement for physical interaction among university students in UTAR. Apparently, students have found a medium to replace physical meetings, which is social media. Social media plays a role in meetings as it can be convenient for students who live further away from the campus. Based on this study, there are biases in the purpose of meeting each other. On questions about meeting friends generally, most respondents are quick to choose physical meetings over social media. However, the pattern changes when it comes to assignment meetings. The conclusion of study based on the research questions is that students are dependent on social media for interaction, especially for school based meetings, such as assignment meetings. However, Online platforms and covid-19 has not changed the students' preference to meet physically. Some students may have faced difficulties at the start of the post pandemic, more students are back to campus now and are back to the old habits and preferences of physical

interaction. This is contrasting previous studies of university students' behaviours, but this study shows the adaptability of students in communicating with others over time.

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APPENDICES

Survey Questionnaires

Impact Of Covid-19 Pandemic On Physical Interaction Among University Students In UTAR

You are invited to participate in a questionnaire concerning personal information as a part of the research study conducted by a student in Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman. Before you decide whether to participate in this study, it is important that you understand the purpose of the study, the nature of your involvement, and the potential risks and benefits associated with participating in this study. Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary, and you have the right to withdraw at any time without any form of penalty.

The purpose of this study is to collect information personal experiences, demographics, and other relevant data from students related to social media usage. The collected data will be used for research purposes only and will be strictly confidential. This study aims to understand the patterns of interaction among students in UTAR and how covid-19 has affected them.

If you agree to participate, you will be asked to complete a questionnaire consisting of three sections. The first section of the questionnaire includes questions about your age, gender, ethnicity, and other relevant information. The second section of the questionnaire consists of questions regarding to your personal experiences with social media usage. The third section of the questionnaire consists of the psychological aspects of your experiences with social media. Your responses will be kept anonymous, and no personal information will be included in any published or reported results.

Do you wish to participate in this questionnaire? *

☐ Yes

☐ No

Section 1: Demographic Questions

1. Email Address (eg. name123@gmail.com) ⋮

Short answer text

2. Age *

- ☐ 18 - 21
- ☐ 22 - 25
- ☐ 26 - 29
- ☐ 29 and above

3. Gender * ⋮

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female
- ☐ Other...

4. Ethnicity *

- ☐ Chinese
- ☐ Malay
- ☐ Indian
- ☐ Other...

5. Course (eg. Bachelor of Corporate Communication (Hons)) *

Short answer text

Section 2: Usage of Social Media

1. Which types of social media do you use? Select all that apply: *

- ☐ Instagram
- ☐ Facebook
- ☐ Twitter
- ☐ Xiao Hong Shu
- ☐ Tiktok/DouYin
- ☐ Discord
- ☐ Reddit
- ☐ Other...

2. What is (are) the purposes for you to use social media? Select all that apply: *

- ☐ News
- ☐ Connect with friends and family
- ☐ Find new friends
- ☐ Entertainment
- ☐ Self-learning
- ☐ Follow social media influencers
- ☐ Other...

3. How much time do you spend on social media in a day? Please select one answer: *

- ☐ Less than 1 hour
- ☐ 2 to 3 hours
- ☐ 4 to 6 hours
- ☐ 6 to 8 hours
- ☐ More than 8 hours
- ☐ Other...

4. How do you access social media? Select all that apply: *

- ☐ Personal Computer
- ☐ Laptop
- ☐ Mobile Phone
- ☐ Ipad/Tablet
- ☐ Other...

5. Have you ever made new friends or connections through social media platforms? Please select one answer. *

- ☐ Yes, frequently
- ☐ Yes, occasionally
- ☐ No, not at all

6. Do you actively engage in discussions or express your opinions on social media? Please select one answer. (If Yes, proceed to question 7. If No, proceed to question 8.)

☐ Yes

☐ No

...

7. What makes you engage in discussions or express your opinions on? Provide a short answer.

Long answer text

...

8. Why do you prefer not to join in discussions on social media? Provide a short answer.

Long answer text

9. Do you feel pressured to present the best version of yourself on social media? Please select one answer. (Please proceed to question 10 after this question.)

