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EMBRACING SINGLEHOOD EXPERIENCE: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY

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Embracing Singlehood Experience: A Phenomenological Study

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DECLARATION

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

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APPROVAL FORM

This research paper attached hereto, entitled Embracing Singlehood Experience: A Phenomenological Study prepared and submitted by Angeline Chung Kah Yee, Lanisha a/p Rajendran, and Nabil Daniel bin Abdul Rahim Chan in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Bachelor of Social Science (Hons) Psychology is hereby accepted.

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Abstract

The number of single people around the world is increasing gradually. This shows that singlehood has become a more and more popular trend of lifestyle within society. Although there are some benefits in living as a single person, there are also some. This study is a qualitative study to explore more about singlehood in terms of the meaning, reasons, and challenges behind singlehood. It also highlights some strategies that were implemented to overcome the challenges as extended branch from challenges behind singlehood. Interviews were conducted online and physically among seven single participants who were between 30 – 40 years of age and open-ended questions were asked. Thematic analysis was conducted to analyse the transcripts of interviewees and to create suitable themes based on the research objective. The findings had found several themes which were thoughts and feelings about singlehood, independence, past versus present experiences, personal and lifestyle considerations, individual development and growth, societal pressure, and changes in social life. Limitations of the study were found related with the limited time, diversity of data from different age categories, language barriers, and broad topic. In conclusion, singlehood is a complex mechanism that further research needs to be conducted to understand more about it and, this study could be a potential catalyst for future studies as a point of reference in conducting more thorough research.

Keywords: singlehood, loneliness, independence, thoughts and feelings, experiences, personal and lifestyle, individual development, societal pressure, changes in social life

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List of Abbreviations

Abbreviations	
PAS	Parti Islam se-Malaysia
DAP	Democratic Action Party
MP	Member of Parliament
TPB	Theory of Planned Behaviour
UTAR	Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman
I-CVI	Content Validity Index for items

Chapter I

Introduction

1.1 Background of Study

Singlehood is defined as not being married or engaged in a romantic relationship. Being single is commonly believed to be a decision and an attitude (Heng et al., 2023). Individuals who have never been married and are not living together are called singles (Himawan et al., 2018). According to research (Kislev, 2023), more people opt to stay single for an extended period and avoid talking to closely related people. Like other social identities, the claim is that being single has evolved into a standalone social act and identity. Based on a national survey carried out by Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR), most young people between the ages of 18 and 35 would prefer to have smaller families, with less than half (41.8%) planning to get married (Menon, 2021). Besides, in Malaysia, an Asian nation, the number of spouses dropped from 206,352 to 203,821 in 2019, a 1.2% decrease (Tan et al., 2021). This clearly shows that half of the adult population has no interest in or avoids getting married as soon as they choose to stay single.

Besides, on 22 November, in Malaysia parliament, a debate containing concerns towards single people and in that debate, Parti Islam se-Malaysia (PAS) Deputy President Tuan Ibrahim Tuan Man proposed polygamy as a solution to the “issue” of having over 8.4 million single women in Malaysia. DAP MP Yeo Bee Yin replied, “Wives and women inside and outside of Dewan Rakyat feel hurt by it.” It was every woman’s right and personal choice to be single (M’sia et al. Says Polygamy Is the “Answer” to the “Problem” of Unmarried Women, 2023)

Since being single is now regarded as a desirable lifestyle globally, marriage is no longer considered the ideal life path (Heng et al., 2023). One reason for being single is having

trouble selecting and staying with a partner. Individual choices to avoid being in serious relationships are another factor. In addition, socio-sexuality test takers with high scores would be less inclined to pursue relationships. People frequently stated that they remain single to concentrate on developing their careers (Apostolou & Patsiarika, 2022). According to Pepping and MacDonald (2019), to avoid the mechanism of attachment being activated and distress, people with high attachment avoidance suppress their desires for intimacy, especially when there is a chance to connect. After a breakup, they are more likely to shy away from entering new relationships and are less likely to establish a committed romantic relationship. These are a few factors that explain the choice of remaining single among adults.

Singlehood can be classified into two types, which are known as voluntary and involuntary singlehood. Some adults have made the conscious decision not to get married, and they fall under voluntary singlehood. At the same time, those who involuntarily want to live together with a partner or want to get married cannot do so (Fitzpatrick, 2023). Individuals' deliberate choice and external circumstances primarily explain their continued single status. Reasons for opting to remain voluntarily single include life satisfaction, the inability to find a suitable match, high marital expectations, desire for independence, career pursuit, and disappointment in love. However, earlier research on involuntary singleness is associated with low self-esteem, difficulties in focusing or working, depression, and rejection related to sexual frustration (Adamczyk, 2016). Besides, according to another research on singlehood, it is proven that introverted people are more likely to remain single than extroverted ones and to go through more extended periods of it. Being introverted limits one's options and lowers the likelihood of meeting a partner by reducing exposure to potential partners (Apostolou & Tsangari, 2022). Therefore, personality would also play a role in singlehood.

1.2 Problem Statement

The increasing global trend of choosing to be single makes it increasingly necessary to study this phenomenon to fully understand its complex implications thoroughly. DePaulo (2021) pointed out that there has been an increase in the number of singles and the postponement of marriage in the United States. Spreitzer and Riley (1974) also stated that a positive correlation was found between elevated levels of intelligence, career, and education and singlehood among women. At the same time, bad relationships with family and siblings are associated with singlehood among males.

This study's key component is identifying the root cause behind the decision to stay single. There are two types of single people: voluntary and involuntary singlehood. People stay single for various reasons, including independence, personal preference, or career pursuits. On the other hand, there are several reasons why someone might become an involuntary single, such as relationship problems, societal pressures, or unforeseen life occurrences (Fitzpatrick, 2023). The implications of this growing tendency go beyond individual choices to include societal effects like a decline in the human population. Studying the impact of the growing number of people embracing singlehood becomes necessary.

Moreover, single individuals are more susceptible to loneliness. This was pointed out by Adamczyk (2015), who stated that the higher the number of single individuals, the higher the level of romantic loneliness. Long-term romantic loneliness is worrying as it may also lead to a higher risk of mental and physical health issues (Mushtaq et al., 2014). Hence, we hope to contribute essential insights, considering the growing trend of people choosing to remain single.

1.3 Research Objectives

1. To explore the meaning of being single

2. To explore the reasons and challenges behind singlehood.

1.4 Research Questions

1. What are the meanings behind the experience gained by single adults?
2. What are the reasons for adults choosing singlehood?
3. What challenges do adults face in the singlehood path?

1.5 Significance of Study

Research on singlehood is essential to fully understand societal trends and cultural shifts surrounding marriage and relationships. For researchers, sociologists, and policymakers alike, this study provides a sophisticated snapshot of the changing face of singlehood. It gives them the knowledge and understanding they need to create policies that reflect the changing needs and preferences of the populace and effectively adjust to shifting social dynamics. It is essential to comprehend the complex aspects of singlehood to promote a more inclusive and responsive approach to social and policy development.

A valuable tool for dispelling myths and reducing the stigma associated with singledom is research on singlehood. This study might make a valuable contribution to developing a more accepting and helpful society by providing an in-depth exploration of the varied experiences of single adults. The research helps to reshape societal attitudes by providing a more comprehensive understanding of singlehood and challenging preconceptions. To foster an environment that is more accepting and understanding for everyone, people who choose to remain single or who are not in a relationship must make this shift towards greater acceptance.

Moreover, a critical aspect of this research is to study the coping mechanisms people use to deal with being single. It is crucial to comprehend how individuals manage the difficulties that come with being single, such as possible social stigma, loneliness,

discrimination, prejudice or societal pressure, to create successful interventions that promote mental health and well-being. This study aims to find out why people belong to a neighbourhood specifically by analysing the difficulties that individuals go through along with how they cope. Hence, we hope to contribute essential insights that, considering the growing trend of people choosing to remain single, can influence social attitudes, support networks, and personal well-being.

1.6 Definition of Terms

Singlehood – The term “single” describes individuals not in a committed romantic relationship; for some, this may indicate a conscious decision to stay single, while for others, it may indicate challenges in forming or sustaining relationships (Pepping et al., 2018).

Chapter II

Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter will review past studies on discovering underlying factors of voluntary and involuntary singlehood, issues surrounding singlehood, and challenges of being single. Although it is not within the research objective, but this study would also like to highlight key strategies and coping mechanisms that was used to overcome the challenges. The Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) explains voluntary and involuntary singlehood in attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control.

2.2 Voluntary Singlehood

People who are single by choice have chosen to stay single, either permanently or for a specific amount of time and are classified under voluntary singlehood (Kislev, 2023). The decision to remain single without committing to any romantic relationship is attributed to various reasons. One of the factors of voluntary singlehood that scholars studied would be life satisfaction and well-being among single people. According to the research (Kislev, 2021), long-term singles generally express higher happiness levels than married people because they uphold wealthier social networks and friendship circles that eventually prevent loneliness. An increasing percentage of singles are delighted with their relationship status and have high general well-being. Compared to married people, single people are more likely to help others, receive help, interact with friends, and contact their parents or siblings more frequently (Peterson, 2022).

Furthermore, freedom is another factor that is associated with voluntary singlehood. Making concessions to maintain an intimate connection is necessary since one party must consider the other's needs and desires. For example, people should talk to their partners about

their decisions and actions, interact with their partner's friends and family even if they do not like them, or change their routines (Apostolou & Christoforou, 2022). The previous statement is further proven by a study conducted by Bhatt (2020), whereby single people's options for feeling free were shaped by decisions about what to eat, who to meet, how and when to spend money, where to go, and what to do as they also demonstrated their independence and freedom by owning things and making choices on their own, disregarding the interests of others, or by viewing their existence as a compromise between their desires and those of their spouse.

Some individuals remain single for an extended period because they focus on their education and career development. According to the research (Apostolou & Patsiarika, 2022), some have stated that they should focus on their skills. Further, with their education and jobs, individuals will likely choose not to engage in dating. Therefore, it would benefit people to concentrate on advancing their careers and obtaining a solid education. In line with this theory, people frequently stated they were single to concentrate on developing their jobs. To support this, another study has stated that people with low education and income levels would not do well in the dating market. Instead, it may be more advantageous for them to stay out of it and use the little money they must further their education to increase their earning potential (Apostolou, 2017). Additionally, individuals choose to remain single to hone their skills and advance in their careers because post-industrial civilisations are focused on technology, and people must devote a significant amount of time to their education before they can function in the labour market (Apostolou & Wang, 2019). Therefore, browsing research articles has proven that most individuals reported staying single as they want to develop their education and be appointed to a better-paid job.

In addition, mate preferences also impact the choice of remaining single. Women value status and wealth more than men do, whereas men value physical appearance more than

women do. A sociocultural viewpoint states that because women typically have less access to prestige, power, and riches in most countries, they look to males who possess these qualities to advance in life (Li et al., 2002). Both men and women prioritise education and income in a potential partner. However, men's dating habits suggest that they avoid women with graduate degrees or high incomes; they favour women who have some capacity to contribute financially to the household (Brinton et al., 2021). These findings portray the contradiction of women's and men's mate preferences for each other.

2.3 Involuntary Singlehood

Involuntary singlehood can be explained as those who want to live together or get married but are unable to do so (Fitzpatrick, 2023); those who are unmarried do so voluntarily: they struggle to attract a spouse despite their desire for one (Apostolou & Tsangari, 2022). The most critical reason that leads individuals to settle in involuntary singlehood is because of their unavoidable health condition. People with health conditions would rather not burden their potential spouses by remaining alone in the event of a health issue or other hardship. Health issues keep them from participating in the mating market (Apostolou, 2017). That finding, a study by Tarkang and Lutala (2015), has stated that a physical impairment may keep women unmarried because men are hesitant to associate primarily with women who are physically challenged. Men believe that they will have to put in too much effort to care for physically disabled women if they marry them. Besides, severe disease may impact a person's ability to allocate resources toward finding a partner and their ability to recognise a mate (Apostolou & Wang, 2019). This research is strongly proving the reason people with health conditions or disabilities are settling under involuntary singlehood.

Furthermore, many individuals face involuntary singlehood due to cultural mismatch and poor mating performance. According to the research (Apostolos & Wang, 2019),

mismatched ancestral and present environments could hinder mating behaviour and lead to a significant percentage of people being involuntarily single and going through protracted periods of being single. Relating to the previous research statement, a study by Apostolos et al. (2023) has indicated that in contrast to those who excel in this area, those who have poor mating performance – that is, those who have trouble finding and keeping partners – are more likely to be single unintentionally. Additionally, individuals with poor mating performance are likely to fail to draw in and keep partners repeatedly; finally, they may give up and choose to remain single.

