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**Understanding Social Media and Its Influence on Interpersonal
Communication and Behaviour Among Malaysian Youths**

by

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A RESEARCH THESIS IN PARTIAL COMPLETION FOR THE DEGREE OF
BACHELOR OF CORPORATE COMMUNICATION (HONOURS)

FACULTY OF CREATIVE INDUSTRIES

UNIVERSITI TUNKU ABDUL RAHMAN

OCTOBER 2023

Acknowledgements

I would like to express my sincerest gratitude to my thesis supervisor, Ms. Yong Xin Yi, whose unconditional support, encouragement, and guidance have been very significant throughout the materialisation of this thesis. Her mentorship has helped tremendously in paving the way for this research project to reach greater heights. I appreciate Ms. Yong's unrelenting commitment in helping me shape this writing to its fullest form.

I would also like to thank Jessica Liu and the Scribbr team for their arsenal of tools and resources to help students with producing quality theses.

Forsan miseros meliora sequentur.

LUCAS LIM YE-KAI

Declaration

I, Lucas Lim Ye-Kai, hereby declare that the writing presented in this paper is the end result of my own work. The research conducted and conclusions drawn are results of my independent effort. Credits due are all properly acknowledged in the bibliography and references.

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The dissertation attached in this document, entitled ‘Understanding Social Media and Its Influence on Interpersonal Communication and Behaviour Among Malaysian Youths’ prepared and submitted by Lucas Lim Ye-Kai in the partial completion of the Bachelor of Corporate Communication (Honours) degree programme is hereby approved and accepted.

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18/12/2023

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Abstract

With the advent of technology, the communication aspect of it has taken a big leap. Gone are the days where messages would take a while to write and deliver. The improvement of technology has also brought about powerful handheld devices capable of connecting everyone from all walks of life together through the Internet. This was done through the development of social media platforms which allow its users to share varying information like pictures and videos and exchange conversations. Social media was in its purest form during the early years. As time passed and with the increasing accessibility of technology, everyone was more connected than they were before. While the maturing of social media seems objectively good on paper, it has also brought a wave of negative effects. Time and time again we've seen news articles shining light on the effects social media has on its users, particularly how the younger demographic is suffering from mental illnesses or loneliness. Such a phenomenon can be attributed to the modern age of social media being a platform for people to only show the positive side of their lives, which causes a negative chain reaction for those unaware of the illusion. However, there is a lack of information about this phenomenon in Malaysia as most of the vocal demographic exists in the Western countries. This research conducted using a quantitative method among Malaysian youths aged 15 to 24 which aims to delve into detail on how social media in the modern age has influenced Malaysian youths' interpersonal communication skills and perception towards social media, and also to shine light on how social media has changed over the course of its development.

Keywords: social media, Malaysian, youth, interpersonal communication, behaviour, media effects

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Chapter 1 – Introduction

1.0 Introduction

This research delves into the nature of modern day social media and its effects on its users' interpersonal communication and behaviours. More specifically, it addresses how the usage of social media among Malaysian youths affect their behaviour and interpersonal communication skills, but also their perception towards social media. This research positions itself to be highly relevant due to the increasing usage of social media day by day, which brings negative consequences to the users unaware of its effects. The subtopics included in this chapter of the thesis consists of the background of study, research problem, questions & objectives, significance and scope of study, definition of key terms and also the conclusion.

1.1 Background of Study

Communication is the transmission of information between senders and receivers (Nordquist, 2019). The information being transmitted follows a mutually understood system of symbols (Gordon, 2023). Humans are complex creatures and are social beings, making communication a basic human need. Fundamentally speaking, communication is an element that is imperative for the human psyche, and also the well-being of mental health plus contentment in life (Attard, 2022). Communication is a constant in life, it is almost impossible for the phenomenon to not exist at any point in time. This is supported by the different forms of communication.

According to Willkomm (2018), there are five different forms of communication – verbal, non-verbal, written, listening, and visual communication. Verbal communication occurs through overt actions like speech (Keiling, 2023). This is common in phone calls, presentations, or conversations in general. On the other hand, non-verbal communication is subtle. Some examples of non-verbal communication include: eye contact, facial expressions and posture among others (Willkomm, 2018). Another more literal form of communication would be written communication. Written communication consists of literature of various forms, and it is one of the more helpful forms of communication that involves documentation for future referencing (Keiling, 2023). While listening doesn't often get taken into account when it comes to communication, active listening is among the major elements of communication. Without active listening, it is impossible to communicate with the other parties effectively (Willkomm, 2018). The final form of communication would be visual communication. Visual communication can be treated as a visual aid to verbal communication to enhance and make the message delivery more effective (Keiling, 2023).

Over time, communication methods have evolved from physical and manual to digital and automatic. It starts with basic transmissions of the radio, television and landline phones around the 19th century (Mather, 2022). These forms of communication were a step up from more traditional styles of communication like newspapers and letters, and they were more time-efficient in its delivery. During the middle of the 1990s, technology saw another spike in progression with the development of computers and the World Wide Web. Computers brought about the biggest shift in paradigm in communication by far, and had expanded upon it into different platforms for different purposes (Rogers, 2019). These different contexts of digital

communication would be: e-mails, instant messaging, online video calls, blogs and social media platforms.

As computers continued improving in their computing powers, came along smartphones. Essentially being miniature and portable versions of computers, smartphones are handheld devices that allow for digital communication through the use of cellular networks (Frankenfield, 2022). Smartphones slowly garnered more and more attention and usage worldwide. According to Ali (2021), the usage of mobile phones has increased by 460% in 10 years since 2011. With the improvement and widespread adoption of smartphones, comes the higher usage of social media platforms (Frankenfield, 2022). While social media first started off as mediums for family and friends to connect with each other at any point in time without having to meet physically, businesses found the potential in reaching new audiences internationally using these social networking platforms (Dollarhide, 2023).

Social media sets itself apart from other forms of communication, whether traditional or new, by its emphasis on spontaneity and two-way communication nature. This helps with enforcing the human element of interpersonal communication more, which was the driving force behind social media in the first place.

However, social media as a platform meant to connect all of its users together and foster good relationships with each other gradually took a turn for the worse. Social media had unintentionally conditioned its users in various negative ways. One of the more prominent effects of overusing social media is causing the feeling of loneliness and isolation, which in turn

amplifies mental health issues (Robinson & Smith, 2023). This can stem from the human tendency to compare against other social media users on the platforms in a negative manner, which then leads to the users feeling inadequate about their current situation (Robinson & Smith, 2023). These comparisons usually result in a downward spiral for the person, taking a toll on their mental health. However, these social media users aren't aware that the people who post about so many positive and great moments of their lives are seeking validation and reassurance (Zucker, 2021). As such, their compromised mental health state will also contribute to worsened interpersonal communication skills. Thus, it is important for social media users to understand that the contents of social media aren't what they appear to be in order to avoid falling into the downward spiral trap.