☐ Yes

☐ No

10. What makes you feel that way? Provide a short answer.

Long answer text

Section 3: Psychological Effects of Social Media



This section follows a 5 Point Linkert-Scale question format. There are five options for every question, and the options are Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Neutral, Agree and Strongly Agree (from left to right).

1. I feel uneasy with the absence of social media for a long time. *

Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly Agree

□ □ □
□ □ □

2. I depend on social media to know what my friends are up to.

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

• • •

3. I prefer using social media to interact with my friends, more than physically.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Agree

☐ ☐ ☐
☐ ☐ ☐

5. I put trust in the information and news that I come across on social media platforms.

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

• • •

*

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• • •

*

✱

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

Raw Data

2	2023/07/01	Yes	eetzenk18 - 21	Male	Chinese	Bachelor c	Instagram; Connect w	More than Personal C	Yes, occas	No		When com	Yes	People onl		
3	2023/07/01	Yes	xjiaens2018 - 21	Female	Chinese	AT	Instagram; News; Con	4 to 6 hou	Personal C	Yes, occas	Yes	Interesting lo	Yes	Beauty sta		
4	2023/07/01	Yes	BradleyKu22 - 25	Male	Chinese	Bachelor c	Instagram; News; Con	6 to 8 hou	Laptop; M	Yes, occas	Yes	Things i am intereste	No	People car		
5	2023/07/01	Yes	kaiwen02118 - 21	Male	Chinese	Bachelor c	Instagram; Connect w	6 to 8 hou	Personal C	Yes, occas	No	Freedom o	Yes	Everyone i		
6	2023/07/11	Yes	kaisiangt@22 - 25	Male	Chinese	Bachelor c	Instagram; News; Con	More than Personal C	Yes, occas	No		Discussion	No	I think soc		
7	2023/07/11	Yes	shelbyguit02 - 25	Female	Chinese	CC	Instagram; News; Con	4 to 6 hou	Mobile Ph	No, not at	Yes	gain supporters from	j	No	I donat	
8	2023/07/11	Yes	riua1747@22 - 25	Female	Chinese	Bachelor c	Instagram; Connect w	2 to 3 hou	Personal C	Yes, occas	No	Sometimes	No	I think for		
9	2023/07/11	Yes	tamilarasi22 - 25	Female	Indian	Bachelor c	Facebook	News; Con	2 to 3 hou	Laptop; M	Yes, occas	No	I prefer to	Yes	Social med	
10	2023/07/11	Yes	karenchon22 - 25	Female	Chinese	Bachelor c	Instagram; News; Con	4 to 6 hou	Mobile Ph	Yes, frequ	Yes	When the discussions	Yes	Thereat		
11	2023/07/2	Yes	yapnyan22 - 25	Male	Chinese	CC	Instagram; News; Con	More than Mobile Ph	Yes, occas	No		No I am le	Because I	Yes	Cuz social	
12	2023/07/2	Yes	hyc18100122 - 25	Male	Chinese	Bachelor c	Instagram; Connect w	4 to 6 hou	Mobile Ph	No, not at	Yes	Different opinio	Yes	Competitiv		
13	2023/07/2	Yes	funglim8018 - 21	Male	Chinese	Bachelor c	Instagram; News; Con	4 to 6 hou	Personal C	No, not at	No	Not really	No	Not certin		
14	2023/07/2	Yes	anthonych22 - 25	Male	Chinese	Higher Dij	Instagram; News; Con	2 to 3 hou	Laptop; M	Yes, occas	No	Waste of t	No	I post on s		
15	2023/07/2	Yes	sieny0328/22 - 25	Female	Chinese	Bachelor c	Instagram; Connect w	4 to 6 hou	Laptop; M	Yes, occas	No	avoiding o	Yes	I feel press		
16	2023/07/2	Yes	elliejingyi/22 - 25	Female	Chinese	Media and	Instagram; News; Con	4 to 6 hou	Laptop; M	Yes, occas	Yes	Trending topics that p	No	I donat		
17	2023/07/2	Yes	wzenyng/18 - 21	Female	Chinese	Bachelor c	Youtube	Entertainm	4 to 6 hou	Mobile Ph	No, not at	No	That thing	Bes too da	Yes	
18	2023/07/2	Yes	teeyp03/18 - 21	Male	Chinese	Bachelor c	Instagram; Connect w	2 to 3 hou	Mobile Ph	No, not at	No	no opinion	No	No, just br		