Being introverted and having low self-esteem can lead a person to not engage in romantic relationships or find a mate for themselves. According to the research (Apostolou & Tsangari, 2022), being introverted limits one's options and lowers the likelihood of meeting a relationship by reducing exposure to potential partners. For example, admitting that one is alone due to difficulty finding a spouse may be detrimental to one's self-esteem. Besides, they had limited ability to flirt and recognise signals of interest, made little attempt to mate, and were extremely fussy. These characteristics have been linked to poorer mating performance, which implies that these characteristics could predict whether a person will remain involuntarily single (Apostolou, 2021a).

In addition, parental pressure to find perfect mates for their children also contributes to involuntary singlehood. Based on a study, mate-seekers are typically youthful and inexperienced in mating, and their decisions about mating are motivated by intense passion and a strong libido. However, their parents typically have more excellent mating experience when evaluating potential partners for their kids (Buss, 2023). This action by parents leads to involuntary singlehood among young adults, which has been proven through research conducted by Gui (2022). Chinese young adults' decisions on marriage are still influenced by their parents, as seen by the fact that unmarried women in their late 20s and early 30s still

experience solid parental pressure to marry and are the focus of disparaging social discourse. Since there is no acceptable alternative to marriage and choosing not to marry is linked to the family's reputation, parents are frequently involved in their children's partner selection and marriage decisions (Himawan et al., 2018).

2.4 Issues Surrounding Singlehood

Issues in this context may refer to problems or concerns that impact the society. Single individuals may experience challenges daily due to prejudice and discrimination from society, cultural pressure, peer pressure, self-perception, societal stigma and more.

2.4.1 Prejudice and Discrimination

According to Magardechian (2017), women who choose not to marry are stigmatised negatively as undesired, old housekeepers, spinsters, and less affectionate and loving. Hence, these individuals may seek strategies to cope with the pressure to escape.

The previous statement is further proven by a study conducted by Kislev (2023), whereby a group was studied to determine the dynamic of the group, including discrimination, prejudice, and group identification. It was found that in the first study, compared to other forms of discrimination, singles felt more discriminated against and showed less affiliation with being single than they did with other group identities. According to Study 2, prejudice against singles was more acceptable than prejudice against other groups, and singles were ranked lower on the group-like coherence scale than people in romantic relationships. The previous literature supports that single individuals may be discriminated against more compared to individuals in romantic relationships, and prejudice shown against them may be more normalised.

2.4.2 Stigma Surrounding Singlehood

According to Goffman (1963), stigma is a mark or characteristic that distinguishes someone and casts them in a negative light in the eyes of others. Goffman has classified stigma into two types, which are discredited and discreditable stigmas. Managing tension is difficult for people with discredited stigma since others are aware of their differences or issues—for instance, a person who is disabled. People are aware of the differences, and the individual needs to deal with the tension that comes with this knowledge. Individuals who face discreditable stigma face a distinct set of difficulties: their problem or distinction is not apparent to others. Therefore, the difficulty is keeping it hidden from becoming apparent.

According to Ntoimo and Isiugo-Abanihe (2014), singlehood falls under the discreditable stigma. However, symbols and titles such as a wedding ring make one's relationship status apparent. This may cause older single women to hide their status from others due to the fear of stigma. The previous statement may be further proven by Link & Phelan (2001), who state that a fundamental aspect of the stigma process is the sense of discrimination and status loss by the labelled individual, which can have detrimental effects on their prospects in life, including their psychological, financial, and physical well-being. This shows that the literature supports that stigma may negatively impact single individuals.

2.4.3 Self-Perception on Singlehood

Perception is a belief or a widely shared view. Single participants chose to stay single or by circumstance and perception. The previous statement is proven by a study conducted by Bhatt (2020), whereby women had an incredibly positive outlook towards their single status. The women viewed singlehood as a trade-off, to be free and independent, as staying alone but not feeling lonesome and as a symbol of satisfaction. However, when asked how society views their single identity, they take a very contradictory stance regarding their status as

single people. None of the participants shared any experiences that were favourable to the way things were.

On top of that, the way one perceives oneself will also show how they display themselves. This statement is further proven by a study conducted by Apostolou et al. (2020), whereby younger people perceive themselves as undesirable and unattractive; therefore, they are more likely to display their status as 'single'. It was also said that younger individuals do not like commitment. Therefore, how one views oneself may define one's relationship status.

2.4.4 Loneliness in Singlehood

Being alone may be a challenge for some individuals because they feel they do not have solid and close relationships with significant people. This may lead to loneliness. Loneliness can be defined as isolation or solitude (Tiwari, 2013). As the quote goes, "No man is an island" (Donne, 1624, Meditation XVII, line 1). This quote states that no one is self-sufficient, and we all rely on each other.

According to Adamczyk (2015), one's perception of loneliness is significantly influenced by the lack of romantic partners. Marriage is a protective factor because married people consistently feel less lonely than single people. The dynamics of romantic relationships are important because being in a romantic relationship is linked to reduced levels of romantic loneliness, whereas being single may lead to higher levels of loneliness overall and in the romantic sphere. A change in relationship status, such as the breakup of a romantic partnership, can also impact how lonely one feels.

On top of that, both men and women may perceive and experience loneliness differently depending on developmental tasks and traditional gender roles. Due to the conventional roles that characterise women in relationships, women may have a greater desire for intimacy than men. This could lead to a higher rate of romantic loneliness among

unmarried women. Therefore, loneliness may be one of the challenges that single individuals encounter.

2.5 Strategies and Coping Mechanisms

According to a study by Shahrak et al. (2023) on Iranian women over 35 who have never married. A variety of coping mechanisms were used. Firstly, is getting used to being alone. Several interviewees said they were at ease and comfortable being single, comparing marriage to a delicious dessert instead of a necessary institution. According to their statement, the women were satisfied with their independence and had come to terms with the thought of being alone. They maintain a stable job and stay with a supportive family. A participant emphasised the role of having a job and a supportive family as reasons for not desiring marriage. This is further supported by Ang et al. (2020), whereby a participant stated that after separating from a 10-year-long marriage, she went back to school and tried to meet new friends. Therefore, financial independence and the presence of a large family contribute to a sense of security, diminishing feelings of loneliness and reducing the perceived need for marital companionship.

On top of that is building strong social relationships. As an essential source of support, single women actively nurture and value their friendships. Participants emphasise the significance of preserving close friendships to combat loneliness, considering the evolving dynamics of family life, particularly in later stages.

Next, another coping mechanism is embracing God's plan. According to Shahrak et al. (2023), participants sincerely accept being single due to their religious views. The interviewed women agreed that God had predetermined their path and purpose, mainly regarding marriage.

Lastly, perceived social support is one coping mechanism for single adults. The idea that one is taken care of by others and has a solid social network one can rely on in tough times is known as perceived social support. People may believe they can get support from friends, family, and significant others (Wilson et al., 2020). This is further supported by the research (Coplan et al., 2021) whereby long-term singledom was linked to higher levels of loneliness; however, this detrimental effect was offset by elevated levels of perceived family social support and moderate levels of support from romantic partners. In another context, even after being single, the degree of romantic loneliness may drop from single people who believe their families are supportive.

2.6 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for this research is the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) proposed by Icek Ajzen in 1985. TPB emphasises that human behaviour is determined by three factors, which are attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control (Bosnjak et al., 2020).

Ajzen (1991) mentions that attitude refers to the level of satisfaction or dissatisfaction towards a specific behaviour. He also defines subjective norms as the societal expectations of a particular good or bad behaviour. Ajzen (1991) explained that perceived behavioural control is an individual's belief about controlling their behaviour. TPB emphasises that a positive attitude and subjective norms towards a behaviour, with robust perceived behavioural control, will cause an individual to act upon those behaviours (Ajzen, 1991).

2.6.1 TPB in Explaining Singlehood

Attitude Towards Singlehood. Voluntary individuals who live as a single person may have a more positive outlook towards self-discovery, the benefits of independence, and personal development. This is because they may view their single status as a chance to

concentrate on their interests, professions, and personal growth. This means they value independence as a voluntary single individual that allows them to focus on their career without being tied to a romantic relationship.

Involuntary single individuals who want to have a connection with another person. They feel that a partner's presence would boost their overall well-being. Therefore, they would like to avoid singlehood and find a partner soon.

Subjective Norms Towards Singlehood. There are two ways to view subjective norms: the norms against singlehood and the norms that accept people's choices in life. In an environment against singlehood, family and friends may pressure single individuals about the importance of being in a relationship. Friends and family might voice some concerns or give dating advice regarding dating. As a result, they become more conscious of the pressure from society to be in a relationship because of how societal expectations about relationships lead to less encouraging subjective norms.

Another version is that the environment is more accepting, where they would not judge if an individual chose to be single. Single individuals have supportive family and friends who support them in their life choices because they believe that singlehood is another choice of living currently. Therefore, single individuals would not feel pressured to force themselves to find a partner.

Perceived Behavioural Control. Perceived behavioural control can be explained in two ways: a single person with reasonable life satisfaction and a single without. A single person with reasonable life satisfaction would perceive that they have great control over their behaviour since they might have good financial stability, a stable job, a supportive social network, and so on. As for the other person, they might perceive that they do not have any control over themselves, such as no financial stability, health issues, strict parents, and so on.

Behavioural Intentions. Individuals' behavioural intentions rely on the three factors above: attitude, subjective norms, and behavioural control. Therefore, if a single person has a powerful desire to be single and has a supportive family, with a strong belief that they can control their life, then most likely, they will choose the path of singlehood willingly. Additionally, suppose the single individual has a strong attitude towards singlehood and behavioural control, but the subjective norms are against singlehood. In that case, there is a high chance that they still stand firm with being single due to the robust control over themselves, such as having financial stability and excellent life satisfaction; hence, they no longer see having a partner as necessary.

However, for involuntary single people, if they have a strong attitude toward wanting a partner that aligns with the subjective norms of being in a romantic relationship but do not perceive themselves as having reasonable control over their behaviour, then most likely, they had to stay single. This is because if they are facing barriers such as no financial stability, health issues, perceived low attractiveness and so on, then most likely they will stay single since these are the barriers that prevent them from having a partner.

From here, although the attitude and subjective norms towards singleness play a role in deciding if one become single or not, perceived behavioural control will determine the overall outcome since if the individual does not perceive themselves to have the ability to execute the behaviour, then most likely they will not do it. So, this is how the Theory of Planned Behaviour is suitable to become the theory that supports this study.

Chapter III

Methodology

3.1 Research Design

A qualitative research design will be chosen for this study. This study aims to investigate the reasons adults for opting for singlehood and their life experiences. Therefore, the findings mainly rely on their experiences of being single. Hence, data gained from this study cannot be quantified; thus, it needs to be subjectively evaluated and determined by the researchers after thorough data analysis.

So, a qualitative study suits this line of research because it emphasises comprehending and explaining the meaning that an individual places upon an issue (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). This is because being single nowadays can be a choice or not due to multiple reasons that cannot be quantified. Therefore, researching the life choices, barriers, and methods one uses in one's life requires the subjective human interpretation on the researcher's side.

There are various types of qualitative studies. As for this study, phenomenological research would be suitable for studying singlehood. Phenomenological research is a research design that explores individuals' experiences about a specific event (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The experiences of multiple individuals would then be analysed and summarised to describe the phenomenon they experienced.

For this study, the experiences of single individuals are collected to explore what they have gone through, their hardships, and how they overcame those hardships. Hence, a phenomenological study allows researchers to understand more about the different experiences that they have gone through and why they remain single for an extended period.

3.2 Population and Sample

3.2.1 Participants

It is expected that three to six people will be scouted out for the study. This is because every type of qualitative study (phenomenology, ethnography, case studies, etc.) has its recommended ranges. For a phenomenological study such as this one, the range would be between three to ten people (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). However, the number of participants is subject to the saturation of the data collected, where the data would show no additional information to be added. So, if the data collected reached saturation between three to six people, the search for participants would be stopped. If saturation has not been reached by then, more participants may need to be scouted for this study.

3.2.2 Sampling Procedures

For this study, purposive sampling would be suitable to gather participants. Purposive sampling allows researchers to select individuals who can bring the most value to a study within their limited resources (Patton, as cited in Palinkas et al., 2015). As for this study, the researchers or their acquaintances might know someone who fits the inclusion criteria and could bring value to the study. Thus, researchers would be able to request for their participation in the study. Purposive sampling is the perfect sampling method for this study because of its effectiveness in identifying highly potential participants who could bring a variety of data to this study.

This study also tries to explore if there are any differences in experience across a few demographics, such as sex, race, and age. Sex becomes one of the demographics used in this study to see if there are any differences in the life experiences gained by males and females. This is because there are studies suggesting the differences between sexes. According to Li et al. (2002), women choose to be single due to the pursuit of their careers; on the other hand,

voluntarily single men tend to chase physical attractiveness. Therefore, comparing the latter and previous findings would help to see if there are any changes from previous findings with the new one.