1.2 Research Problem

Consumption of social media content has been at an all-time high ever since smartphones have consistently been improved by the smartphone industry. This is a phenomenon that occurs throughout the world, where social media applications and smartphones are accessible. However, the increase of social media consumption has led to notable undesirable effects, especially among the younger generations. There are reports on how spending way too much time on social media can cause mental health issues, however, not much attention or awareness have been brought to it. Thus, people are still using social media for obsessive amounts of hours, still clueless on how to go about fixing the issue.

While the discussions of this phenomenon are more prevalent in the Western world, it is rarely ever discussed in their Eastern counterparts. Thus, the lack of awareness regarding social media

overuse would lead to more people falling into the trap, which affects the younger generation as a whole in varying degrees.

1.3 Research Questions

- RQ1 How does social media in the modern age influence Malaysian youths' interpersonal communication skills?
- RQ2 How do Malaysian youths perceive social media?
- RQ3 How has social media changed over the course of its development?

1.4 Research Objectives

The general objectives of this research study is to: (1) explore how social media in the modern age has influenced youths' interpersonal communication, and (2) understand how youths perceive social media. As for the research objectives of this study, it is to: (1) explore how social media in the modern age has influenced Malaysian youths' interpersonal communication skills, (2) understand how Malaysian youths perceive social media, and (3) study how social media has changed over the course of its development.

1.5 Significance of Study

This research is primarily significant in terms of raising awareness among the younger Malaysian demographic, especially when social media usage is prevalent throughout the age bracket of 18 to 24. While the study is done within this age bracket, the main message is applicable to anyone that is a social media user. It helps people to realise how social media can be detrimental if we do not establish a proper mindset or perception towards it beforehand. Thus, this research would benefit social media users the most.

The Ministry of Health (MoH) and the Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission (MCMC) would also benefit from the significance of this study. The findings of this study would be able to open up more opportunities for MoH and MCMC to collaborate together to execute campaigns that raise awareness on the detrimental effects of social media overuse, subsequently improving the nation's overall social media literacy.

Moreover, software developers or tech companies could also benefit from the results of this research thesis as they can better understand the dynamics of social media and its users. Therefore, it presents an opportunity and a challenge for these entities to perform changes to their platforms or create new functionalities that help curb this social media overuse phenomenon that does not disrupt the overall operations of their services.

The methodological significance for this research lies in the high reproducibility of the study. Future researchers looking to test the validity of this research are able to obtain similar results to this thesis. This can be attributed to the increasing usage of social media day-by-day, which

reinforces the potential to emulate this study. There are also ethical considerations and peer review in the making of the questionnaires before being approved for the research's usage.

In terms of theoretical significance, it helps the society and researchers to understand how the overuse of social media can lead to mental health troubles, which can affect interpersonal communication skills as a whole. This establishes a general idea that helps with predicting social media users' behaviours more accurately. The theoretical significance of this study also contributes to the practical methods of solving this widespread issue.

As for the practical significance of this study, its primary significance is its high relevancy to modern society. Social media is essentially a daily part of everyone's lives in this day and age, and we are able to see its influence not only in the online space, but also in the real world too. This research thesis will help everyone to be more aware of social media and how to go about using it the next time they are on the platform.

1.6 Scope of Study

The proposed sample size required for this research would be 4 respondents. Time period to gather responses would be 2 weeks or if 4 responses have been collected at some point within the two-week period. The respondents will be contacted through different social media platforms for an online interview through their preferred social media platforms. The targeted demographics would be Malaysians aged 18 to 24 who use social media on a regular basis and have basic social media literacy.

1.7 Definition of Key Terms

Social Media

Social media is a virtual platform that allows for the exchange of information among its users (Dollarhide, 2023). Some examples of popular and established social media platforms would be: Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Discord and LinkedIn. Social media also allowed for two-way communication, with the audience being on a more even field, with certain occasions being more dominant than the publishers on the platform (Walsh, 2022).

Youth

According to the United Nations (2013), youth is the timeframe where individuals transition from the dependent nature of childhood to the independent nature of adulthood. Compared to other age groups, it is considered to be more flexible and fluid. However, for analytical usage, youth is defined as individuals between the age of 15 – 24 despite not having a globally agreed upon definition (United Nations, 2013).

Interpersonal Communication

Interpersonal communication is the process of communication whereby two or more individuals converse through verbal and non-verbal means (Jouany & Martic, 2023). For interpersonal communication to occur, the sharing of information can happen either through face-to-face physical settings or through remote environments like social media or emails too (Parincu, n.d.). Interpersonal communication is the human element of communication which are considered soft skills that dictate how well we deliver the message to the recipient (Moss, 2022). This also

means interpersonal communication is affinitive, which helps with relationship-building and bonding (Franz, 2023).

Behaviour

Behaviour, specifically human behaviour, refers to how an individual responds internally or externally towards a stimulus (NSW Government, 2020). To elaborate further on this definition, human behaviour revolves around the three major elements of action, cognition and emotion, where they work together to make up how a person acts when faced with a certain situation (Farnsworth, 2023). It is the potential and apparent capability of material, psychological and social activity throughout a person's lifetime (Bornstein et al., 2023).

Media Effect

Media effect is how news sources and information from the media have the ability to influence the thoughts and perceptions of people (Gordon, 2022). This phenomenon can happen through channels that are used in our daily lives like newspapers, social media, television and more. From a business perspective, media effect exists whereby news from the media can assist or harm an organisation's business and share prices (Chen, 2022). There exists debates among researchers surrounding the dynamics of media effects and how it influences people with varying degrees of truth (Gordon, 2022).

Media Literacy

Media literacy is the capability of an individual to critically evaluate media and the information that is being disseminated (Schmit, 2021). The rationale behind media literacy is the overwhelming amount of information coming from different sources, this in itself brings us to

question the legitimacy of the information and the credibility of the sources (Common Sense Media, 2020). The result of being literate when it comes to media means that individuals would be more aware and smarter of the news that is coming out of different media sources (Vinney, 2023).

1.8 Conclusion

This segment concludes the introductory chapter of this research thesis, where the basis of this paper is covered comprehensively. The background, research problem, questions & objectives, and significance of this study have been established, which justifies the need for further research in the upcoming section.

Chapter 2 – Literature Review

2.0 Introduction

This section begins the second chapter of the research thesis. Chapter 2 will consist of segments that provide a comprehensive overview of literature materials varying in relevance to the research topic. The subtopics of this chapter consists of the literature review, theoretical framework and conceptual framework. The literature review follows a thematic approach for evaluation and analysis. All resources used are published in the past five years as of the writing of this research thesis.

2.1 Interpersonal Communication

Interpersonal communication is defined as the process of information exchange between the individuals whose lives have some mutual influence to each other (Backinoff et. al., 2020). The foundation of interpersonal communication is built off of two or more individuals within the social and cultural contexts that they are in. Knowing this, it is an essential element within social activities.

According to Ariyani & Hadiani (2019), there are multiple factors that make up the nature of interpersonal communication – openness, empathy, supportiveness, positivity and equality. This is further elaborated by Venter (2019), where quality interpersonal communication involves elements of empathy and concern, with the inclusion of emotions. It is these factors that make the transactions meaningful.