19	2023/07/2	Yes	rachelsw/18 - 21	Female	Chinese	Bachelor c	Instagram; News; Con	4 to 6 hou	Mobile Ph	Yes, occas	No	I prefer ob	Yes	Downside		
20	2023/07/2	Yes	jesslneche/18 - 21	Female	Chinese	Bachelor c	Instagram; Connect w	6 to 8 hou	Laptop; M	Yes, occas	No		Yes	it feel like		
21	2023/07/2	Yes	rtbssxd/18 - 21	Male	Chinese	Bachelor c	Instagram; News; Con	4 to 6 hou	Laptop; M	Yes, occas	No	Feel like it	No	My life, m		
22	2023/07/2	Yes	hucastin/18 - 21	Male	Chinese	Bachelor c	Instagram; Connect w	15 hours	Personal C	Yes, occas	Yes	Interest in a particular	No	Social med		
23	2023/07/2	Yes	yanrong0818 - 21	Female	Chinese	BC	Instagram; Connect w	More than Mobile Ph	Yes, frequ	No		No	No, becaus			
24	2023/07/2	Yes	Mingjin0922 - 25	Male	Chinese	Bachelor c	Instagram; News; Con	More than Mobile Ph	Yes, frequ	No		Don't have	No	Not an infl		
25	2023/07/2	Yes	shihun578/18 - 21	Female	Chinese	Bachelor c	Instagram; News; Con	6 to 8 hou	Laptop; M	Yes, occas	No	Because it	No	Because I		
26	2023/07/2	Yes	minyue02/18 - 21	Female	Chinese	Bachelor c	Instagram; Connect w	2 to 3 hou	Laptop; M	Yes, occas	No	No	-			
27	2023/07/2	Yes	mia.78@1122 - 25	Female	Chinese	Bachelor c	Instagram; News; Con	2 to 3 hou	Mobile Ph	Yes, occas	No	I don't wat	Yes	Usually I h		
28	2023/07/2	Yes	kieranin018 - 21	Male	Chinese	Bachelor c	Instagram; News; Con	More than Laptop; M	No, not at	No		Can't be bc	No	I only care		
29	2023/07/2	Yes	Keitikitiv/22 - 25	Male	Thai	CC	Facebook	News; Con	4 to 6 hou	Mobile Ph	No, not at	No	To safegu	No	Because I	
30	2023/07/2	Yes	ruente04/18 - 21	Female	Chinese	Boardcasti	Instagram; Connect w	4 to 6 hou	Laptop; M	Yes, occas	No	Lazy	No	Iat		
31	2023/07/2	Yes	yenlan/8/22 - 25	Female	Chinese	Bachelor c	Instagram; News; Ent	4 to 6 hou	Mobile Ph	No, not at	No	i prefer to	Yes	not really j		
32	2023/07/2	Yes	johms00/22 - 25	Female	Chinese	Bachelor c	Instagram; News; Con	2 to 3 hou	Laptop; M	Yes, occas	Yes	Because I want to let	Yes	I wouldn't		
33	2023/07/2	Yes	loiyuenwal/18 - 21	Female	Chinese	Bachelor c	Instagram; Connect w	2 to 3 hou	Mobile Ph	Yes, occas	No	Something Avoid arg	Yes	Everyone i		
34	2023/07/2	Yes	sikianhui/18 - 21	Male	Chinese	BC	Instagram; Connect w	6 to 8 hou	Laptop; M	Yes, occas	No	usually dis	No	Don't care		
35	2023/07/2	Yes	xiaoxuan02 - 25	Female	Chinese	Bachelor c	Instagram; News; Con	4 to 6 hou	Mobile Ph	No, not at	No	Yes	introvert h			
36	2023/07/2	Yes	alfrednirol/18 - 21	Male	Chinese	Bachelor c	Instagram; News; Con	2 to 3 hou	Laptop; M	Yes, occas	No	Even thou	No	its kind of		
37	2023/07/2	Yes	sarves717/22 - 25	Female	Indian	Bachelor c	Instagram; News; Ent	2 to 3 hou	Mobile Ph	Yes, occas	No	I'm not a s	No	I felt that i		
38	2023/07/2	Yes	xyee195/18 - 21	Female	Chinese	Bachelor c	Instagram; News; Con	4 to 6 hou	Laptop; M	Yes, occas	No	I prefer ob	Yes	Not necess		
39	2023/07/2	Yes	jcho99@1122 - 25	Male	Chinese	Bachelor c	Instagram; News; Ent	Less than	Personal C	No, not at	No	Waste of t	No	I am a mot		
40	2023/07/2	Yes	ngzhijy01118 - 21	Female	Chinese	Bachelor c	Instagram; News; Con	6 to 8 hou	Mobile Ph	No, not at	No	I do not w	Yes	cuz not a li		
41	2023/07/2	Yes	jasminekw/22 - 25	Female	Chinese	Bachelor C	Instagram; News; Con	4 to 6 hou	Laptop; M	No, not at	No	Because n	Yes	Because f		
42	2023/07/2	Yes	ttw2001/22 - 25	Male	Chinese	Bachelor c	Instagram; News; Con	2 to 3 hou	Mobile Ph	Yes, occas	Yes	Exchanging different	No	Most are n		
43	2023/07/2	Yes	leekaiszein/22 - 25	Female	Chinese	Bachelor c	Instagram; Connect w	6 to 8 hou	Mobile Ph	Yes, frequ	No	Not really	No	I donat		
44	2023/07/2	Yes	teng773/22 - 25	Female	Chinese	Bachelor c	Instagram; Connect w	4 to 6 hou	Laptop; M	Yes, occas	No	like to wat	Yes	many peof		