Another demographic included in this study would be race and ethnicity. This is because Malaysia is a multicultural country that is home to various races and ethnicities, such as Malays, Chinese, and Indians. In America, a study was conducted about singleness with race and ethnicity, and it was found that Black women enjoy the single life more than White singles (Pudrovska et al., as cited in Kislev & Marsh, 2023). This shows a difference in perception of being single between races. Therefore, collecting data from different races and ethnicities in Malaysia would allow this study to see if there are any differences in singleness as per the study in America.

The last demographic would be age. Individuals' goals differ from one another in different life stages. Bergström and Vivier (2020) mentioned that people in their 30s would focus more on finding partners. Another study then mentioned that when an individual gets closer to their 40s, they will focus more on themselves rather than finding a partner. Therefore, exploring the age difference would open up exciting experiences that participants of different ages will share during the interview.

For this study, the inclusion criteria for participation eligibility were single adults between 30 and 40. For adults in their early 30s, the feeling that being single is not a choice is at its highest (Bergström & Vivier, 2020). As single people grow older after their 30s, their satisfaction towards singlehood becomes higher. Girme et al. (2023) mentioned that when single people reach their 40s, their desire to have a partner decrease because they find satisfaction in life, such as life goals, focusing on their companions, etc. Therefore, the age

range between 30 and 40 would be suitable for a study about the experiences of being single as not a choice in their life.

The second inclusion criterion would be that the participants have been single for at least one year. This is because of the conflict in defining who can be called a single person. According to Conley and Collins (2002), single people are not in a relationship currently, even though they have been in one or been married. If based on this definition, a person who just broke up would be considered as a single person. However, the individual is still having a hard time; hence, the data the participant is giving might not be suitable for the study. Therefore, the minimum requirement for living as a single person must be determined.

Upon searching for relevant articles, no articles mentioned the minimum duration for a person to be defined as a single person. However, searching articles using an alternative way provides some insight into this matter. Articles about recovery time after the breakup were the alternative way to see how long it takes for a person to move on from the ex and start to find a new partner. This would mean that the person can be considered a single person ready to get out there again. Unfortunately, there was no specific period since recovery depends on one person to another. However, it has been mentioned that the longer a person takes a break after the breakup, the better they are at recovering (Howatt, 2016). Therefore, a year might be a safe assumption that individual has already moved on from their exes.

The third inclusion criterion is the residential status. Residential status provides insights about a single person's living situation, whether alone, with parents, or with friends. The experience gained by living in these different situations may provide informative data about the challenges they had to face and the motivators as to why they remain single. Gui (2022) mentioned that women who are still single beyond their cultural expectations will face pressure from their parents. Thus, this study can see whether these results are seen later in

data collection. Other than that, some remain single due to their obligation to care for their parents. Therefore, including their residential status would provide in-depth information about singlehood.

The exclusion criteria for this study would not include divorced individuals since they are already married. Hence, they would not give the correct data that this study is looking for, which are the reasons they remained single and their life experiences as a single individual.

3.3 Recruitment Process

A form using Qualtrics was created to register for those interested in joining the study. The form required some participants' demographic information to check for eligibility. Researchers had acquired potential participants by scanning through those whom researchers know might fit the inclusion criteria such as lecturers and relatives. After acquiring eligible participants, they were contacted by the researchers regarding the date and time to set the interview.

The location of the study can be done physically or virtually, depending on the availability of the participants. It would not be convenient for both parties if they had to meet up physically for the interview when they were far away. Another reason a virtual interview would be an option is because the purpose of this study is to hear the stories of the participants who joined the study. Therefore, this study only relies on the information from the answered interview questions to be interpreted. Although information from non-verbal communication could help explore more about the participants during the interview, it would not contribute much to the data collection since the study relies on the information collected.

An ethical clearance form had been taken from the Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR) website and filled out with the required details. After that, the form, the complete list

of questions, and the consent form had been submitted to the faculty for approval. After approved, the recruitment process will begin.

3.4 Instruments

The interview questions had undergone content validity whereby a qualified expert will assist in validating the questions before conducting the interview. Polit and Beck (2006) has summarized few definitional terms of content validity as the degree to which the questions or items that have been created would be able to explain or relate with the purpose of the scale or study. Therefore, to ensure the questions are valid to use for interview for this study, qualified expert would need to validate the content and also the phrasing of the questions to ensure that they are easy to understand and relate with the study about singlehood.

Open-ended questions had been used for the interview. Open-ended question such as “What are your thoughts and feelings about being single?” will be asked to start going into the main agenda of the interview.

To explore the research question, “What are the reasons for adults choosing singlehood?”. Questions such as “What is the reason for you being single?” was asked. This was to dive deeper into the research question about what causes a person to remain single. It was believed that these questions might help allow the interviewee some freedom in answering, thus giving researchers more data to analyse.

Besides that, questions such as “What are the challenges you had to go through?” was asked to answer the research question of “What are the challenges faced by adults in the singlehood path?”. These questions allowed researchers to explore single adults' barriers and hardships and how they overcame those experiences.

Lastly, the research question “What are the meanings behind the experience gained by single adults?” will be answered by inquiries such as “What are your thoughts and feelings about being single?”. These questions allowed the interviewees to think carefully about their answers and share the experiences, thoughts, and feelings behind those experiences, which could allow researchers to explore singlehood more.

3.5 Pilot Study

A pilot study is required for this study before conducting the actual study. A pilot is a miniature version of the study to test the procedure, items, etc. In (2017) emphasises that high-quality research is the goal for every researcher; hence, having a pilot study to identify the flaws of the research is extremely important so that improvements can be made before the actual data collection.

The pilot study's primary purpose for this research is to test the interview questions. This is because the interview questions are the primary data source to achieve this research's objectives. Therefore, the questions need to be aligned with the research objectives. Other than that, it is also essential to examine the clarity of the questions to ensure that participants can understand them clearly. This is because ambiguous questions would lead the participants to answer the questions outside the initial scope of the study. Therefore, asking for feedback from the pilot study participants would help notice questions that may need re-examining or re-phrasing.

Two individuals who fit the inclusion criteria had joined the pilot study. The individuals had been asked to fill up the online form and also the consent form for the interview. After that, the date, time and venue were set for the pilot study. Both pilot were conducted physically as per the request of the individuals. During the pilot study, interview questions were asked to see its suitability and simplicity in comprehending the questions

from the point of view of an interviewee. Besides that, other important areas such as the selection process were also evaluated.

From the pilot study, there was a comment from a participant regarding the registration form that was done for the selection process. The participant pointed out that some important ethical areas that was overlooked by the researchers within the registration form. The feedback had been taken seriously and the form had been amended as per the comments from the participant.

As for the interview questions, both pilot study found that the questions were quite comprehensive and easy for them to understand. Besides that, the questions created were able to help researchers answer their research questions. Therefore, it can say that there were no issues regarding the questions. However, one of the participants had recommended to add more questions into the set of questions. Hence, after some discussion, it was decided that a few more questions were added into the original set of questions.

Overall, the pilot study yields positive outcomes that had helped in the progression to the actual study.

3.6 Data Collection Procedure

After gaining approval to collect data, researchers had inquire the people that the researchers might know that fits the study so that they could fill in the Qualtrics if they are interested. Potential participants had been screened using the inclusion and exclusion criteria, and contacted to discuss about the date, time, and place for the interview. Consent forms had been given to the participants before the interview. All the interviews were recorded for both online and physical interviews to transcribe and ease the data analysis process. The data collected from the interview were analysed using thematic analysis. More data were collected from different sources other than interviews to get more information that might be helpful for

the study to compare and contrast with the data collected from the interviews. After the end of the study, all transcriptions, recordings, and information about the participants and others will be deleted to protect the confidentiality of the participants.

3.6.1 Obtaining Consent

After getting the ethical approval and finding participants who met the inclusion criteria and were willing to participate in the study, an informed consent form had been given out to the participants via e-mail or WhatsApp. Before signing the consent form, the participants had been asked if there is any clarification needed for the consent form. This ensures that the participants know what they were getting involved in. After any clarification and finally agreeing to the study after signing the consent form, researchers moved on to the interview phase according to the date, time, and venue both parties agreed upon.

3.6.2 Data Sources

The proposed data source for this study would be an interview with the participants. The interview can be done physically or virtually, depending on the suitability of the situation. The benefit of using interviews is that they provide data for research when they could not collect it naturally from the environment by observation (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). In this study, it is hard to observe the behaviour of a single person directly. Therefore, inquiry into the experiences of single people would be the best course of action since they can explain it more thoroughly.

Besides that, interviews allow researchers some sense of control when questioning (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Many data sources, such as observations, documents, and digital materials, can be used to gain information. So, from all these other data sources, it could give an overwhelming amount of information regarding the study. Thus, it may cause the information gained to be slightly off the study topic. Therefore, the interviews are the

primary data source because they allow the researchers to control the flow of questioning, where they would ask questions specifically to answer their research objectives and questions.

Another data source would be from documents found either offline or online.

Documents can be considered a secondary source of information that could help strengthen the data extracted from the interviews. From here, the data extracted from a primary source, the interview, could have a more conclusive interpretation since it has been backed up with previous research that got the same results.

3.7 Reflexivity

One of the issues that may arise is the differences in opinions. In addition, the researcher who is still single might be somewhat biased since they have already been single for a long time. However, this might not be the case because one researcher is in a relationship, another is in a relationship-building stage, and another is single without a partner. Therefore, there might be a clash of perspectives when data analysis is later. This happens because the other researchers might not be able to understand fully the struggles and things done by single people. In addition, the researcher who is still single might be somewhat biased since they have already been single for a long time. Hence, the researcher might relate strongly to some of the statements made during the data collection since they could be understood and empathised with by the researcher.

However, it must be noted that all the researchers have worked together for a long time, either professionally or after work. Therefore, the teamwork and coherence among the researchers are strong. Hence, any difference in opinion can be dealt with by discussing among the researchers and coming to an understanding when analysing the data.

Another issue that the researchers might face would be language barriers. For the inclusion criteria, there is no mention of focusing on specific races; however, researchers would try to find participants from different races to explore if there is any difference in the experience of single people across different races. Therefore, some participants might be more comfortable speaking according to their mother tongues, such as Malays with their Bahasa Melayu, Chinese with the different dialects, and Indians with their Tamil language. However, the research group for this study has been diversified from those races; hence, the researchers could overcome this language barrier and accept people from different races.

3.8 Data Analysis Method

This study used thematic analysis to analyse and compile the data. Thematic analysis is a method that allows researchers to analyse qualitative data by organising and creating patterns for interpretation that allow them to code those patterns into themes, which is the goal of thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2021). This method is suitable for a phenomenological study about singlehood because it relies on listening to or reading the experiences gained by single people. Some of the stories or information that were told might be similar. Therefore, using thematic analysis, researchers can organise and categorise similar data gained to create a theme for these similarities.

Thematic analysis has six phases. The first phase is about getting familiar with the data set. One way to familiarise oneself with the data set is to fully immerse oneself when listening to the recordings or reading the transcriptions. Braun and Clarke (2021) mentioned that re-reading or listening to the data repeatedly would help researchers understand more about the data. They also mentioned taking notes whenever reading the data set. All of these make sense because by reading through the data multiple times, researchers could discover more meaning about what has been said. Reading for the first time would allow researchers to

notice the surface-level information; however, re-reading would allow researchers to go in depth from word to word and imagine their situation. Then, during complete immersion into familiarising themselves with the data, researchers question or analyse it, becoming thoroughly familiar with it.

Next, the second phase is to code the dataset, whereby researchers will label interesting data or information with a meaningful description. Braun and Clarke (2021) emphasise that coding is more than just summarising the data; it is also about the constructive opinion from the researcher's side. This means that researchers would need to analyse critically and code data suitable for this study based on their analytical take on the data.

The third phase of thematic analysis is about generating initial themes. In this phase, researchers would try to find data or code that might talk about similar concepts that might be helpful for the research and group them. Generating a theme is not easy since it requires several components to determine a theme: the researchers themselves, the research questions, and the data (Braun & Clarke, 2021). This is because the data that have been collected can be considered as raw, unrefined data. Therefore, no definite answer exists about which theme suits this data set. Hence, it is up to the insight of the researchers to generate possible themes to match the data or codes that have been grouped.

After that, the next phase is to develop and review the themes initially generated during the third phase. For this phase, researchers would need to review the initial themes with the coded data and the original complete data. This is to identify if the data and the codes can help to support the theme by making sense of it. Braun and Clarke (2021) said that the themes are not yet set in stone during this stage. Some may be dropped, some may evolve into another theme, or some may be right. This is because generating themes allows

researchers to answer the study's objective; therefore, researchers must choose suitable themes.

The fifth phase is to refine, define, and name the themes. In this phase, researchers will refine the analysis more than the initial ones. Braun and Clarke (2021) gave some pointers about how to refine the themes that have been created. Those pointers were about how these themes can help the researchers explain their study and create a synopsis about each theme to assist in this phase. After that, researchers would also need to develop exciting names for each theme to attract readers' attention to the study.