Interpersonal communication as a component of social interaction has its functional and cultural purpose. Within the functional aspect, there are the instrumental, relationship-maintenance and self-presentation goals (Backinoff et. al, 2020). Just as the name states, this aspect of interpersonal communication revolves around actions, social activity and how we present our image to gain a certain type of perception towards us from our peers. While for the cultural aspect, there are the relationship cultures, schemata, routines, rituals, and personal idioms (Backinoff et.al, 2020). This particular facet of interpersonal communication concerns the continuity of human relationships through the aforementioned elements above, where all of it works towards sustaining relationships. It also gives each of the relationships that we have some sort of unique identity and meaning.

As one of the fundamentals of social interaction, every individual should aim to improve their interpersonal communication skills. Especially within the context of corporate worlds, having good communication skills for day-to-day business matters would give individuals a better chance in being employed (Bailey, 2018).

As such, there exists a method that can help individuals, especially students where they're slowly being exposed to the outside world, to improve their interpersonal communication skills. According to Kurniawan et. al. (2022), small group discussions as a constructivist approach to learning can benefit students facing issues with interpersonal communication. The effectiveness is heightened when information services are paired together with the learning method, while also helping educators in engaging the students in active learning.

2.2 Gender Differences in Interpersonal Communication

Gender is an element that influences the differences in interpersonal communication. A study done by Almuzakir and Qamariah (2019) had shown males and females exhibiting differences in the way they communicate verbally. While the use of grammar is similar between both genders, females scored higher on average than their male counterparts in their fluency, vocabulary and pronunciation (Almuzakir & Qamariah, 2019).

On the other hand, a study conducted by Ariyani and Hadiani (2019) researched further into students' interpersonal communication with an emphasis on gender to find out whether there are any differences. Their findings show that male students scored higher than females in the interpersonal communication aspect. However, there is more to the research than this. Female students exhibited a more equal trait, positioning themselves on the same level as their recipient to create a comfortable environment. While for the male students, they displayed more empathy, supportiveness, openness, and positivity (Ariyani & Hadiani, 2019).

However, as the studies were done on localised subjects of their countries, it does not represent the universal whole. This means that the findings are exclusive to their research only. Moreover, gender as a factor that affects interpersonal communication competence may be inconsequential on its own due to other variables like one's background, culture, upbringing and lifestyle. For gender to be a viable factor of discussion, a more comprehensive method of research may be required to create more meaningful findings.

2.3 Effects of Social Media Usage

i. Interpersonal Communication

The progressive nature of technology has established a way for all walks of life to interact with each other while not needing to be physically present. With these digital tools for communication being essential in today's world, Venter (2019) posits that the traditional definition of interpersonal communication has changed. During the digital devices' infancy, it was originally a means of escapism from reality. However, due to the human need for social interaction, computer-mediated communication (CMC) is established to cater that need.

Due to the high accessibility of CMC with the development of technology, people favoured it over face-to-face interactions for the convenience that it offers (Venter, 2019). With this, the social connections established through CMC have expanded further on interpersonal communication. Venter (2019) mentions that the younger generations opt for this form of communication as opposed to face-to-face interactions due to its swiftness. Nevertheless, this leap in communication technology does not come without costs. The younger generations who use CMC as their main form of communication are said to be lacking in their interpersonal communication skills (Pierce & Payne, 2018). This phenomenon can be attributed to the lacking information that CMC transmits as compared to traditional physical communication, which is detrimental to the quality of the conversational exchange (Venter, 2019). This point is strengthened further by the shift in African culture values, where the youth's respect towards elders seems to be dissipating due to social media exposure (Commeey, 2020). Despite this, Hidayat and Pratama (2019) states that there were no correlations between interpersonal

communication skills and social media usage as there are other aspects that contribute to interpersonal communication.

The preference of younger generations towards CMC is also shown in Nasrullah and Khan's (2019) study, where the subjects like meeting new people through social media rather than physically. It is this preference that causes them to spend more time online. Two negative traits were also outlined by the researchers. Firstly, the students strongly believe any information showcased by these online platforms is authentic and trustworthy. Next, messages which are malicious in nature also can affect their emotions. In addition, social media is said to not assist them in their learning process (Nasrullah & Khan, 2019). The drawback of lacking interpersonal communication skills is missing opportunities in the working world. While having technical skills is important for business operations, having soft skills (like interpersonal communication) is what completes an employee and enables them to progress in their career to greater heights (Bailey, 2018).

ii. Friendship

With technological advances affecting the essence of interpersonal communication, it is without question that friendships would be affected too. According to Petricini (2022), there are two ends of a spectrum on perceiving technology's role in friendships – pessimism and optimism. Through the pessimistic lens, it is exclaimed that the rise of technology has negatively impacted friendships and the ability for it to thrive, that communication done through online means sacrifices the opportunity for actual meaningful face-to-face communication. While on the optimistic perspective, the internet and its social platforms have facilitated people in creating

meaningful personal relationships (Petricini, 2022). Nonetheless, the author elaborates further that the attempt to define friendship could be problematic due to its context-dependent nature.

Both ends of the spectrum certainly have their valid concerns regarding technology's role in friendships. It is imperative that individuals attempt to find a balance between both sides to make the most out of it.

iii. Mental Health

Mental health is also another element that can be affected by social media use. Seeing as humans communicate not only with words, but also with emotions, it is a reasonable deduction that an individual's mental well-being can be affected.

Seeing as how social media satiates the human need for social interaction, it has resulted in the integration of online platforms into everyone's communication routine and became a mainstay of modern culture (Warrender & Milne, 2020). However, the increasing accessibility and use of social networking sites (SNS) has also brought about a rise in mental health concerns, primarily platforms that emphasise on image-sharing (Magner, 2018). Examples of these image-sharing platforms are Instagram and Snapchat, among others.

iv. Academic Performance

Social media usage also has a possibility of affecting students' academic performances. The sharing and exchange of studying materials is done through social media and it helps the students in their academics (Nasrullah & Khan, 2019). Moreover, it is elaborated that students of a particular institution are cross-sharing their materials with students from another institution through social media platforms too. From this point, it can be deduced that social media can help with students' academic results should they use it responsibly and with the right intent.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

Featuring the use of virtual networks, social media is defined as the digital technology that facilitates the sharing and exchange of information like texts and visuals through online means (Dollarhide, 2023). This basic element of social media first stems back to the 70s through Bulletin Board Systems (BBS), where individuals wanting to socialise with others have to log onto the platform beforehand (Dhingra & Mudgal, 2019). However, the social networking sites that resemble more of what we know today can be seen in SixDegrees.com, and it was the one that sparked the 'social networking' trend (Méndez-Díaz et. al., 2022). After the development of the World Wide Web, more and more social networking sites popped up with different premises in mind. Among these is Facebook which is still well-known until this day, where the platform focused on profile personalisation and the sharing of texts and photos (Dhingra & Mudgal, 2019).

The usage of social media can be a root cause of mental health issues due to certain human tendencies. According to Abi-Jaoude et.al. (2020), individuals who spend more hours on social media had higher probability of experiencing the feeling of envy or inferiority, also coined as ‘FOMO’ – meaning the fear of missing out. This phenomenon has been linked to the heightened stress from consuming social media. Additionally, social media has the potential to cause its users to experience negative emotions through the rumours and false news that spread during crises like COVID-19 (Ni et.al., 2020). Taking into account gender differences, it was observed that girls invested more hours into social media than their male counterparts (Kelly, 2018). Incidentally, females reported lower levels of self-esteem on average in the same study.

