

# INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF LAW, GOVERNMENT AND COMMUNICATION (IJLGC)

[www.ijlgc.com](http://www.ijlgc.com)



## USERS' PERSONALITIES AND GENDER EFFECTS ON SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Diyana Mohd Reffal<sup>1</sup>, Nursafwah Tugiman<sup>2\*</sup>

<sup>1</sup> School of Multimedia Technology & Communication, Universiti Utara Malaysia, Malaysia  
Email: diyana\_m\_reffal@ahsgs.uum.edu.my

<sup>2</sup> School of Multimedia Technology & Communication, Universiti Utara Malaysia, Malaysia  
Email: safwah@uum.edu.my

\* Corresponding Author

### Article Info:

#### Article history:

Received date: 16.10.2022

Revised date: 07.11.2022

Accepted date: 22.12.2022

Published date: 29.12.2022

#### To cite this document:

Reffal, D. M., & Tugiman, N. (2022). Users' Personalities and Social Media Usage During the Covid-19 Pandemic. *International Journal of Law, Government and Communication*, 7 (30), 136-161.

DOI: 10.35631/IJLGC.730012.

This work is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)



### Abstract:

The Covid-19 epidemic has made Malaysian consumers between the ages of 19 and 30 were highly dependent on social media. This is due to the fact that all activities, including employment and education necessities, are conducted online on social media platforms like Facebook and WhatsApp. This research propose that the negative or positive use of social media are depending on the personality of the user. Neuroticism, Extraversion, Openness, Conscientiousness, and Agreeableness are the five primary personalities according to The Big Five Personality Theory. This study examines the use of social media during the Covid-19 pandemic. There were 200 respondents who voluntarily engaged in this survey. The study found that Neuroticism increased by 0.814% based on time spent on social media, whereas Extraversion increased by 0.905%. In addition, the survey found that male respondents have a higher Neuroticism score (m=5.378) than female respondents (m=4.639), and that male respondents utilise social media more (m=5.781) than female respondents (m=5.574). To conclude, high institutions such as the government, universities, teachers, and students can benefit from this research regarding the negative health effects of excessive social media use.

### Keywords:

Covid-19, Effect, Gender, Personality, Social Media

### Introduction

Social media is an application used like the internet and it is based on the ideology and technology of Web 2.0 ensuring the creation and exchange of content by its users (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). This makes communication easier and indirectly helps people live their lives now. Among the frequently used social media applications are Whatsapp, Telegram, Facebook,

Twitter, YouTube and Instagram. In the context of university education, the majority of undergraduates who use social media assume that social media plays an important role in their daily lives. The development of this online system or application gives many changes to the daily life of the community to process, share and disseminate information (Salman et al., 2018).

The style of presenting information and communication through social media is often easier, convenient and timesaving (Kim et al., 2021; Liao et al., 2021). Therefore, educators and students can connect continuously without having to attend classes by leveraging this platform to learn and teach each other (Tang et al., 2021). *Coronavirus Disease 2019* or called COVID-19 is the originator of the pandemic on March 11, 2020, a disease that spreads almost all over the world. This virus spread quickly and recorded 185 countries in the world infected with COVID-19 (CSSE, 2020). Since the enactment of the Covid-19 outbreak, social media has become very important as an open source of information and a platform for sharing knowledge. Educational organizations including universities use this convenience to communicate more effectively in everyday life. Educators are now leveraging the power of social network technology to enhance the learning experience among students. The emergence of social media is very helpful for students and educators to interact and share opinions with each other. This is because social media acts as a medium in fostering relationships and relationships, and social media also functions as an educational medium (Zakirah, 2019). Through the media, students can cooperate, communicate, exchange opinions, create ideas and gain knowledge about something that is truly relevant in the environment education.

However, the use of social media also invites negative effects on university students. This is because the individual's personality traits during the Covid-19 pandemic may cause the individual to use social media to be overused according to their goals and goals. This is evidenced by the writing of Astro Awani's newspaper where the Clinical Psychologist who is the Assistant Professor of the Department of Psychology of the International Islamic University of Malaysia (IIUM), Dr Jamilah Hanum Abdul Khaiyom said that "when individuals are faced with a pandemic situation, it can increase anxiety in oneself especially when it is too easy to believe in the information shared on the social media" (Mamat, 2020).

Starting in March 2020, the government has advised all Malaysians to work from home and all activities involving gatherings are prohibited to prevent Covid-19 virus transmission. According to Metro Newspaper, a study released by data collection company KASPR DataHaus showed that Malaysia has recorded a nine percent increase in Internet usage starting from March 18th - March 20th, 2020, compared to February 12<sup>th</sup> - February 14<sup>th</sup> 2020 while Iran recorded the highest consumption increase of about 10 percent (Hassan, 2020). In addition, the Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission (MCMC) also informed that internet traffic flow throughout Malaysia increased by 23.5 per cent during the first week of the Movement Control Order (MCO) carried out and subsequently by 8.6 percent in the second week of the MCO (Adnan, 2020). The Movement Control Order has left millions of Malaysians "bound" to their devices to curb the spread of Covid-19 (Free Malaysia Today, 2020). Consequently, the use of social media by individuals increases during the epidemic, as it is the primary means of communication while people are isolated at home.