Lastly is the write-up phase and the most critical part of thematic analysis. The write-up aims to convey a narrative about the study that researchers are doing by combining all the data and information that the researchers have analysed and collected. Braun and Clarke (2021) said that although formal writing starts in the third phase, researchers note that during the first and second phases, when conducting the interview, it can be used to help build up the narrative. This is because the final write-up also involves the introduction, the methods, and the conclusion that researchers had done to show how the dataset helps to answer the study's research questions. Therefore, editing is crucial for this part because researchers are compiling information from different parts of their study to make a beautiful and quality report.

Chapter IV

Results

4.1 Demographics

For this study, seven interviewees participated in the interview, two physically, while the others were done virtually. There were three males and four females who participate in this study. All of the participants been single for more than a year. Some of them had been single for at least two years and most of them were more than 10 years to their whole entire life. The participants were within the age range, which was between 30 to 40 years old. The participants were Malay and Indian with two people were Malays and five people were Indians. For their residential status, three of the interviewees are currently living with their family, three of them are living alone, and one of them is living with friends.

4.2 Findings

This study aims to explore the meanings behind singlehood, and reasons and challenges faced by single adults. Hence, three research questions were made to fulfill these objectives. There were two themes to answer the first research question which addresses the meaning behind the experience gained by single adults. This research question focuses on participant's overall opinion about singlehood.

There were three themes to answer the second research questions that helps to understand the reason behind their current status.

Lastly, there were two themes discovered to answer the third research question which focuses on the challenges that single people faced in their life. Strategies used to overcome challenges would also be discussed here as it compliments this research question.

4.2.1 First Research Question

Table 1

Identification of Themes with Sub-Themes, Codes and Meanings

Research Objective 1: To explore the meaning of being single.			
Research Question 1: What are the meanings behind the experience gained by single adults?			
Theme	Subthemes	Codes	Meaning
Thoughts and feelings about singlehood	Feelings towards singlehood	Positive and neutral	Feeling good towards singlehood due to life principles, or the advantages, and feeling neutral due to pros and cons between single and relationship
	Diverse path on singlehood	Voluntary and involuntary singlehood	Singlehood can be something that a person chose, or something a person could not control.
Independence	-	Do what and when I want	Singlehood gives abundance of time and freedom to do whatever they want.

Thoughts and Feelings About Singlehood. This theme is defined as the point of view of single people about their current status in which to observe the feelings they have towards singlehood and whether this was the path they chose or not. To look deeper into this theme, two sub-themes were created which were feelings towards singlehood and diverse path on singlehood.

Feelings Towards Singlehood. This subtheme surrounds the information about their feelings towards singlehood in which it could either ranging from negative to positive feelings. This subtheme tries to highlight about the diverse nature of singlehood in which being single could be mean differently to different people. From the interviews, it was found that all of the

participants showed positive or neutral stance about singlehood. There were none mentioning negative feelings towards singlehood. However, there was a deeper meaning behind being positive towards singlehood.

“I would say more positive, more positive, right, because one thing I have so much time for myself, right? I only have to take care of myself, OK?” (Ms. B)

“At the moment, yes, I don't think it will be like like this for a long period of time, but I feel that at the moment, given the situation as such, I feel like, yeah, definitely inclined towards single food at the given moment.” (Ms. D)

Ms. B and Ms. D highlighted that the reasons why they felt positive about being single was because of the advantages it gave to them. Ms. B said that she could take care of herself since she has lots of time. Ms. D then says given her current situation, being single had given her time to focus on her matters. Hence, Ms. D felt positive towards singlehood for now.

“I'm actually being single I think for almost more than, I mean forever I can say. OK, so yeah, so genuinely I am very happy and proud single” (Ms. Su)

“I view my life in the positive way. So, every single thing that happened in my life, I view it, view it in the positive way. So being single also is a positive thing for me.” (Ms. H)

Ms. Su and Ms. H felt positive towards singlehood due to their life principles. Ms. Su mentioned that she was very happy and proud to be single. In this sense, it can be seen that Ms. Su. had been through a lot in her life as a single person and has accepted singlehood as part of her identity. Ms. H viewed her current status as something positive due to her life principle where she would see things from a brighter view.

“While we are single, yes, you should enjoy whatever you can do when you are single instead of, you know, complaining when you are in a relationship about it. Or, you know when

you're in relationship and then you are like regretting wasting your single life kind of thing, so yeah” (Mr. P)

It can be seen that Mr. P has given his thoughts about the pros and cons of both single and being in a relationship. Mr. P pointed out that singlehood is a time where they can enjoy their life to the fullest before moving into the next stage of their life so that they would not leave any regrets. Hence, this was aligned with his thoughts about being neutral in his opinion about singlehood.

Diverse Path of Singlehood. Although single people might be happy or neutral with their current status, it does not mean that they chose this path. Those that deliberately chose to be single are of course happy and felt positive with their choice. However, it could not be said the same if it were not their choice. Involuntary singlehood can evoke negative feelings about being single since they do not really want to be. However, the findings had shown that no negative feelings were shown. In fact, those who mentioned that singlehood is not their choice had either neutral or even positive feeling. This may stem from the fact that singlehood gave a lot of advantages and although they did not choose it, but they adapt and found that singlehood is not so bad.

“Yeah, I couldn't control. It's not like I want to be single. It's just that it happened to be single.” (Mr. Sr)

Although Mr. Sr said it was not like he wants to be single, he does not feel negatively toward singlehood but, as a neutral stance. This mainly because he felt the pros and cons of being single such as he would have a lot of time, but at the same time felt lonely.

“Being single until now, I think it's 5050. Sometimes it's feel lonely, most of the time I feel that I can do things by myself, being independent alright. But at times, yeah, you tend to feel lonely.” (Mr. Sr)

“I didn't choose to be single.” (Ms. Su)

“OK for me, I'm not really choosing to be a single” (Mr. Sh)

“To be a single. I think for me it's not a problem because it has many advantage compared to couple or a married person.” (Mr. Sh)

It is noted that Mr. Sh and Ms. Su although they felt that being single was not something they chose, they were still happy with being single. So, this may show that they adapt to their circumstances and discovered the advantages that they could get from being single.

“To be a single. I think for me it's not a problem because it has many advantage compared to couple or a married person.” (Mr. Sh)

“I'm actually being single I think for almost more than, I mean forever I can say. OK, so yeah, so genuinely I am very happy and proud single” (Ms. Su)

Independence. This theme explores how single people gained a sense of freedom wot do whatever they want. Being single allows the individual to have so much of time for themselves since they do not have any other commitment other than themselves. So, this abundance of time gave single adults the opportunity to have autonomy over their life and do thing according to their own preferences.

“When I am single, I am the person in charge for my life. I'm the only person who are responsible for.” (Ms. H)

“As I can see, for being single growth wise like say you don't have any other commitments beside yourself. OK, maybe if you have your parents then that's another commitment. But as for myself? I can explore like for example maybe if I don't like to work here, I can go to another places without thinking about the responsibility or I would say

thinking about my partner like whether she can follow me or not or something like that.” (Mr. Sr)

“I am grateful because it has given me a lot more time to focus on the things that I really want to do.” (Ms. D)

Ms. H, Mr. Sr, and Ms. D pointed about that being single allowed them to be a person of their own choices. So, this shows how being single evokes the sense of being independent because they can just do whatever they want without any hindrance from partners.

Mr. P also pointed out that by having this much time, he was able to spend more time with the friends and family.

“In a social way, it's just that I get to spend more time with my friends and all, and then with my family members and all that.” (Mr. P)

As for Mr. Sh, he believes that this sense of independence allowed him to focus more on himself and build up his life. He would try to improve his relationship with his family, he would try to be more religious, and try to pick up new skills or hobbies along the way. This shows the advantages singlehood can give to single adults.

“I mean you you build up your life to make your parents happy to, I mean, like being more religious person like I am Muslim, right. And I need to get better in my religion level something like that. And then I mean, I want to build up my hobbies such as I like to drawing. I mean, maybe do some online business, build up my career and then something like that to make my my more more comfortable, improving.” (Mr. Sh)

4.2.2 Second Research Question

Table 2

Identification of Themes with Sub-Themes, Codes and Meanings

Research Objective 2: To explore the reasons and challenges behind singlehood.			
Research Question 2: What are the reasons for adults choosing singlehood?			
Theme	Subthemes	Codes	Meaning
Past versus Present Experience	-	Influence by experiences	Past experience such as childhood, viewing other couples, and TV shows and dramas shaped the perception of relationship and current experiences by singlehood benefits shaped comfortability.
Personal and lifestyle considerations	-	Practical decisions	Personal preferences, practical considerations, and lifestyle choices influence the decision to be in a relationship such as being career oriented, financial security, and personality.
Individual development and growth	-	Growth and development.	Improving personal growth and starting to embrace the comfortability of being single

Past versus Present Experience. The present study’s theme refers to the individuals’ past and present experiences that have formed and influenced their perception of being single. This also clarifies the considerations that played a role in their decision to stay unmarried for an extended period. This theme particularly draws attention to how media representation, exposure to other couples, and early experiences all influence how people will view relationships. These prior experiences provide a context for weighing the advantages and disadvantages of single life, which in turn affects how comfortable a person is with being single.

Ms. B states that during childhood her parents did not allow her to have a relationship with any boys as she attended an all-girls school, and they told her to wait until she pursued higher education.

“This while I started back to my childhood. Right when my parents right, when you know, I go to a very old girl's school, right? So, when you only get to meet boys, when you go to tuition classes and then at that point like my parents were like ohh don't have relationship because you're going to meet better people. When you go to university.” (Ms. B)

Ms. D states that most couples out there are not happy with their relationship as it should be the major thing to give importance to a relationship.

“But I can say this as a couple of therapies. I work with countless couple and to be honest I sometimes when I look at a certain relationship and how people are in relationship and how unhappy and you know dissatisfied, they are but they sort of rushed into it or they are holding on because of the fear or. Whatsoever I feel. Like. That's not important. Your relationship status is not important if you feel contented. Whether or not you're in a relationship. That's important” (Ms. D)

Ms. B mentioned that some of her friends are involved in a good relationship while some of her other friends are going through a very bad relationship as it made her feel lucky to be single.

“I view other people OK. Some of my friends do have very good relationships with their partners, right? Some of my friends, they have a. Very bad relationship. So, when I see the bad relationship right, this is where all the. Negative things start to come up and then after that I always feel like oh. I'm so lucky to be single” (Ms.B)

Mr. Sh mentions how couples get married even before they are ready to deal with married life as they encounter lots of problems in their life.

“And most people I know are already married or already couple. I mean they have some sort of problem that they are actually they are keeping for a very long time. I mean something is very big problem some like you know financing problem. And keep what we call. Ask for money from relative they know, like from this person and that person. But they but in in when facing they don't look like that. They look like happy, like no problem but for. Me. It's not, it's not normal. For me, you want to get married or if you want to be in in relationship you need to be ready.” (Mr.Sh)

Ms. B indicated some points from dramas that related to singlehood as it influenced her thinking about relationships.

“Do you watch sex in the city? Samantha has a very good philosophy about marriage, OK? Because she said that I love myself too much to give up to another person in which he will short change my life. Therefore, why am I doing it? Right. I think you have to be very, very, very concerned about your life before you want to have with someone. So, I always look at the singleness part, right, has been something that is nice and quite positive” (Ms.B)

Ms. B also mentioned that she is now very comfortable being single as she has been single for over a decade.

“So, by the time I would like to think about or where my life partner is already 40. So, no more time and besides, that was one of the factors like the timing part and then after you've been single for so long, right? You get very comfortable. And when you want to meet someone? You have to change your entire life. So, am I ready to change my entire life because I've been single for almost 40 years, right? So that was one of the reasons why I am single until now.” (Ms.B)

Personal and Lifestyle Considerations. This theme explores the practical factors that affect the decision people make in relationships. It captures the idea that a person's decision to

be in a relationship is influenced by a variety of factors including lifestyle decisions, practical concerns, and personal preferences. An individual's perspective on singlehood can be shaped by a variety of factors, such as personality, job orientation, and the need for financial stability.

Ms. D stated that she might not have achieved her goal of building her own empire if she happened to be in a relationship.

"I may not be able to develop soul mechanics as how far I've come, if alone I was in a relationship, I have never imagined it, but I would like to believe that it would have been impossible because in these five years since I started soul mechanics. Weekend weekdays I have entirely dedicated to soul mechanics, so maybe if I were in a relationship, I think things may have been different. I don't think I would have been able to. Uh, you know, like, solely focus. I'm sure I would have segregated some time for relationship and all. So, things may have been different." (Ms. D)

Ms. Su mentioned that the idea of committing into a relationship didn't cross her mind as she was invested in her career.