On the other hand, interpersonal communication skills is defined as the verbal and non-verbal factor of an individual’s ability to communicate with others (Ansari, 2021). These skills are imperative in sustaining various types of relationships as discussed in the prior sections. Having high proficiency in interpersonal communication skills would mean being able to empathise and to foster better relationships over time.

i. Self-Presentation

Within the context of social media in modern day, the self-presentation theory has been altered to fit it. This is due to the new variables that social networking sites carry, therefore making the updates to the existing self-presentation theory necessary for application. Within the virtual networking context of social media, self-presentation is now influenced by the anonymity, and visibility of the individual behind the screen (Hollenbaugh, 2021). Especially with the nature of current social media platforms like Instagram and Facebook, self-presentation is emphasised as

its users look to produce content to farm engagement from other online users more than having conversational exchanges (Yang & Robinson, 2018).

ii. Social Comparison

In addition to the self-presentation theory, social comparison is the tendency for individuals to assess their own qualities and traits in comparison to their peers (Cherry, 2022). This comparison occurs both upwards and downwards with regards to the aforementioned traits. From a functional perspective, these comparisons may act as a motivating factor for the individual to improve themselves to do better, or to feel better about themselves (Cherry, 2022). Within the social media context, the factors that are involved in the social comparison process are: popularity, social skills, social connectedness to peers (Yang & Robinson, 2018). This act of online social comparison leads to strong negative reactions like envy and jealousy by the individual (Yang & Robinson, 2018).

2.3 Conceptual Framework

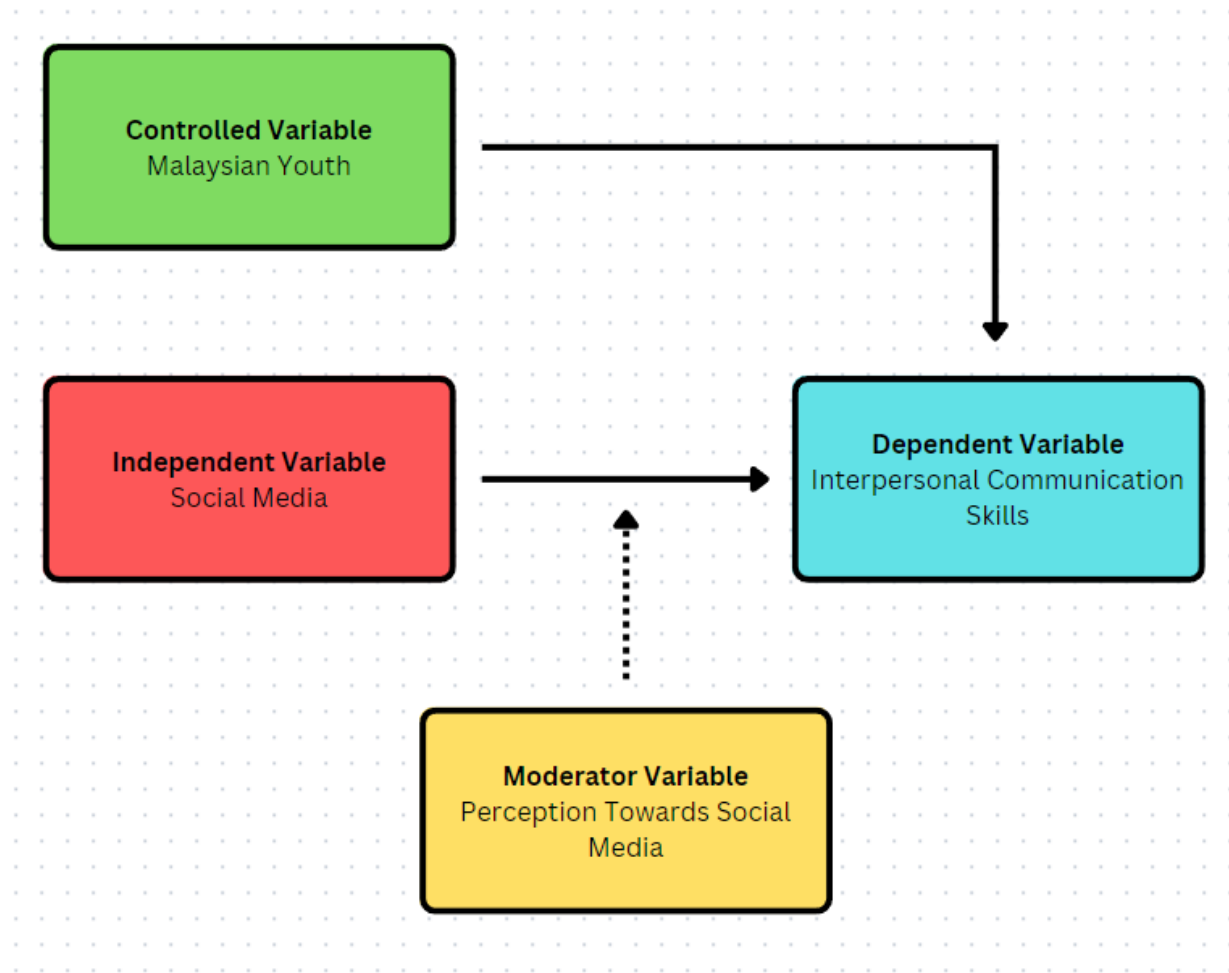


Figure 2.0: Conceptual framework

With Malaysian youths being the main subject of study in this research, they are labelled as the controlled variable. Their interpersonal communication skills will be a dependent variable in this case to the independent variable of social media. To add on to this visual framework, a moderating variable of their perception towards social media which can influence interpersonal communication skills of the Malaysian youths is included.

2.4 Conclusion

This segment marks the end of Chapter 2 of the research thesis. Based on the literature review and theoretical framework, social media in the modern day has grave implications on its users' self-esteem and mental well-being. However, the literature that has been reviewed did not touch on the perception of subjects towards social media, which as seen in the conceptual framework, is a moderating factor to the dependent variable. This results in the perception of social media being a gap that this research study aims to address. Though, the limitations of it would be the demographic of study as it does not represent the global population.

Chapter 3 – Methodology

3.0 Introduction

As discussed in the first chapter, this research thesis aimed to: (1) explore how social media in the modern age has influenced Malaysian youths' interpersonal communication. (2) understand how Malaysian youths perceive social media, and (3) to study how social media has changed over the course of its development. To achieve these objectives, primary data are collected through qualitative means.

3.1 Research Design

The research design for this study is qualitative in nature. The reason for going with a qualitative research design is to look into the various subjective experiences and perspectives of the respondents. With the subjectivity, comes specific elaboration on each of the participants' answers to help with understanding them better. A qualitative research design will also allow for inductive reasoning, where the various responses collected will help build a strong foundation for a conclusion. For this research topic, a phenomenological approach was used as the research method is through structured interviews. Phenomenological research is described as a researcher studying an event or situation and making an attempt to interpret it (Bhandari, 2023). The data collected relies on the interviewee's described experiences. Therefore, this makes the research rely on primary data for its study.