45	2023/07/3	Yes	siewwenci/18 - 21	Dont ask	Chinese	Bachelor c	Instagram; News; Con	2 to 3 hou	Laptop; M	No, not at	Yes	Lazy	No	Like to rec		
46	2023/07/3	Yes	lowcluxxi/18 - 21	Male	Chinese	Foundation	Instagram; News; Con	4 to 6 hou	Laptop; M	Yes, frequ	Yes	Comment	No	Don't know		
47	2023/07/3	Yes	vincentleu/18 - 21	Male	Chinese	Bachelor c	Instagram; News; Con	2 to 3 hou	Laptop; M	Yes, occas	No	You might	Yes	People mij		
48	2023/07/3	Yes	ongonglat22 - 25	Male	Chinese	BACHEL	Instagram; News; Con	2 to 3 hou	Laptop; M	Yes, occas	No	Lazy	No	I don't hav		
49	2023/07/3	Yes	fongzien/18 - 21	Male	Chinese	Bachelor c	Instagram	Entertainm	4 to 6 hou	Mobile Ph	Yes, occas	Yes	to gain more knowled	Yes	scared of r	
50	2023/07/3	Yes	leejinkang/18 - 21	Male	Chinese	Foundation	Instagram; News; Con	2 to 3 hou	Personal C	Yes, occas	No	Not intere	Yes	Not enuf li		
51	2023/07/3	Yes	jiexin04/18 - 21	Female	Chinese	Bachelor c	Instagram; News; Con	4 to 6 hou	Mobile Ph	No, not at	No	Got distrac	No	I barely sh		
52	2023/07/3	Yes	yey251025/18 - 21	Male	Chinese	BACHEL	Tiktok/Do	Entertainm	2 to 3 hou	Mobile Ph	No, not at	No	Lazy	No	No show, i	
53	2023/07/3	Yes	weiweic2922 - 25	Female	Chinese	Bachelor c	Instagram; News; Con	4 to 6 hou	Laptop; M	Yes, occas	Yes	To answer the questio	No	I donat		
54	2023/07/3	Yes	satnamsas/22 - 25	Male	Sikh	Bachelor c	Instagram; News; Con	6 to 8 hou	Mobile Ph	Yes, occas	No	A lot of ke	No	Because I		
55	2023/07/3	Yes	Joeyyyc5118 - 21	Female	Chinese	Bachelor c	Instagram; News; Con	4 to 6 hou	Laptop; M	Yes, occas	No	Lazy	Yes	People mij		
56	2023/07/3	Yes	110xinhui/22 - 25	Female	Chinese	MA Hons	Instagram; News; Con	2 to 3 hou	Personal C	Yes, frequ	Yes	Convenient	No	No one for		
57	2023/07/3	Yes	shatrice.ch/22 - 25	Female	Chinese	Bachelor c	Instagram; News; Con	4 to 6 hou	Laptop; M	Yes, occas	No	I would pr	Yes	To make n		
58	2023/07/3	Yes	nicolengsh/22 - 25	Female	Chinese	Bachelor c	Instagram; News; Con	4 to 6 hou	Laptop; M	Yes, occas	No	Yes		fear of gett		
59	2023/07/3	Yes	xjiaens2018 - 21	Female	Chinese	Bachelor c	Instagram; News; Con	6 to 8 hou	Personal C	Yes, occas	Yes	Data collection and an	Yes	Society pri		
60	2023/07/3	Yes	louisalam418 - 21	Female	Chinese	Business a	Instagram; News; Con	6 to 8 hou	Laptop; M	Yes, occas	Yes	When I feel like show	No	Posting ph		
61	2023/07/3	Yes	Gopal@gn/22 - 25	Male	Sikh	Bachelor c	Instagram; News; Con	Less than	Laptop; M	Yes, frequ	Yes	Fun	Because s	Yes	Because tl	
62	2023/07/3	Yes	Tashwinsa/22 - 25	Male	Punjabi	Communic	Instagram; Entertainm	2 to 3 hou	Mobile Ph	Yes, frequ	Yes	Itat	fin I like	No	No one de	
63	2023/07/3	Yes	rishigkro3/22 - 25	Male	Indian	Bachelor c	Instagram; News; Ent	2 to 3 hou	Mobile Ph	Yes, occas	Yes	To know their percep	No	It depends		
64	2023/07/3	Yes	Nina7478/29 and abc	Female	Punjabi	Bachelor c	Instagram; News; Con	4 to 6 hou	Laptop; M	Yes, occas	No	No		I feel unse		
65	2023/07/3	Yes	jeon1025/22 - 25	Male	Chinese	Bachelor c	Instagram; News; Con	6 to 8 hou	Personal C	No, not at	No	No		Doing my		
66	2023/07/3	Yes	siddhidesh/22 - 25	Female	Punjabi	Bach of C	Instagram; News; Con	4 to 6 hou	Laptop; M	Yes, occas	Yes	Social media provides	No	I believe n		
67	2023/07/3	Yes	ashvikau/22 - 25	Female	Sikh	Bachelor c	Instagram; News; Con	2 to 3 hou	Mobile Ph	Yes, occas	Yes	Spreading Awareness	No	Social med		
68	2023/07/3	Yes	crystalline18 - 21	Female	Chinese	BSc (Hons	Instagram; News; Con	2 to 3 hou	Laptop; M	Yes, occas	No	Usually no	Yes	Depending		
69	2023/07/3	Yes	jagroop.gr/22 - 25	Male	Indian	Internatio	Instagram; News; Con	2 to 3 hou	Laptop; M	Yes, occas	No	When som I can lead	No	-		