"When I was in my early 20s, OK, so I was very, very ambitious, you know, I was very, very. I was so focused in my career, so. This relationship, uh, you know, didn't come to my mind at all. So, my whole focus was in I, but I won't say I'm a very successful person now. Definitely not. But back in when I was in my 20s, my main focus, my main goal, everything was to become a very. Uh. Successful person in my career" (Ms.Su)

Mr. Sh mentioned that having a strong financial background is a must before being involved in a relationship because it would turn out to be a burden.

"Financial. You know, if you want to get into a relationship, you need to have a strong financial. For me, if you don't, don't get ready for that, then they cannot make your your wife

or the girl you want to marry be happy. So, I would be a burden to people. I rather go to singlehood. Something like that.” (Mr. Sh)

Ms. B also mentioned that money plays an important role in relationships, and she is not willing to share her wealth with her partner.

“And then, of course, the other thing I would consider right is money. Got a lot of people think eh when it comes to having someone in relationship and whatnot, right? It's quite costly. You know you have to think about going out for meals, right? You have to think about. Appearances, right? And then after you get married, you have to share your wealth. Which is something that I don't want to do, OK.” (Ms. B)

“No, it's not gold digger. It's just that I want to have a life security, OK? My wealth is my wealth. Your wealth is your wealth, right? Why am I supposed to share? That was my biggest concern because a lot of our Asian culture is that sharing is. Still OK, because you're building your life together. No. When you want to get married, you have to make sure. Everything is stable. That's the most important thing” (Ms. B)

Mr. Sr mentioned that he is looking for someone that has equal compatibility as him and mostly he tends to match with someone that doesn't go along with his personality.

“To be committed because some people they are kind of like, you know, they can tend to attract it easily to each other like myself maybe. I'm kind of a bit of looking into a lot of areas like for example the compatibility, the love, OK, the compatibility, the communication and things like that. So, I believe that there are certain things that it's not really matched in a way because of my personality or maybe the other person's personality. So that is the reason why I think I'm still single now. Looking for. Yeah. Yeah. Kind of thing. Yeah.” (Mr. Sr)

Ms. B stated that she is more open to marry with an orphan because being the eldest daughter she needs to prioritize her family and she won't be able to commit into another family.

“So, when you want to get married, one of the things that you have to do is to married the family. Yeah. Yeah. That's why one of my conditions to get married is I want an orphan? I want an orphan I don't want the person to have any family members because I'm the eldest. So, my family always comes first, so I have to take care of the other person's family. Then it will have conflict for me.” (Ms. B)

Ms. B also stated that for her age, she wants someone that can provide her companionship, someone that will be concerned about her feelings and feel comfortable being around.

“Towards my age has been single, right? You're not looking for a person to get married just because you get married. You for companion. Can that person listens to you or not? Can that person. Echo your feelings or not, can that person be comfortable with you or not? So, there is a certain. A stage in your life that you require a companion more than you require a husband.” (Ms. B)

Ms. D indicated that she needs someone with whom she will be able to share her life and will not get married just because of family pressure.

“Uh, OK, I have a therapist, so I also work with couples. It's not like I feel so strong towards single root. Definitely not. But I would feel that OK when I want to get into a relationship, I want to be at a place where I want to. Share my life with somebody. I don't want it to be like, OK, I want to get into a relationship because my family is pressuring me. Ohh, because biology. Clock is ticking. I don't want to do it for anybody else and I don't want to rush things like I really want to know. For sure I have a rapport with this person before I commit.” (Ms. D)

Mr. Sh said he is an introvert person, and that is the main reason why he cannot find a partner.

“It's like I don't have a girlfriend and it's not like I don't want to find one. I mean, you know, OK, I'm saying in general, I'm very introverted person. So yeah, that is strong opinion for not getting a girlfriend.” (Mr. Sh)

Individual Development and Growth. The main idea of the theme is that being single can present opportunities for personal development and advancement. This emphasizes the notion that being single can allow people to concentrate on improving their lives and themselves. It can involve following one's interests, passions, and objectives free from the limitations or trade-offs that come with being in a committed relationship. Being single may also be a time for people to think back on prior experiences, take what they have learned from them, and strive to be the greatest version of themselves.

Mr. P mentioned that being single helped him to build his career and his character, which increased his self-esteem.

“One of the reasons was that like, as I said, like it for me to build my career, my character and also to build myself like, you know, I notice that I have more self-esteem over the years.” (Mr. P)

Ms. D said she could focus more on her personal development and met many people with whom she could relate her experiences and she is certain of what she wants.

“So, the plus or the benefit would definitely be more focused on personal development, career. I meet many people. And I feel I'm also. I also feel like as I meet more people with my experiences, I definitely feel like I'm at a phase where I'm most certain of what I want.” (Ms.D)

Mr. Sh mentioned that he is able to make his parents happy, be more religious, build up hobbies, conduct online business and build his career, which led him to an improved life.

“You do something, I mean you build up. Your life to make your parents happy to, I mean, like being more religious person like I am Muslim, right. And I need to get better in my religion Level something like that. And then I mean I want to build up my hobbies such as I like to drawing. I mean, maybe do some online business, build up my career and then something like that to make myself more comfortable, improving.” (Mr. Sh)

Ms. Su said that while being single, she could focus and know herself better. Besides, she planned and started her master's that will contribute to her personal growth.

“I think that's the best time to know about yourself. The real person, I mean the real yourself.” (Ms. Su)

“You can always focus in your personal growth like and I think you will have Peace of Mind, ultimate Peace of Mind.” (Ms. Su)

“So, recently I was I was doing this self-analysis. Now what? What I can do better to make my life better. So, I just started my masters. I'm also studying. I'm a part time student. So that's 11 plan that I have. You know, I planned that recently and I started my masters” (Ms. Su)

4.2.3 Third Research Question

Table 3

Identification of Themes with Sub-Themes, Codes and Meanings

Research Objective 2: To explore the reasons and challenges behind singlehood.			
Research Question 3: What challenges do adults face in the singlehood path?			
Theme	Subthemes	Codes	Meaning
Societal Pressure	-	Family and Friends	Family and friends were not happy and do matchmaking, people from family gatherings would ask questions, and look at single people differently.

Changes in Social Life	Socializing	Not socially active	Friends are already married hence, lack of opportunity to hang out, and being single causes inclination to do things alone.
	Loneliness	Lack in emotional support	Managing things or handling emotions alone can be difficult since there is no one to support intimately.

Societal Pressure. Societal pressure in this research refers to the pressure for them to get married from the individuals’ family and friends. This clearly shows that there is a societal stigma which portrays that most of the time it is a ‘must’ for individuals to get married by a certain age. It is often viewed as a benchmark for success and life fulfilment. Not only that, but it is also a sign of care shown towards them to ensure that there will be someone who are able to accompany and take care of them when they are older. The societal pressure from friends and family may often create a sense of urgency in the individuals. For instance, when attending social or family gatherings it may turn into an uncomfortable experience for the individuals to be inquired about their current relationship status.

All of the participants agreed that they would feel pressured from either their family, relatives, or friends. Ms. B states that her parents and brother-in-law are still trying to get her to get married and have been constantly looking for a match for her.

“My parents has not given up for matchmaking you know. Alright, every time was, they were like, OK, this is a new candidate, right? And only certain, there's a limit for you to say no.” (Ms. B)

Ms. B mentions that from her friend's circle, she has two groups of friends. One group of friends that are married while another group is single. She has mentioned that it is easier to hang out with the single group when compared to the married group. She also added that she

gets agitated due to the high frequency of married friends constantly asking about when she will get married.

“Friends are also sometimes getting on my nerves, especially those who get married like they'll be like when is your next right? When are you going to get married or do you need the people you already 40, right? So, I have two cluster of friends, those who are married, they always have misconception and push you.” (Ms. B)

Ms. B also mentions that she gets a lot of pressure to get married when she attends family and social gatherings. She gets asked a lot about when she will be getting married.

“You will get a lot of pressure when you go to family gathering alright. Family gathering. They will be like oh, when's your turn?” (Ms. B)

How Ms. B handled this pressure was communicating her feelings directly or just joke around whenever she was asked these kinds of questions. Ms. B believe that she is a person who is straightforward and do not care about what others think and someone that can hold on to her beliefs.

“I have an attitude where I don't care. I don't really care about what other people say. OK, because people going to keep saying and keep saying right? So, it's just a matter of time they stop. So just stop caring that you'll be fine. But you need a lot of determination.” (Ms. B)

Ms. B also noted that whenever a relative asks about her partner, she would joke around by giving the common excuses.

“All my aunties and uncle was like, OK. When when is your turn? You know what I answered him? I I my reply was I'm too busy. I'm sorry I'm too busy.” (Ms. B)

Mr. P mentioned how his parents were not happy after his relationship status went back to single. He also mentions his mom wanting him to get married by a specific age.

“When I went single, of course my parents, especially my mom, she was not happy for. She was expecting me to get married by a certain age. When I announced that, you know, I’m I am no longer in relationship. So, she was like, OK, that’s not a good news kind of thing.”

(Mr. P)

Mr. P also responded to the societal pressure was to fight back as same as Ms. B but by replying to the family about finding a partner for him so that they would not disturb him again.

“One of it was, I actually throw the ball back at her. I said, “you want me to get married? Why don’t you go and get somebody for me to get married too?”. So that helped a lot, because now she’s busy finding people and all that, so she doesn’t bug me at all about it.”

(Mr. P)

Ms. D mentions feeling upset whenever she receives questions about when she will be getting married during family functions.

“This is one thing really upsets me is every family functions gets very difficult. Like if my cousin is getting married or if my if I’m attending like a open house initially. I wouldn’t say it is completely gone now, but initially I used to face a lot of questions and then I have had uncles who will come and tell me like hey, I will get, I will try to match make Ms. D with somebody. I know these guys interested all these sort of things.” (Ms. D)

So, how Ms. D overcame this pressure was by setting up boundaries as to not get too personal with the comments. She understood that her relatives were coming from good intentions. Therefore, being irritated by their comments would not be appropriate.

“I have very good boundaries with people. I don’t personalize peoples comment or people’s views of me like I always feel like, OK, that they’re coming from best intention, but that doesn’t have to define.” (Ms. D)

Interestingly, Ms. D's parents were very supportive, and they would even tell the relatives about her decisions to stay single and stand beside her.

"I'm blessed, I'm very lucky and I'm very fortunate because my parents have always been very supportive. My parents have always, always had my back and they have always tell them like, "No, D has always mentioned that she would look for a person herself and she's really not interested in matchmaking"." (Ms. D)

It was also noted that the friends of Ms. D were also very helpful in supporting through the societal pressure.

"My parents have always been very, very supportive, so that has been greatly, greatly helpful for me. And I also think. Having good what they call the friends." (Ms. D)

This was also the same for Ms. H who would also face the same situation as Ms.D.

"Luckily my parents and my family are supportive. And they don't really force me into marriage life." (Ms. H)

Mr. Sh mentioned that he was viewed negatively by his friends for not getting married.

"But for, for public they will see me as negative people like "don't want to get a girlfriend", I mean, " don't want to be a good life". I mean, it's like they saw me playing game like maybe they think I'm not thinking something but actually I am thinking about my life." (Mr. Sh)

Mr. Sh overcame this challenge by reacting proactively towards the pressure. Mr. Sh would take it as a challenge and try to prove them wrong by being there for them when they are in trouble. So, he would work his way into building himself and be ready in any case that requires his assistance.

“If anything happened to family or anything happened to my friend, I always there for them like have a financing problem or having like. I mean emergency. Like somebody just have to go to hospital. Always. I'm always ready to have them.” (Mr. Sh)

Ms. Su also mentioned how she is viewed negatively by society but does not think it is pressure but more to stigma.

“Because now I'm in my 30s, late 30s. So the way they, the people, the way the society look at you is completely different. When you're in the 20s, it's different, but when we are single in your 30s, the way they look at you is completely different.” (Ms. Su)

Ms. Su overcame this situation by doing nothing to change it or just watch comedy shows to pass the time. For her, she believes that all the pressure and things that came to her would just subside the next day. This would be means that she does not take it too seriously hence, she was able to let the thoughts and pressure pass by. However, in certain cases, if she felt it was too much, then she would go and pray at the temple.

“I don't do anything. If I I'll be automatically fine the next day. So that's why I said it will be a. It'll be for a very short period only. So basically, I don't do anything, but I watch a lot of comedies la.” (Ms. Su)

“I pray if it's really out of control, right. Yes. I I do pray. If I really cannot, cannot take it. I go to temple.” (Ms. Su)

Changes in Social Life. This theme consists of two subthemes, socializing *and* loneliness. Changes in social life in this research represents how their social life has changed positively or negatively while being single. This clearly shows how the individuals' lives are while most of their friends are already married. On top of that, it shows how without a partner it may cause a lack of emotional support in their life which may lead to loneliness.