3.1.1 Sampling Procedure

The population's criteria set for this research study firstly requires the subjects to be Malaysian citizens. Secondly, they are required to be of age 18 – 24. Finally, they need to have basic English language proficiency and also must be a user of social media.

Knowing this, the sampling procedure followed is non-probability sampling, where the sample is chosen in a non-random way. This study relied on the respondents' convenience and voluntary response. A sample size of 4 is chosen and all were contacted through different social media platforms. To minimise variance, the sample size was ensured to have equal counts of genders (2 males and 2 females). The criteria of the selected age range is due to almost 31 percent of Instagram users being aged 18 to 24 (Dixon, 2023). Therefore, it is most appropriate for this research to be conducted within this age group.

3.1.2 Research Variables

As seen in Chapter 2, there were four variables outlined for this research. They are as follows:

- A. Controlled variable: Malaysian youth
- B. Independent variable: Social media platforms used
- C. Dependent variable: Interpersonal communication skills
- D. Moderator variable: Perception towards social media

Since the study is only done among the Malaysian youth, it is considered as the controlled variable. Social media platforms begin the pillar of this study's topic, it is labelled as the independent variable. With this study's aim to explore how social media has influenced

Malaysian youths' interpersonal communication skills, it is justified to be the dependent variable. Adding on to the equation, the interviewees' perception towards social media is considered as the moderating variable as it is a variable that affects the level of influence that social media has to their behaviour and interpersonal communication skills. The moderating variable assists in adding nuance and helps the research with developing a sturdier foundation for conclusions.

3.1.3 Research Instrument

The research instrument utilised in this study is in a focus group, structured interview format. Structured interviews are a textbook way of inquiring further about an individual and their backgrounds, and it helps with extracting nuanced answers from the interview subjects. It follows a standardised procedure to minimise variance and bias between different interviewees.

The platform used for the interviews are dependent on the interviewees' convenience and preference, though it would not have any effects on their answers. Prior to the interview, all the interviewees will be briefed on the study and its details, as well as their privacy rights through the Personal Data Protection Act. The interviewees are allowed to withdraw from the interview at any point during the interview process, though none have withdrawn.

3.1.4 Pilot Testing

Before proceeding to the actual data collection phase, two sessions of pilot testing were conducted on randomly selected individuals. Pilot testing is a method of testing that validates the functionality of a system under normal operating circumstances; it helps to evaluate the soundness of the system being tested (Hamilton, 2023). Thus, this process was made to test the efficacy of the interview questions in gathering the required data, and also for the researcher to know what to expect during interviewing sessions.

3.2 Data Collection

The qualitative research method used in this study is structured interviews with 4 individuals. The interviews were conducted through online voice calls which lasted 30 to 45 minutes. The answers were documented through notes and audio with consent before recording. They were firstly transcribed, and then analysed through text and audio.

To operationalise the variables that this study is attempting to investigate, 4 main sections out of 6 of the interview questions (Section B to Section E) were curated to specifically address these variables.

Section B aimed at profiling the interviewee on their frequency of social media usage and the platforms that they interact with. Knowing the platforms they use and the amount of time they invest in these platforms can help with understanding their responses and reasoning in the other three sections.

Section C looked into the subjects' use of social media and how it has or has not influenced their interpersonal communication skills. Among the questions, they were meant to see whether the interviewees were observant in the way they communicate with others, and also how the way they communicate have changed ever since using social media today.

Section D was curated to understand the interview subjects' perception towards social media and their experiences or opinions towards social media and the presence it has in the modern day. This section looks into how the subjects' experiences using social media has shaped their perception towards it.

Lastly, Section E relies on the interviewees' knowledge and experience of using social media since the start to investigate how social media has developed and changed. The questions set in this section attempts to understand the subjects' comprehension of social media as a platform and phenomenon in modern society as a whole. The entire list of interview questions can be referred to in the appendices section.

3.3 Data Analysis

As opposed to quantitative data, where the collected data can be simplified to statistics for estimates, qualitative data is more dense with varying information and different ideas. Therefore, the analysis method chosen for this research is a hybrid method between thematic and discourse analysis.

Thematic analysis is one way of analysing qualitative data, where a set of texts or transcripts are scrutinised in order to identify commonly repeated themes (Caulfield, 2023). To avoid confirmation bias, a set of procedures has been developed to counter it.

Discourse analysis (also known as critical discourse) on the other hand is an analysing method utilised to understand a spoken language with relativity to the context set (Luo, 2023). Being more specific with this form of analysis with regards to this research, the vocabulary and non-verbal communication aspect of the interviewees will be studied.

The research followed a structured interview as it mainly helps with efficiency. With the interviews being done verbally through online voice calls, the data collection process is quicker as opposed to a survey that requires some form of writing or text input (George & Merkus, 2022). This faster process results in less workload for the interviewees too. As opposed to semi-structured or unstructured interviews, a structured interview's set questions minimises the chances for the interviewees' answers to go out of topic.

While a quantitative research approach would have been possible, it lacks the potential for further elaboration by the respondents. The answers provided by respondents come in forms of numbers, which ensures accuracy and objectivity, but falls short in lack of expression and the human element which interviews can provide (Indeed Editorial Team, 2022). Due to the nature of phenomenological research with a qualitative take on this study, a total of four respondents already provides a wide range of variety in their responses. These responses being qualitative, it already contains dense and rich information too.

3.4 Conclusion

This segment marks the end of Chapter 3. To conclude, the research methodology follows a phenomenological design through the use of structured interviews. Following the population's criteria, a sample of four have been chosen for this study's research. The data collected will then be analysed through a hybrid analysis method between thematic and discourse analysis. Using a structured interview format helps with standardisation while allowing a wide range of answers from the interviewees with respect to the interview questions.

Chapter 4 – Research Findings

4.0 Introduction

This segment begins Chapter 4 of this research study. Chapter 4 consists of the results, where the main findings of the data collected will be presented without researcher interference or interpretation. This chapter will be structured as follows: (1) Section B: Profiling, (2) Section C: Social Media Usage Influencing Interpersonal Communication, (3) Section D: Perception of Social Media, and (4) Section E: Changes to Social Media Throughout Its Development.

Details of the four interviewees who agreed to be interviewed are as follows (to protect their identities, their full names are not published):

Table 4.0: Interviewees' Details

Interviewees		Details
Interviewee 1	Kee Chun	Male, 22, Chinese, Former UTAR Student
Interviewee 2	Mae San	Female, 23, Chinese, UTAR Student
Interviewee 3	Dinesh	Male, 22, Indian, Sunway University Student
Interviewee 4	Xin Yee	Female, 21, Chinese, UTAR Student

4.1 Section B: Profiling

As mentioned previously, the profiling section of the interview questions were aimed to build a description of the interviewee as a social media user. It helps to establish a foundation of reasoning and justification to their answers in the later sections.