[illegible]

1	3	5	5	3	5	5	3	5	1
2	3	2	3	3	2	1	4	3	3
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3	3	2	2	3	5	1	2	5	5
2	4	3	4	2	4	2	2	4	5
1	1	5	5	3	3	3	3	4	1
2	5	2	2	2	5	1	1	3	5
4	5	2	2	2	5	2	2	2	4
3	4	2	1	2	3	1	1	2	4
4	4	2	1	2	2	2	2	3	5
4	4	2	2	3	4	1	3	3	4
3	4	2	2	3	4	3	2	2	2
1	1	3	1	2	3	1	5	1	1
4	4	2	2	3	3	2	4	3	3
1	2	1	2	3	5	4	1	1	1
2	4	2	4	3	4	5	4	2	3
3	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	2
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4	4	1	1	2	4	1	1	1	5
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4	4	4	4	4	2	2	3	4	4
4	5	2	3	3	4	2	2	2	5
3	3	4	4	2	3	3	4	4	2
3	5	2	2	3	5	2	2	5	5
5	5	4	2	4	4	4	1	1	5
4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	5	1	1
3	2	2	2	2	4	3	2	5	5
5	5	5	5	5	2	1	3	3	5
1	5	2	5	2	3	2	5	5	3
4	4	4	5	5	3	1	4	1	4
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