Socializing. Individuals that experience singlehood will encounter changes in their social life which may be characterized by lesser opportunities to socialize due to the marital status of most of their friends. This reflects to them not being socially active after their friends have transitioned to married life leaving the individuals that are single behind with lower opportunities to hang out. This will cause an inclination for these individuals to conduct activities on their own. This shows that as the dynamic of social interaction shifts with the changes of relationship status.

Mr. Sr mentioned that it is difficult to spend time with his friends as they are married, and they are not available most of the time.

“It’s just that for me to spend time with them becomes harder because I’m available they are not available, so it’s kind of like the plan. Whatever plan that we make will become postponed, postponed, postponed and postponed forever in terms of friends. It’s just that the timeline, timeline, timeline is not being matched up for us.” (Mr. Sr)

Mr. Sr also mentioned that he becomes less socially active and spends more time with himself doing activities that he enjoys.

“I will say it becomes lesser and lesser socially active you spend. You tend to spend more time with yourself, like afterward you just do your things sports or watch movies, eat and then sleep.” (Mr. Sr.)

Mr. Sr did not mention any ways that he would overcome this challenge however in the interview he did mention about spending time with his family. In that sense, he was using the time he reserved for friends, for his family to keep socializing.

“More time for me to spend time with them because my parents are still there, so that is another plus point that I can spend more time with them.” (Mr. Sr.)

Loneliness. Individuals that experience singlehood will face loneliness as well. Individuals may find it difficult from time-to-time to navigate emotions without having someone intimate to share their day with. During challenging times, it may become more difficult as they do not have someone to confide in or support them.

Ms. D mentioned that sometimes she feels lonely and ponders how life would be if they had a partner.

“I’m not going to deny that sometimes you do experience some sense of loneliness, especially like Valentine’s Day or like, you know, every time you travelw to people’s places and then they ask you all the kind of questions. It does. It does make you wonder, how would life be if I had a partner.” (Ms. D)

Ms. D overcame this by dedicating the time she had to the things she wanted to do.

“I am grateful because it has given me a lot more time to focus on the things that I really want to do.” (Ms. D)

Mr. P mentioned that he does not have someone intimate to share his life with, which may be a downside of being single.

“But you know, end of the day like. You wanna share certain things with certain people that but you don't have it because you know you don't have someone intimate to share with, right? So that part is a bit lacking.” (Mr. P)

Mr. P overcame this by spending more time with his family and friends.

“In a social way, it's just that I get to spend more time with my friends and all, and then with my family members and all that.” (Mr. P)

Ms. Su said she feels there is no one to share her problems with whenever she felt stressed out from her work.

“I would say sometimes I because I'm a normal human being as well. So sometimes when I have problems. How to say? How to say so? Let's say for example, at work I had a terrible day, so you know, in this kind of situation, right? Sometimes I feel that I don't have someone to share my problems with.” (Ms. Su)

Ms. Su overcame this by watching comedy shows and also by praying and occasionally going to the temple.

“I don't do anything. If I'll be automatically fine the next day. So that's why I said it will be a. It'll be for a very short period only. So basically, I don't do anything, but I watch a lot of comedies la.” (Ms. Su)

“I pray if it's really out of control, right. Yes. I I do pray. If I really cannot, cannot take it. I go to temple.” (Ms. Su)

4.3 Summary of Findings

To summarise the findings and analysis, there are seven themes found in this research which are thoughts and feelings about singlehood, independence, past versus present experience, personal and lifestyle considerations, individual development and growth, societal pressure and changes in social life. Some themes had subthemes while others did not. Do refer to the table below for the themes and subthemes that we have retrieved.

Table 4

Summarization of Themes and Subthemes

No	Themes	Subthemes
1	Thoughts and feelings about singlehood	1. Feelings towards singlehood 2. Diverse path on singlehood
2	Independence	-

3	Past versus Present Experience	-
4	Personal and lifestyle considerations	-
5	Individual development and growth	-
6	Societal Pressure	-
7	Changes in social life	1. Socializing 2. Loneliness

All these are based on the 7 individuals and their experiences of being single such as their thoughts, feelings, challenges and ways on how they overcome it. The first research question asks about, what are the meanings behind the experiences gained by single adults? There are visible similarities when it comes to their thoughts and feelings about singlehood and one of it is the independence that comes with it. The second research question asks about, what are the reasons for adults choosing singlehood? Most of the individuals have mentioned about it being due to its positive impact on their personal growth and development while some have stated that it is due to personal and lifestyle consideration. A small minority however stated about how it is due to their past and present experiences. Lastly, research question 3 asks about what are the challenges adults face while being single? Almost all the individuals have mentioned that a main challenge is societal pressures while another is changes in social life. Our findings strongly relate to the research questions that were stated to ensure the relation with what the researchers.

Chapter V

Discussion

5.1 To Explore the Meaning in Being Single

Being single varies depending on the individual perspective. It solely comes down to how one views their life.

Firstly, based on the theme thoughts and feelings about singlehood and its subthemes, feelings towards singlehood and diverse path on singlehood, single individuals find that they are happy about their relationship status. 5 out of 7 single individuals stated they have a positive and stronger feeling towards singlehood while 2 said they are on a neutral stance. This is mainly due to the advantages that come with it, such as independence, the second theme that will be discussed later. Single individuals can make decisions without having to consider the needs and desires of another person (Apostolou & Christoforou, 2022). For instance, segregating their time to their own needs without having to dedicate any time to another person such as gaming, baking, and building a company. While discussing singlehood, it is important to consider both its advantages and disadvantages. Additionally, the element of control over one's single status varies among individuals; some may choose to remain single while others may not. For those involuntarily single, contentment with their life situation is possible. This perspective emphasizes the individual's outlook. A positive or optimistic mindset can lead one to view singlehood positively, turning it into an advantage. For example, single individuals that are involuntarily single may have happiness and contentment in their situation. In summary, those with a positive outlook are likely to perceive the benefits of singlehood outweighing the drawbacks, whereas those with a neutral stance may see both sides equally.

Secondly, based on the second theme independence, all single individuals have stated that independence is the primary advantage of their single status. The single individuals stated that they are the only person in charge of their life, and they are the only one responsible for it as well. They stated that being single allowed them to have control over their lives and they were able to do what they want without asking for anyone's permission. This proves that being single can give them the sense of control that they oversee their life (Bhatt, 2020).

Furthermore, the individuals highlighted the significance of independence within their singlehood experience, emphasizing their personal accomplishments. The single individuals stated that singlehood served as a catalyst for their personal development, affording them the opportunity to navigate various aspects of life autonomously. They exemplified this through instances of self-reliance, including stabilizing their career trajectory and managing their own financial affairs independently, resulting in a profound sense of fulfilment and achievement. These achievements also served as tangible markers and proved to them that they could handle life without needing a partner. The single individuals with higher independence would more likely experience a higher satisfaction with singlehood (Kislev, 2023).

In another sense, single individuals also have the freedom to prioritize their ambitions such as career and skill development (Apostolou & Patsiarika, 2022). Single individuals can dedicate their time to their work, as this may benefit and help stabilize their career life. The experience of single individuals highlights the value of independence in pursuing goals and succeeding professionally without being constrained by a partner's expectations (Hill, 2020).

5.2 To Explore the Reasons and Challenges in Singlehood

According to the themes discovered during the investigation, single people deal with a wide variety of reasons that contribute to their singlehood and along with it they must deal with challenges that are caused by their status of being single.

Considering the reasons that influence singlehood, individuals have many factors contributing to their prolonged single status. Study participants stated that their perspectives on relationships were greatly impacted by their prior experiences. It was noted that older people were more likely to say they were single due to negative relationship experiences; a further reason given by several participants for not pursuing new relationships was their fear of experiencing similar unfavorable outcomes (Apostolou et al., 2020). Their opinions on partnerships were formed by their early experiences, views of other couples, and media representations in dramas and TV series. According to the research (Jin & Jeong, 2010), the portrayal of single life as “cool” and parenting children as a “burden” in South Korea television soap operas and dramas helped to foster an unfavorable mindset among single individuals. Many of them seemed to find solace and ease in their single status, suggesting that these influences impacted their current feelings of being single.

Remaining single was found to be significantly influenced by lifestyle decisions, practical considerations, and personal preferences. Numerous individuals mentioned how much they valued their unique personality features, placed a high priority on their employment, and sought financial security. According to Apostolou et al. (2020) men stated that they were more likely than women to be unmarried for two reasons: first, they were unattractive as partners since they had not accomplished much in life, and second, they were unable to support a relationship due to their financial circumstances. This can be connected to one of the participants which was said to be ensuring financial stability is crucial before

stepping into marriage life. Besides, greater choosiness was linked to longer years spent alone as well as a higher likelihood of being single as opposed to in a relationship (Apostolou & Michaelidou, 2024). The need for a romantic relationship was frequently subordinated to these pragmatic concerns.

A further important theme that surfaced was the concept of individual development and growth. The time spent being single, according to the participants, allowed them to concentrate on bettering themselves and relishing the comforts of being unmarried. According to Beckmeyer and Jamison (2023) some young adults started emphasizing their single status on their self-centeredness; because participants frequently discussed how their time spent alone before entering partnership improved their understanding of themselves. They choose to remain single to concentrate on their own personal development, which includes clarifying their expectations for future love relationships. Moreover, it is hypothesized that people would find being single desirable since it would allow them to capitalize to their strengths, while participants said being single would allow them to concentrate on improving their employment or academic standing as being single provided them with additional resources, such free time, that they could use to better themselves (Apostolou & Christoforou, 2022). This subject implies that being single is not only a fleeting condition for many people, but rather a conscious decision to place a higher priority on personal growth.

Moreover, because of their relationship status, single people frequently face a variety of challenges in their daily life. The theme of societal pressure pertains to the impact that friends, family, and wider societal norms have on people's choices about their relationship status. According to Gui (2022) it was indicated that even after they gained financial independence and agency, their parents continued to feel that "getting married before 30" was a big deal for them; the parents had feelings of inadequacy as a result of their daughters'

single status, which manifested as worry and pressure for their grown children to get married. Family and friends may actively try to matchmake or express disagreements with an individual's single status, frequently driven by concern or cultural standards. According to the research (Apostolou, 2013), in addition to giving their children dating advice, parents actively work to pair up their children with people who have the attributes they want in a mate; they might recommend particular people as potential mates, giving their mobile phone numbers and pressuring their children to make the first move. During family get-togethers, this pressure may show up as questions and observations, which can make one feel as though they are being singled out or condemned for not living up to social norms.

Within the theme of changes in social life, the subthemes of socializing and loneliness emerge as significant challenges faced by single individuals. The decline in socializing was highlighted by the participants, who gave several explanations including feeling lonely as the only single person in social situations where couples predominate or a lack of single friends and relatives. According to Apostolou et al., (2023) indicated that another drawback of being single, according to participants, is not having someone with whom to go places, go out, or attend social gatherings; they also indicated another disadvantage of being single was not having someone to inspire them to become better versions of themselves. Feelings of loneliness and a stringer desire to spend time alone can result from this change in social dynamics.

As stated in the above paragraph, another main challenge noted was the loneliness that comes with being single. According to the research (Barjakova et al., 2023), being married or in a relationship is regularly related with lower degrees of loneliness, whereas being unmarried, divorced, or widowed is linked to higher levels of loneliness; for the youngest adults (less than 30), there is no significant correlation between partner status and loneliness, however for young to middle-aged adults (ages 31 to 65), partner status has the

greatest impact on loneliness. The participants highlighted how tough it is to handle life's obstacles and emotions without a spouse by expressing a lack of emotional support. Social standards that place a high value on romantic relationships might make people feel inadequate or incomplete, which can worsen their loneliness.

As mentioned previously, researchers were also curious about how single adults were able to overcome or faced the challenges. So, the main coping strategies by the participants were to keep themselves busy with other things such as religious teachings, hobbies, spending time with family and friends, being proactive, focusing on work, and self-improvement. By doing so, they would keep their mind off any thoughts of relationship or the loneliness that comes with being single. A study done by Golemis et al. (2022) had mentioned that doing beneficial things such as religious teachings, sports, sharing feeling about COVID-19 predicted lower level of loneliness. So, this is to show that by allowing oneself to keep their time busy with other things, would help them lessen their feeling of loneliness which was one of the main issues that was faced by the participants.

Besides that, another way that was discussed to help single people face the societal pressure would be by their interpersonal communication style. Most of the participants had different styles in communicating when faced with pressure from family and friends. One of them was humor. A study conducted by Himawan et al. (2019) found that single people would use humor as a mechanism against something that they could not change. They also mentioned about going against norms as a way single people tried to justify or counter argue a society's expectations. This relates with a few of the participants in which they would be direct and straightforward about their thoughts and feelings and ignore what the society has to say. Although this is not an argument against the pressure, but it is a bit similar as how it shows they are opposing the value and beliefs of marriage and relationship head on.