When the interviewees were asked about the social media platforms that they frequented on a regular basis, all of the interviewees had answered Instagram. This is followed by Facebook taking the second place. Aside from that, the interviewees had listed Xiaohongshu, Reddit, Youtube, and WhatsApp as their other frequented social media platforms. Moving on to the next question, the interviewees were asked about their hours spent on social media on average per day / week, and the answers received are as such: 21/week, 56/week, 21/week, and 42/week. Something to be noted here is that both 21/week answers were from male interviewees (Kee Chun & Dinesh), while the remaining two at higher hours per week were answered by female interviewees (Mae San & Xin Yee). All of the participants use social media on a daily basis.

The final question under this section inquired about what sorts of content that they favour when using social media. The range of answers received were very diverse, but they can be summarised to entertainment and informative content.

To directly quote Kee Chun on the instance above: *“Mostly memes, and of course news. And occasionally some hobby stuff. That’s probably it.”*

4.2 Section C: Social Media Usage Influencing Interpersonal Communication

This section of the interview aims to understand how social media usage in the modern age influences Malaysian youths' interpersonal communication.

When asked about how often they communicate with others using social media, all the interviewees answered every single day. One highlighted social media in this instance was 'WhatsApp', where it is used for daily communication regarding academics or work. Three out of four respondents have stated that using social media on a daily basis has in fact influenced their interpersonal communication.

Dinesh had stated that he would communicate the same way online as he does in real life, quoting as such: *"I would say no, because I try to be the same person both online and in real life. So there is no dichotomy. Whatever I say in real life is probably what I am gonna say in the app as well."*

Regarding whether the interviewees convey any sorts of emotions through text messages, one of them stated that they were much more neutral through texts, while the others mentioned the use of emojis or the exaggeration of words to convey emotions. When questioned about whether the interviewees are observant and critical of how others send their messages, all of the respondents answered yes.

Mae San can be quoted as saying: *"Yes, because I will try to assume their tone of the messages by the way they construct their message."* This answer is similar to the one given by another

respondent – Xin Yee, where through her observations, she is able to tell how the sender is feeling when the message is sent through the way they have written their messages. Quoting it as such: *“I’d say most of the time. If I happen to be a friend of the recipient, then most of the time I can tell how they feel based on the content of their messages, but there are times that I can’t tell as they can be different online and in real life.”*

4.3 Section D: Perception of Social Media

The third section of social media was designed to look into the interviewees’ perception towards social media and the presence it has in the modern day. This segment looks into the interviewees’ experiences using social media until this point.

When questioned about their overall perception of social media, the answers given by all of the interviewees were mixed. All of the interview subjects then clarified their answers further in the next two questions, where it goes into more detail of what the subjects find positive and negative about social media.

In terms of the positive aspects, social media allows us to have access to tons of information. The communication process among peers has also been streamlined. To add on further, one of the interviewees has mentioned that social media has connected everyone together. This is also in line with what another interviewee said about how he is still in contact with his friends from other countries, solely because of social media being the medium of communication.

On the other hand, the interviewees also had mentioned their negative aspects of social media as well. Firstly, a downside of social media is that it made one of the interviewees feel anxious. The same interviewee also mentioned how social media isn't a friendly platform towards the older demographic. Moreover, another respondent mentioned how spontaneous social media users are when faced with a topic, without taking the time to assess whether the news is genuine or not. Another point made by a separate interviewee mentioned how the exposure towards the same news on social media multiple times will cause desensitisation to the news regardless of severity.

The question afterwards inquires about whether social media has had an impact on the interviewee's mental well-being. All the interviewees have admitted to social media affecting their mental well-being, although they have different reasonings behind it. Among the answers given, one of them was about receiving messages about work or studies. Upon receiving the message, it would make her feel stressed. Another reasoning given by Mae San was how she couldn't help comparing herself to others that she deemed have the 'ideal body type'.

On the other hand, Kee Chun had mentioned that social media had influenced his mental well-being in a more positive light, stating that he got motivation to frequent the gym for a healthier lifestyle, quoting: *"Well first of all, it's all the male positivity posts, and of course the gym bros, having a healthy body, having a healthy mind, those kind of stuff. Those kinds of stuff that I actually consume changed my mind, like I should work harder to build a healthier life. It pushed me to go to the gym."*

The final two questions of Section D touch on two social theories – social comparison theory and self-presentation theory. With regards to the social comparison theory, all the interviewees had compared themselves to others at some point in time.

Quoting Kee Chun: *“I definitely have, I was very into materialistic items. I was very much into shoes when I was much younger, but as time goes on, and I keep pumping out more posts, you know, keep spending my hard-earned money on these shoes and posting them online. Slowly but surely I realised that actually nobody cares. No one. Even for the people who like my post, or comment on it, I would say that they didn’t really appreciate what I posted, or what I see in that particular item... Most people wouldn’t care, and it’s us that think that we actually matter in people’s eyes. I think that a lot of people have invested a lot of energy and time towards these ‘hollow achievements’ and they think that these likes and comments, these clouts, these popularity posts would make them something, but in fact in real life, they’re still the same person.”*

In terms of self-presentation, all of the interviewees are aware of it as a phenomenon on social media. However, only one of them does not practise that.

4.4 Section E: Changes to Social Media Throughout its Development

The final section of questioning is Section E, which relies on the interviewees' knowledge and experience of using social media until this point.

When the interviewees were questioned regarding how social media has changed ever since they have started using it, a range of answers have been received. The key theme identified between the answers is how social media eventually updated to be more connected and easier for users to socialise than before. At the same time, there are two other interviewees mentioning how social media has evolved to be worse. To be more specific, the platform users are more materialistic.

To quote Xin Yee: *"I think social media has changed. In a place where it tends to be a more materialistic kind of place, like because of a lot of commercial posts, a lot of judgement in it. People will kind of comment negatively. But when I started using it, people mostly shared their daily lives, and just for memories. For close friends to comment and engage with each other instead of having so many people to just comment in a post about negative / positive things."*

To quote another, Dinesh: *"I have used social media since I was very young, like age 10 or something. Those days, Facebook was our only social media, for us Asians at least. At the time, Facebook was only having people sharing photos and funny videos. It was simple. But now, social media is very different. Some I would say are propaganda, and some are straight up brainwashing videos, trying to promote certain things as positive."*

The second question of this section questions the interviewee on how social media has impacted its users' behaviour online. All of the respondents mentioned that people behave vastly differently in real life and online. Some users can be very polite and mindful with their actions and words while some are rather vocal in just stating their mind whenever they would like to.

Quoting Kee Chun: *“Like from the start of me using social media, I’ve seen that people could comment something very bad, very hateful towards another person, and they wouldn’t think about what they say having consequences towards that person. Of course, the toxic behaviours.”*

Moving on to the third question, a variety of answers had been received too. On one end, the interview subject mentioned that they would be more talkative in an online environment but more reserved in real life, while on the other end, another interviewee stated that they would be more formal with strangers on social media, while being more relaxed in real life with known peers.