Lastly, quite a number of the participants had social support system from their family and friends to fight with the societal pressure and loneliness. Wilson et al. (2020) did mention that people may believe they can get support from friends, family, and significant others in which in this case, single people received it from their family and friends. A study by Fajardo (2020) found that the single women in his research had family and friends as one of the main sources of their happiness. Additionally, Coplan et al. (2021) said loneliness was predicted to correlate with a long period of being single. So, our study aligns with these lines of thoughts in which having a support system allowed single adults to be able to cope with the hardship they faced within the society and also themselves.

5.3 Theoretical Implication

Based on our findings, our theoretical framework, which is the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB), supports our findings for this research. The attitude towards singlehood refers to the feelings an individual has towards singlehood. Based on our study, the attitudes shown by the interviewees were neutral to positive towards singlehood. There were no participants who had negative attitudes towards singlehood. However, voluntary and involuntary singlehood is a separate matter. Most of the participants said that it was not their choice to be single, but they still felt positive towards singlehood due to the benefits gained through it. Therefore, having these feelings and thoughts about singlehood lead the participants to feel comfortable with their single status, hence, does not feel the need to resist their current situation.

For the subjective norms towards singlehood, as previously discussed, two ways were able to explain these subjective norms. Our findings support that a supportive family or any support system would allow freedom of choice. Some of our participants had supportive

family and friends that helped them in fighting back the societal pressure that they were facing and, their decisions were supported by them.

Another way was from the subjective norms that were against the idea of singlehood. Our findings also showed a norm in which some members of society put pressure on single people. The participants of our study felt pressured by their family, friends, and other relatives to find a partner as soon as possible. Different forms of pressure from them were such as started to ask questions, encouraging them to find a partner, voicing their concerns and even tried to have a match making session. As a result, the participants all agreed that it was pressuring them, some of them also said that they did not take it personally, but some of them felt it was annoying and sometimes disturbing.

For perceived behavioral control, it is about how a single person perceived their control over their desired behavior. There were two ways of looking at this which were either they have strong perceived behavioral control, or they do not. Our studies mainly found that the participants had a high level of perceived behavioral control. This is because they remained single due to several reasons such as personal preferences, practicality, and financial stability. So, remaining single due to these factors shows that they are the ones controlling their behavior by ensuring they are ready and matched with a suitable partner. However, there was a small amount of data gathered from one of them about other reasons that they could not control which was personality.

As for behavioral intentions, our study found that all participants were fine with being single. This would most likely be due to their attitudes towards singlehood. Although most of them were involuntarily involved in singlehood, their attitude towards it was not bad or negative. This would most probably be due to the advantages they experienced during their time as a single person that made them feel comfortable with just being single. So, since there

was no intention of going against their single status, their behavioral intentions remained unchanged even if they could find a partner.

Besides that, although all of them had to face societal pressure, the pressure did not change their decision to be single. This situation is likely caused by how they perceived singlehood, which all were fine with, and by a supportive family and friends that counters the negativity of the societal pressure. Moreover, having other coping strategies had helped them overcome this issue such as their communication styles and keeping themselves busy.

How perceived behavioral control affects behavioral intention is that by having control of when and who they want to be with, they can ensure the right partner for themselves. Hence, if they did not find any, they would stay single, which was fine with them. Although personality is something they could not control, it was not a major factor. So, it can easily be compensated for by the factors they can control and their feelings towards singlehood.

5.4 Practical Implications

This study could be of help for future studies about singlehood. As the number of single people in Malaysia increases, more and more studies about singlehood in Malaysia would be conducted. This study would be considered a comprehensive study about the lives of single adults. From here, future researchers could gain insights into understanding single people better when they start conducting their research.

As mentioned in the significance of study, this study would allow some valuable insight into single people in Malaysia that would allow policy makers to create policies or initiatives surrounding the current issue that is happening in Malaysia. For example, creating an awareness campaign about singlehood to help improve the societies perspective on single people.

Other than that, the findings of this research may allow the opportunity to break the stereotype that Malaysian society has upon single people. As a society that practices collectivism, a deviation from the norm would result in being looked at differently by other parts of society. Hence, the pressure and negative attitudes towards single people stem from the fact that they are different from what society expects them to be. So, this research would hope to spark a realization in this collectivistic culture that being single is no longer a deviation from society, but a new norm that should be practiced or at least understood by society.

5.5 Limitations

One of the limitations of this study is the limited time available for researchers. As informed previously, this study is a Final Year Project conducted by students under a limited period of time. Therefore, gathering data and analysing for the study requires a lot of time for a more in-depth analysis about the interview transcripts. This is more so when interviewees were giving answer somewhat between the lines that requires some time for researchers to finally understand what they were trying to say.

Besides that, another limitation that can be considered is the age group for this study. The age range used as an inclusion criterion was between 30 to 40 years old. Although we had justified the reasons for this age range, it still feels incomplete if other age ranges such as above 40 or 50, or above 20 were not included in the study since it could provide an even deeper understanding of singlehood since they may have different perspectives on singlehood.

Moreover, the quality of the questions asked could also be considered as a limitation. During interviews, some of the questions were misunderstood by the interviewees hence, they

gave answers that did not entirely answer what the questions were asking. This may be due to the differences in English language proficiency that could lead to this issue.

Lastly, this topic of research might have been too broad of a topic. After finishing analysing the transcripts, coding, and creating themes, researchers had found that each of the research questions had the potential of being a single research topic of itself. Hence, this shows how potent and rich the data were to the point it could be a research topic of its entirety.

5.6 Recommendations

For future studies, provided sufficient time, researchers could do a longitudinal study about singlehood to increase quality of research. The justification for this longitudinal study is that by conducting the same study on the same participants after a long period of time, researchers would be able to learn more about the changes in singlehood experiences. This is because analysing data from a huge gap of time between Time 1 and Time 2 would allow researchers to see differences between when they were during their 30s, and during their 40s for example. So, this would enrich the data gained even more because researchers would discover probably a whole other meaning in singlehood between the two times.

Besides that, broaden the age range of the participants can also be considered. This is because by having participants from either their 20s to their 50s, it allows researchers to explain or understand the lifelong singlehood journey since researchers are taking different age of single people and compile it into a single narrative that explains the singlehood journey.

Furthermore, preparation of interview questions in different languages might help participants understand them properly. For example, there are participants who are proficient in their mother tongue such as Bahasa Malaysia. Therefore, create questions in Bahasa

Malaysia and allowing them to answer in this language would help them explain better about singlehood since they might not have enough proficiency in English.

Lastly, future research to focus on one specific area of singlehood such as, thoughts and feelings, reasons of being single, or challenges and coping strategies in singlehood. By doing so, researchers would be able to understand better each of the topic because they could focus on a specific topic instead of broad research topic that could cause them to divide their attention and may or may not be able to fully grasps the meaning of the transcripts fully.

5.7 Conclusion

In conclusion, this qualitative study provides in depths insight on the meaning behind the experiences gained in being single and, the challenges and reasons for being single in Malaysia. Coping strategies used were also addressed within this study as an additional information due to the curiosity on how single people manage the challenges. Theory of Planned Behavior seems to be suited into explaining the mechanisms behind singlehood in terms of attitude towards singlehood, subjective norms, perceived behavioral control, and behavioral intentions. However, there are limitations to in this study which are limited time, age range, and language barrier, and broad research scope. Therefore, further improvements can be made after this research when future research is being conducted in this field of interest to ensure the quality of the data gathered could explain more about singlehood.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Interview Questions

Research Question 1

“What are the meanings behind the experience gained by single adults?”

Interview Questions

1. What are your thoughts and feelings about being single until now?

Interviewer needs to identify either positive or negative feeling from question (1) that would change the ending of sub-question (1.1) 's.

1.1 Can you share with us any experiences that make (you feel stronger towards singlehood – positive / you feel the way you are right now – negative)?

2. How has being single affected your life in terms of your growth, social, love life, or anything other dimensions that you can think of.

Research Question 2

“What are the reasons for adults choosing singlehood?”

Interview Questions

1. What are your reasons for choosing to become single until now? Is it something you choose or something you could not control.

1.1 What are the benefits / impact from being single?

1.2 What are your goals in this current single stage?

2. Do you mind sharing what do you do with your time as a single person?

Research Question 3

“What challenges do adults face in the singlehood path?”

Interview Questions

1. What were some of the challenges or barriers that you had to went through when choosing to become single? It can be in terms of yourself, family, friends, and any other party that you think had been a demotivator to you.

1.1 Despite having to go through these challenges, would you mind sharing about some of the things that had help you overcome or at least, minimized the impact that it had on you.

Appendix B

Turnitin Receipt

Embracing Singlehood Experience: A Phenomenological Study

ORIGINALITY REPORT

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Appendix C

Supervisor's Comment on Originality of Report

Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman			
Form Title : Supervisor's Comments on Originality Report Generated by Turnitin for Submission of Final Year Project Report (for Undergraduate Programmes)			
Form Number: FM-IAD-005	Rev No.: 0	Effective Date: 01/10/2013	Page No.: 1 of 1



FACULTY OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCE

Full Name(s) of Candidate(s)	Angeline Chung Kah Yee, Lanisha a/p Rajendran, Nabil Daniel bin Abdul Rahim Chan
ID Number(s)	2002895, 2002322, 2002024
Programme / Course	Degree in Psychology
Title of Final Year Project	Embracing Singlehood Experience: A Phenomenological Study

Similarity	Supervisor's Comments (Compulsory if parameters of originality exceeds the limits approved by UTAR)
Overall similarity index: <u> 0 </u> % Similarity by source Internet Sources: <u> <1 </u> % Publications: <u> <1 </u> % Student Papers: <u> </u> %	
Number of individual sources listed of more than 3% similarity: <u> 0 </u>	
Parameters of originality required and limits approved by UTAR are as follows: (i) Overall similarity index is 20% and below, and (ii) Matching of individual sources listed must be less than 3% each, and (iii) Matching texts in continuous block must not exceed 8 words <i>Note: Parameters (i) – (ii) shall exclude quotes, bibliography and text matches which are less than 8 words.</i>	

Note Supervisor/Candidate(s) is/are required to provide softcopy of full set of the originality report to Faculty/Institute

Based on the above results, I hereby declare that I am satisfied with the originality of the Final Year Project Report submitted by my student(s) as named above.

Signature of Supervisor

Signature of Co-Supervisor

Name: _____









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Date: _____

Date: _____

Appendix D

FYP 2 Action Plan

Action Plan of UAPZ 3023 (group-based)Final Year Project II for Jan & May trimester						
Supervisee's Name: <u>Angeline Chung Kah Yee, Lanisha a/p Rajendran, Nabil Daniel bin Abdul Rahim Chan</u>						
Supervisor's Name: <u>Puan Wirawahida binti Kamarul Zaman</u>						
Task Description	Duration	Date/Time	Supervisee's Signature	Supervisor's Signature	Supervisor's Remarks	Next Appointment Date/Time
Methodology, Data Collection & Data Analysis	W1-W2	16/2/2024 20/2/2024 29/2/2024	  			
Finding & Analysis Discuss Findings & Analysis with Supervisor Amending Findings & Analysis	W3-W6	30/3/2024 1/4/2024 2/4/2024 3/4/2024	  			
Discussion & Conclusion Discuss Discussion & Conclusion with Supervisor Amending Discussion & Conclusion	W7-W9	6/4/2024 7/4/2024	 			
Submission of first draft*	Monday of Week 10	submit the first draft to Turnitin.com to check similarity rate				
Amendment	W10					
Submission of final FYP (FYP I + FYP II)*	Monday of W11	final submission to supervisor				
Oral Presentation		Oral Presentation Schedule will be released and your supervisor will inform you				

- Notes:
1. The listed duration is for reference only, supervisors can adjust the period according to the topics and content of the projects.
 2. *Deadline for submission can not be changed, one mark will be deducted per day for late submission.
 3. Supervisees are to take the active role to make appointments with their supervisors.

Appendix E

FYP 2 Marking Rubric

**UNIVERSITI TUNKU ABDUL RAHMAN
FACULTY OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCE
DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY AND COUNSELLING**

UAPZ 3023 Final Year Project II

Qualitative Research Project Evaluation Form

TURNITIN: *'In assessing this work you are agreeing that it has been submitted to the University-recognised originality checking service which is Turnitin. The report generated by Turnitin is used as evidence to show that the students' final report contains the similarity level below 20%.'*

Project Title: Embracing Singlehood Experience: A Phenomenological Study	
Supervisor: Puan Wirawahida binti Kamarul Zaman	
Student's Name:	Student's ID
1. Angeline Chung Kah Yee	1. 2002895
2. Lanisha a/p Rajendran	2. 2002322
3. Nabil Daniel bin Abdul Rahim Chan	3. 2002024

INSTRUCTIONS:

Please score each descriptor based on the scale provided below:

1. Please award 0 mark for no attempt.

2. For criteria 7:

Please retrieve the marks from “**Oral Presentation Evaluation Form**”.