A wide range of answers has been given by the interviewees on the fourth question too, with each covering a different context within social media platforms. Kee Chun stated that the behaviour that has been encouraged on social media platforms are the users confusing between ‘freedom of speech’ and ‘voicing out without thinking of the consequences’. The next interview subject, Mae San, also mentioned the same point as the first interviewee, where online users would be vocal without thoughts on consequences. She has also added that online users would blindly follow any news without any verification of the news’ legitimacy. Moving on to Dinesh,

he stated that one of the behaviours that is encouraged by social media in the modern day is ‘witch hunting’.

To quote Dinesh: *“Humans tend to assume everything, right? So, when one accusation flies out on someone, or one allegation, everyone doesn’t care about the truth, they just straight up witch hunt the person that is accused. They straight up bad mouth, send death threats. It is really toxic. For all we know, we don’t know whether the guy actually did the wrong thing or not. I’ll give you one example, Johnny Depp vs Amber Heard. Amber Heard literally blamed Johnny Depp for abusing her and doing a lot of things. But then in the end, we found out the truth is that Amber Heard was the one doing all the abuse, all the verbal and physical abuse. The Internet encourages witch hunting behaviour.”*

The final interviewee had given two sides of behaviour that has been encouraged by social media. On the positive end, social media has encouraged people to be more independent and to work hard for themselves. On the other hand, it also encourages people to be more selfish and think about themselves first.

Moving on to the final question of Section E, this question aims to understand what the interviewees think of how social media has affected modern Malaysian culture as a whole. Kee Chun mentioned that social media has been utilised by political parties in an effort to secure votes. He also mentioned that it is not only exclusive to any political parties, but it is a phenomenon as a whole.

To quote him: *“Social media is a tool for you to share information, but not for you to twist that information. On an entertainment level, nowadays a lot of YouTubers or content creators, they would just pump out any sorts of content to get views. They do not even care if it’s good or well-edited.”*

Dinesh had mentioned that social media had made the culture more reserved. He elaborated on it more, stating that social interactions between strangers aren’t common and there exists some social isolation. The final interviewee stated social media has allowed people to understand how people from different cultural backgrounds celebrate their cultural events through the sharing on these social platforms. However at the same time, conflicts may arise due to the different cultural perspectives.

4.5 Conclusion

This segment marks the end of Chapter 4. In conclusion, all of the interviewees have answered the questions within the scope of social media platforms, but in their different contexts due to the different usages by the interviewees. The data collected will be analysed through thematic and discourse analysis in the next chapter.

Chapter 5 – Discussion & Conclusion

5.0 Introduction

The ever-increasing use of social media, particularly among younger generations, has contributed to the deterioration of their mental health issues. While its prevalence is openly talked about in Western countries, it is rarely ever brought up in Eastern countries. This lack of dialogue leads to less awareness, which causes more people to be vulnerable and fall prey to this phenomenon. The interviewees frequently communicate on social media, with WhatsApp being a significant tool for academics and work. Responses and opinions about social media were inconsistent among the interviewees. Their mental health was also impacted by social media, as some users experienced stress and self-comparison. The interviewees also talked about their experience with self-presentation and social comparison, which show that this is common behaviour in online platforms. The interviewees talked about how social media has changed over time, emphasising how it has become more connected. They did observe, though, a rise in materialistic behaviour as opposed to how users interacted with close friends and shared details of their daily lives back then. This chapter will end with recommendations for further research done on a similar topic.

5.1 Discussion of Results

The results are in line with Kurniawan et. al. (2022), where interpersonal communication can be influenced by the use of social media. This influence affects the social media user positively by expanding on their interpersonal communication competency in an additional dimension. Social media is a limited form of social interaction in a sense that the sender and receiver aren't physically present in each other's spaces, this severely limits the amount of non-verbal communication that is present at the moment of exchange. Despite this limitation, the recipient would still make an attempt to figure out or construct the perceived tone that the sender has given through their text messages. It is the awareness and the effort made to understand the text messages that helps to strengthen the individual's interpersonal communication. Especially when all the respondents are using social media on a daily basis, it is logical to see the adaptation that they have in trying to improve a limited form of communication.

The mixed perception by the respondents is to be expected, and it is in line with the 'optimism' and 'pessimism' labelling by Petricini (2022). Taking into account the various contexts of social media platforms through the respondents' answers, social media indeed has its advantages and disadvantages. In accordance with Petricini (2022), social media and the internet has the ability to facilitate communication and foster friendships. This is in line with one of the interviewees' responses, where he is still in touch with his friends from other countries due to social media. On the other hand, Petricini's (2022) take on the pessimistic view is also reflected in another interviewee's response, where the communication done in digital spaces has actually deteriorated social interactions as a whole. This runs parallel to the interviewee's answer of feeling anxiety

when using social media, and also noting the unfriendliness towards the older demographic of users as they are less well-versed with social media.

Bringing back the feeling of anxiety stated by one of the interviewees, there are multiple factors that cause this phenomenon. As posited by Warrender & Milne (2020), social media platforms have integrated itself into everyone's communication routine and has become a mainstay of modern culture. This also means exchanges of an individual's work or academic responsibilities also go through social media platforms, as mentioned by all the interviewees, where they use WhatsApp for such communication. Social media platforms essentially bridge such communications to be at any point in time instead of being in office or in the academic institution. As such, when the social media user is notified of work or study-related matters at a less desirable time, it will cause them mild distress.

Another factor causing anxiety is the social comparison phenomenon with other social media users online. As stated by one of the interviewees, it makes her feel uneasy when she comes across another user where she considers to have the 'ideal body type.' Though, this is highly dependent on how an individual would look at the situation, as some people can use that social comparison energy to motivate themselves to do better. Another interviewee had stated that the social comparison tendency had allowed him to change his mindset to live a healthier lifestyle.

5.1.1 Implications

The data gathered from this research study aligns with that of Magner's (2018). Magner's statement of social media that emphasise on image sharing being one of the main factors of rising mental health issues is directly applicable to all of the interviewees. Coupled with the fact that Instagram is the most used social media platform and how it is used daily, the phenomenon of self-presentation and social comparison seems inevitable. However as mentioned by the respondents, social media back then did not cultivate any of these negative traits. This can be explained by the increasingly materialistic influence of social media which has changed its overall landscape.

The results collected also expanded upon how social media's evolution has deteriorated interpersonal communication and also user behaviour. Especially when the younger generation uses social media as a major part of their daily communication (Venter, 2019), the degree to which its users will be influenced by the published content online are at a higher efficacy. This in addition to the lack of manners as stated by the interviewees have made stranger interactions worse. Social media is still primarily text-based, especially its comment sections. Coupled with the fact that social media has limited verbal communication and inherently has a certain degree of anonymity, certain users have the tendency to be overtly rude to strangers. This case is strengthened when online content may be misleading and lack factual elements, but with the behaviour that people adopt when interacting with social media content, they do not assess the situation critically to see whether there are any consequences in following a certain style of content. This may subconsciously lure them into following the false movements which do not objectively benefit them.