1. ABSTRACT (5%)	Max Score	Score
a. State the main research questions and research objectives.	5%	
b. Describe the methodology: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research design • Type of participants • Sample size • Location of study • Interview protocol 	5%	
c. Describe the characteristics of participants.	5%	
d. Highlight the significant findings of the study.	5%	
e. Conclusions, Implications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practical implication of the knowledge generated form the study 	5%	
Sum	25%	/25%
Subtotal (Sum/5)	5%	/5%
Remark:		
2. METHODOLOGY (25%)	Max Score	Score
a. Research design <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rationale for selected design 	5%	
b. Sampling procedures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rationale sampling method and sample size • Describe the recruitment process • Procedures for ethical clearance and approval 	5%	
c. Type of data collected <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe the forms of data collected • Describe other data sources • Relevance of the collected data with the research objectives 	5%	
d. Validity of the data collection method (e.g., rigor) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How the validity of the data is established 		
e. Clear explanation of data collection procedures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusion and exclusion criteria • Procedures of obtaining consent • Description of data collection procedures • Describe questions asked in data collection, content and form of questions (e.g, open vs closed ended etc) 	5%	
f. Describe the management or use of the reflexivity in the data-collection process	5%	
Subtotal	25%	/25%
Remark:		

3. RESULTS (20%)	Max Score	Score
a. Appropriate data analysis for research objective <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe in detail the process of analysis (e.g coding, thematic analysis) 	10%	
b. Thematic Analysis <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe research findings (themes, categories), the meaning and understanding derived from data analysis Demonstrate the analytic process of reaching findings (e.g. Interview responses, observations, field notes, etc.) Findings presented should include information to support the research objectives. 	10%	
Subtotal	20%	/20%
Remark:		
4. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION (20%)	Max Score	Score
a. Constructive discussion of findings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discuss the research findings and understanding from the results 	5%	
b. Implication of the study: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Theoretical implication for future research. Practical implication for programs and policies. Reflect on any alternative explanation of the findings 	5%	
c. Relevant limitations of the study.	5%	
d. Recommendations for future research.	5%	
Subtotal	20%	/20%
Remark:		
5. LANGUAGE AND ORGANIZATION (5%)	Max Score	Score
a. Language proficiency	3%	
b. Content organization	1%	
c. Complete documentation (e.g., action plan, originality report)	1%	
Subtotal	5%	/5%
Remark:		

6. APA STYLE AND REFERENCING (5%)	Max Score		Score
a. 7 th Edition APA Style	5%		/5%
Remark:			
*ORAL PRESENTATION (20%)	Score		
	Student 1	Student 2	Student 3
Subtotal	/20%	/20%	/20%
Remark:			
PENALTY	Max Score		Score
Maximum of 10 marks for LATE SUBMISSION (within 24hours), or POOR CONSULTATION ATTENDANCE with supervisor.	10%		
*Late submission after 24hours will not be graded			
	Student 1	Student 2	Student 3
**FINAL MARK/TOTAL	/100%	/100%	/100%

*****Overall Comments:**

Signature: _____

Date:

Notes:

1. **Subtotal:** The sum of scores for each assessment criterion
2. **FINAL MARK/TOTAL:** The summation of all subtotal score
3. Plagiarism is **NOT ACCEPTABLE**. Parameters of originality required and limits approved by UTAR are as follows:
 - (i) **Overall similarity index is 20% or below**, and
 - (ii) **Matching of individual sources listed must be less than 3%** each, and
 - (iii) **Matching texts in continuous block must not exceed 8 words**

Note: Parameters (i) – (ii) shall exclude quotes, references and text matches which are less than 8 words.

Any works violate the above originality requirements will NOT be accepted. Students have to redo the report and meet the requirements in **SEVEN (7)** days.

*The marks of “Oral Presentation” are to be retrieved from “**Oral Presentation Evaluation Form**”.

**It is compulsory for the supervisor/examiner to give the overall comments for the research projects with A- and above or F grading.

Appendix F
Signed Permission Sheet

Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman			
Form Title : Sample of Submission Sheet for FYP/Dissertation/Thesis			
Form Number : FM-IAD-004	Rev No: 0	Effective Date: 21 June 2011	Page No: 1 of 1

FACULTY OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCE
UNIVERSITI TUNKU ABDUL RAHMAN


Date: 8 April 2024

SUBMISSION OF FINAL YEAR PROJECT

It is hereby certified that Angeline Chung Kah Yee ID No: 2002895 has completed this final year project entitled "Embracing Singlehood Experience: A Phenomenological Study" under the supervision of Puan Wirawahida binti Kamarul Zaman (Supervisor) from the Department of Psychology and Counselling, Faculty of Arts and Social Science.

I understand that University will upload softcopy of my final year project in pdf format into UTAR Institutional Repository, which may be made accessible to UTAR community and public.

Yours truly,



Name: Angeline Chung Kah Yee

Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman			
Form Title : Sample of Submission Sheet for FYP/Dissertation/Thesis			
Form Number : FM-IAD-004	Rev No: 0	Effective Date: 21 June 2011	Page No: 1 of 1

**FACULTY OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCE
UNIVERSITI TUNKU ABDUL RAHMAN**


Date: 8 April 2024

SUBMISSION OF FINAL YEAR PROJECT

It is hereby certified that Lanisha A/P Rajendran (ID No: 2002322) has completed this final year project entitled “Embracing Singlehood Experience: A Phenomenological Study” under the supervision of Puan Wirawahida binti Kamarul Zaman (Supervisor) from the Department of Psychology and Counselling, Faculty of Arts and Social Science.

I understand that University will upload softcopy of my final year project in pdf format into UTAR Institutional Repository, which may be made accessible to UTAR community and public.

Yours truly,



Name: Lanisha A/P Rajendran

Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman			
Form Title : Sample of Submission Sheet for FYP/Dissertation/Thesis			
Form Number : FM-IAD-004	Rev No: 0	Effective Date: 21 June 2011	Page No: 1 of 1

**FACULTY OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCE
UNIVERSITI TUNKU ABDUL RAHMAN**

Date: 8 April 2024

SUBMISSION OF FINAL YEAR PROJECT

It is hereby certified that Nabil Daniel bin Abdul Rahim Chan (ID No: 2002024) has completed this final year project entitled "Embracing Singlehood Experience: A Phenomenological Study" under the supervision of Puan Wirawahida binti Kamarul Zaman (Supervisor) from the Department of Psychology and Counselling, Faculty of Arts and Social Science.

I understand that University will upload softcopy of my final year project in pdf format into UTAR Institutional Repository, which may be made accessible to UTAR community and public.

Yours truly,



Name: Nabil Daniel bin Abdul Rahim Chan

Appendix G

Ethical Approval Letter



UNIVERSITI TUNKU ABDUL RAHMAN DU012(A)
Wholly owned by UTAR Education Foundation Co. No. 578227-M

Re: U/SERC/78-192/2024

10 January 2024

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

Dear Dr Pung,

Ethical Approval For Research Project/Protocol

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

The details of the research projects are as follows:

No	Research Title	Student's Name	Supervisor's Name	Approval Validity
1.	Embracing Singlehood Experience: A Phenomenological Study	1. Lamisha a/p Rajendran 2. Nabil Daniel Bin Abdul Rahim Chan	Pn Wirawahida Binti Kamarul Zaman	10 January 2024 – 9 January 2025

The conduct of this research is subject to the following:

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

Kampar Campus : Jalan Universiti, Bandar Barat, 31900 Kampar, Perak Darul Ridzuan, Malaysia
Tel: (605) 468 8888 Fax: (605) 466 1313
Sungai Long Campus : Jalan Sungai Long, Bandar Sungai Long, Cheras, 43000 Kajang, Selangor Darul Ehsan, Malaysia
Tel: (603) 9086 0288 Fax: (603) 9019 8868
Website: www.utar.edu.my



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

Thank you.

Yours sincerely,



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

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



Appendix H

Registration Form



Wholly owned by UTAR Education Foundation
(Co. No. 578227-M)
DU012(A)

Default Question Block

Department of Psychology and counselling
Faculty Of Arts and Social Science
Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman

We are students from Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR), Faculty of Arts and Social Science, would like to conduct a Final Year Project with the title of Embracing Singlehood Experiences: A Phenomenological Study. This study is to discover in depth about singlehood within the society.

PROCEDURES AND CONFIDENTIALITY

Interview will be conducted approximately for about 30 minutes. All information provided will remain as private and confidential. The information given will only be reported as group data with no identifying information and only use for academic purpose.

PERSONAL DATA PROTECTION NOTICE

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

4/7/24, 1:35 PM

Qualtrics Survey Software

1. Personal data refers to any information which may directly or indirectly identify a person which could include sensitive personal data and expression of opinion. Among others it includes:

- a) Name
- b) Identity card
- c) Place of Birth
- d) Address
- e) Education History
- f) Employment History
- g) Medical History
- h) Blood type
- i) Race
- j) Religion
- k) Photo
- l) Personal Information and Associated Research Data

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

- a) For assessment of any application to UTAR
- b) For processing any benefits and services
- c) For communication purposes
- d) For advertorial and news
- e) For general administration and record purposes
- f) For enhancing the value of education
- g) For educational and related purposes consequential to UTAR
- h) For replying any responds to complaints and enquiries
- i) For the purpose of our corporate governance
- j) For the purposes of conducting research/ collaboration

3. Your personal data may be transferred and/or disclosed to third party and/or UTAR collaborative partners including but not limited to the respective and appointed outsourcing agents for purpose of fulfilling our obligations to you in respect of the purposes and all such other purposes that are related to the purposes and also in providing integrated services, maintaining and storing records. Your data may be shared when required by laws and when disclosure is necessary to comply with applicable laws.

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

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

Consent:

6. By submitting or providing your personal data to UTAR, you had consented and agreed for your personal data to be used in accordance to the terms and conditions in the Notice and our relevant policy.

7. If you do not consent or subsequently withdraw your consent to the processing and disclosure of your personal data, UTAR will not be able to fulfill our obligations or to contact you or to assist you in respect of the purposes and/or for any other purposes related to the purpose.

8. You may access and update your personal data by writing to us at:

- a. Nabil Daniel bin Abdul Rahim Chan - skyeizsu@1utar.my
- b. Lanisha A/P Rajendran - lanishababy57@1utar.my
- c. Angeline Chung Kah Yee - angeline.chung@1utar.my

Acknowledgment of Notice

- I have been notified and that I hereby understood, consented and agreed per UTAR above notice.
- I disagree, my personal data will not be processed.

Screening Form

Name (Can be names that you are comfortable with if you do not want to disclose)

Age

Contact Number (For the purpose of contacting for date and time of interview)

Do you grant us permission to contact you using your phone number? If no, please specify which platform you are comfortable with and also your contact from that platform. (ex: email - skyeizsu@1utar.my)

Yes

No

4/7/24, 1:35 PM

Qualtrics Survey Software

Gender

- Male
- Female
- Non-binary / third gender

Race

- Malay
- Chinese
- Indian
- Others

Residential Status (e.g.: living alone/with parents/with friends, or etc.)

Are you single?

- No
- Yes

For how long have you been single?

Please be informed that any changes will be contacted as soon as possible through the preferred media as you already stated above.

Yes, I have acknowledge.

Appendix I

Interview Consent Form

Embracing Singlehood Experiences: A Phenomenological Study

Interview Consent Form

I, _____ hereby consent to participate in an interview. I understand that the purpose of this interview is for research purposes only.

By filling up this form, I acknowledge and agree to the following:

1. I consent to being interviewed by Angeline Chung Kah Yee, Lanisha A/P Rajendran and Nabil Daniel bin Abdul Rahim Chan.
2. I understand that the interview session will be recorded.
3. I acknowledge that the recording will be used for research purposes and only accessible by the researchers which are Angeline Chung Kah Yee, Lanisha A/P Rajendran, Nabil Daniel bin Abdul Rahim Chan and their supervisor Puan Wirawahida binti Kamarul Zaman only.
4. I understand that my participation in the interview is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw my consent at any time during the interview without consequence.
5. I understand that my identity will be kept confidential, and any personal information disclosed during the interview will be anonymized in any resulting publications or reports.
6. I agree that the recorded interview may be transcribed, analyzed, and used in academic publications, presentations, or other forms of dissemination.
7. I understand that I will not receive any financial compensation for my participation in the interview or for the use of the recorded material.
8. I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the interview process and my participation, and all my questions have been answered satisfactorily.

9. I confirm that I am at least 30 years old, have been single for at least a year, am not divorced or widowed.

10. I have read and understood the above information, and I voluntarily consent to participate in the interview and the recording thereof.

Signed by,

Date

For any further information or inquiries, feel free to contact researchers through their contact below:

a. Nabil Daniel bin Abdul Rahim Chan - skyeizsu@lutar.my

b. Lanisha A/P Rajendran - lanishababy57@lutar.my

c. Angeline Chung Kah Yee - angeline.chung@lutar.my