The situation stated above can also bleed into other forms of social interactions on social media as mentioned by one of the respondents. Social media users have the tendency to assume and accept everything as-is. With such spontaneity, the ‘witch hunting’ phenomenon as stated by the respondent may carry a certain amount of power against the recipient of it. The implications of ‘witch hunting’ may bring grave consequences, especially in this time where social media is practically every individual’s second life. As such, this cyber bullying behaviour can categorise itself into one of the factors that may cause mental health issues. As with every other element of social media, it is still dependent on the individual themselves. Should their perception towards social media be that of caution, they may be aware that social media has the potential to affect their lives negatively if they were not careful. This brings back one of the points made by an interviewee, where social comparison has actually helped him to practise healthier living.

5.2 Limitations

The methodological choices were limited by the chosen sample size for generalisability. Despite this, the data gathered were in favour of the research objectives. Moreover, the data gathered covers the different grounds within the social media landscape. With the vast field of social media, comes with it the various contexts that exist within it. Different people will have different use cases for social media, and also their experiences may vary. It is something that has to be looked into through a case-by-case basis, so generalisation has to be done more intricately for validity. Another limitation to note is that study only strictly applies to the Malaysian youth demographic, and may not be true for individuals from other countries. While the basis of this research is done on general research and findings, it does not represent the entire truth.

5.3 Recommendations

Based on the findings of this research study, some recommendations will be suggested to future improve the quality of data collected.

Research studies done in the future should utilise a physical focus group interview. Having physical presence enables both the researcher and interviewee to be more involved in the interviewing process to gather more valuable information. As opposed to an online voice call, where there may be external variables that cannot be controlled by the researcher which can affect the results gathered.

Secondly, integrating more profiling questions to understand the background of the interviewees. As an individual's social media experience is heavily influenced by their own backgrounds, being able to profile the individual helps with understanding and rationalising their behaviour when engaging with social media platforms. It can be very helpful to the researcher to build a stronger case with the context gathered from the profiling questions.

Thirdly, future research may look into expanding the research to look more in-depth into the relationship between demographics & lifestyle against social media. This research did not emphasise a lot on the aforementioned elements, so further findings may surface should a future study be conducted. These new findings have the potential to provide a clearer understanding of why certain social media behaviours exist.

These recommendations are curated to help future studies done to expand upon this topic and provide clearer explanations.

5.4 Conclusion

This concludes the final chapter of this research study. This research thesis has contributed insight into the nature of social media and how it can affect Malaysian youth's interpersonal communication and behaviour. Findings suggest that social media has its advantages and disadvantages, and it is highly dependent on the individual's perception towards social media and the different contexts of social media. This research helps to add more awareness and knowledge towards social media and interpersonal communication topics, as social media increasingly seeps into everyday life. With higher awareness, more people will slowly distance themselves from the negative effects of social media, and be able to fully utilise social media to great benefit.

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Appendices

Interviewing Questionnaire

Introduction

Dear respondents,

I am Lucas Lim Ye-Kai, a final year Bachelor of Corporate Communication (Honours) student at Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR), Sungai Long Campus. I am conducting a study for my final-year project entitled 'Understanding Social Media and its Influence on Interpersonal Communication and Behaviour Among Malaysian Youths'. You are invited to participate in this research through an online interview session. The aim of this research is to delve into detail on how social media in the modern age has influenced Malaysian youths' interpersonal communication skills and perception towards social media, and also to understand how social media has changed over the course of its development.

Eligibility of Participation

To participate in this online interview, you must fulfil the following criteria:

1. Malaysian citizen
2. Understands English
3. 18 – 24 of age
4. User of social media

Interview Segments

This interview consists of SIX (6) segments:

- A. Demographics
- B. Profiling
- C. Use of Social Media Influencing Interpersonal Communication
- D. Perception of Social Media
- E. Changes to Social Media Over Its Development
- F. Thanks and Acknowledgements

Participation

You are required to participate in an online interview that will take about 25 – 30 minutes of your time. Please be informed that your participation is voluntary, and you are allowed to withdraw at any time.

Personal Data Protection Act 2010

In compliance with the Personal Data Protection Act 2010 (“PDPA”), your personal data collected through this interview will be strictly confidential and only used for academic purposes.

Should you have any inquiries about this study, you may contact me via email (lucaslim68@lutar.my). I highly appreciate your consideration and time in participating in my interview session.

Section A: Demographics

1. Gender
 - a. Female
 - b. Male

2. Age Group
 - a. 18 – 19
 - b. 20 – 21
 - c. 22 – 23
 - d. 24

3. Ethnicity
 - a. Malay
 - b. Chinese
 - c. Indian
 - d. Others

4. Education Level
 - a. A-Levels
 - b. Diploma
 - c. Foundation
 - d. Degree

Section B: Profiling

1. What are the social media platforms that you use on a regular basis?
Click or tap here to enter text.
2. How many hours on average do you spend on social media platforms per day / week?
Click or tap here to enter text.
3. How often do you visit these social media platforms? (daily, weekly, monthly)
Click or tap here to enter text.
4. What are the types of content that you favour on these social media platforms?
Click or tap here to enter text.

Section C: Social Media Usage Influencing Interpersonal Communication

RQ1 – How does social media in the modern age influence Malaysian youths' interpersonal communication skills?

1. How often do you communicate with others using social media?
Click or tap here to enter text.
2. Do you feel that social media has influenced your communication skills? If so, how? (i.e. verbal / non-verbal communication)
Click or tap here to enter text.
3. Do you ever convey emotions through text messages? If so, how?
Click or tap here to enter text.
4. Are you observant and critical of how others send their text messages? Are you able to share some examples?
Click or tap here to enter text.

Section D: Perception of Social Media

RQ2 – How do Malaysian youths perceive social media?

1. What is your overall perception towards social media today?
Click or tap here to enter text.
2. What do you think are some positive aspects of social media?
Click or tap here to enter text.
3. What do you think are some negative aspects of social media?
Click or tap here to enter text.
4. Do you feel that social media has had an impact on your mental / emotional well-being? If so, how?
Click or tap here to enter text.
5. Social comparison is the tendency for individuals to engage in comparisons between themselves and their peers in terms of qualities and traits (Cherry, 2022).
Did you ever find yourself comparing yourself with others while using social media?
Click or tap here to enter text.
6. Self-presentation is the way individuals frame themselves in a certain way to be perceived by the public in a desired manner (Warrender and Milne, 2020).
Did you ever find yourself engaging in self-presentation on social media platforms? Are you aware of this phenomenon being a common occurrence on social media?
Click or tap here to enter text.

Section E: Changes to Social Media Throughout Its Development

RQ3 – How has social media changed over the course of its development?

1. How do you think social media has changed since you have started using it?
Click or tap here to enter text.
2. In your opinion, how has social media impacted its users' behaviour online?
Click or tap here to enter text.
3. How has social media influenced your behaviour online and offline?
Click or tap here to enter text.
4. In your experience and observation, what type of behaviour has social media encouraged in the modern day?
Click or tap here to enter text.
5. How has social media changed modern Malaysian culture as a whole?
Click or tap here to enter text.

Section F: Thanks and Acknowledgement

I would like to express my sincerest gratitude to you for participating in my interview session. Your inputs are highly appreciated and immensely valuable in my research. Thank you for being a part of my research and providing me with an opportunity to bring this study to fruition.