### Problem Statement

The use of social media during the Movement Control Order (MCO) increased due to the Covid-19 pandemic. This Covid-19 issue has caused concern and permanence of all residents

around the world (Shahbudin, 2020). Social media is the main platform for the community to express their fear and concern over the spread of the Covid-19 pandemic. Social media is also one of the networks that involves Internet networks. Kircaburun and Griffiths (2018) suggests that there is an association between a user's personality and an addiction to internet. The issue of consumer personality is often associated with the theory of *The Big Five Personality* (John & Srivastava, 1999). This problem is also supported by the research done by Shahbudin (2020) that suggests the panic of social media users over the issue of Covid-19 transmission has given rise to various emotional tendencies such as *Neuroticism*, which is more users tend to be worried, emotional and more sympathetic.

The usage of social media, particularly among college students, has reached a high level and has altered their daily life. For instance, the extension of the Covid-19 pandemic has compelled students to complete their education online and to utilise social media in their everyday life. Students can check the university's official Facebook page to obtain the most recent information about their institution. In addition, students must utilise additional tools such as WhatsApp, Twitter, and Instagram to obtain the most recent Covid-19 information.

Nonetheless, the misuse of social media has contributed to a number of negative issues, particularly among undergraduates at Higher Education Institutions. This issue occurs due to the absence of social media addiction oversight. Therefore, it is essential to discuss how individuals use technology on a regular basis (Zurawski, 2004). During online learning environments, students may spend time perusing each other's social networking platforms. Online learning implemented across the Movement Control Order (MCO) typically requires students' utmost attentiveness. Using gadgets such as smartphones and laptops, the online session runs from the wee hours of the morning through the evening. The use of smartphones during class will also induce students' attention to shift to social media. In this context, excessive usage of social media has a variety of negative impacts on the lives of students, including impacting their academic performance.

Throughout this pandemic era, the majority of students face significant stress owing to home-based online learning. They selected social media as their primary outlet for expressing their emotions. High-Neuroticism individuals are more likely to encounter negative emotional experiences, such as stress and acute anxiety. They will be more dependent on social networking platforms than people with low degrees of Neuroticism (Rettner, 2018). A youngster in Batu Kawa, Kuching, Sarawak, for instance, determines her life through social media. According to Sinar Harian news article, the girl cast a vote on her Instagram page, choosing answer D for death and answer L for life (Ghazali, 2019). As a consequence of the vote, 69% of her colleagues chose D and 31% chose L, and the girl was ultimately determined to leap from the third storey of the shophouse (Ghazali, 2019). This shows that excessive usage of social media has led some people to make the medium a determining factor in their life.

Not only are students at the university under extreme stress as a result of their need to accept the new normal, but women are also severely affected by the Covid-19 pandemic as compared to men. For example, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, a young women aged 29 had to become food delivery to support her husband's precarious income (Nasir, 2021). At this point, the personality of the individual may change according to the situation at hand. For example, a 29-year-old young woman needs to find a source of income for her family members, manage children and become a housewife at the same time. Women either working as frontliners or at

home are more affected by the change than men (Thibaut & van Wijngaarden-Cremers, 2020). This drastic change has resulted in women being forced to play many roles and may not be paid enough in salaries. Women are more challenged during the Covid-19 pandemic, especially home health care and hygiene, loss of income, increased burden of household chores due to husbands and children are forced to work and school from home as well as the risk of domestic violence (Isaac, 2021). Young women between the ages of 16 and 24 years old have high rates of total anxiety disorder or known as *Generalised Anxiety Disorder* (GAD) caused by excessive anxiety (Gani, 2020). Anxiety is also one of the personalities that belongs to *The Big Five Personality Theory* which is *Neuroticism*. Hence, this study is motivated to find out how gender and personality effects may influence social media usage.

Furthermore, excessive usage of social media might lead to mental health issues. According to Dr. Rozanizam Zakaria, a Psychiatrist at the International Islamic University Malaysia Medical Centre, excessive use of electronic devices and social media would result in mental issues, depression, extreme anxiety (anxiety disorder), and impulsive behaviour (Ghazali, 2019). This is because excessive usage of social media causes individuals to engage in less social interaction and less conversation with those around them. They rely heavily on social media sites to the point that they determine their lifestyle.

Therefore, looking at the problems of the above, we suggest that individual personalities can influence social media usage during the Covid-19 pandemic especially among students. Individual personalities include *Neuroticism* where individuals experience emotional disorders of things, *Openness* is that individuals are more open to what is discussed, *Extraversion* is an individual who is social with all things, *Conscientious* is an individual who has an awareness of what is happening and finally, *Agreeableness* that is the personality of the individual who supports the statement or discussion conducted. This personality is an individual personality that is always tolerant, harmonious, honest, polite, and trustworthy (Ali, 2019). This is because past studies have stated that the personality of *Neuroticism*, a combination of *Conscientiousness* and *Neuroticism*, a combination of *Agreeableness* and *Conscientiousness* will cause the individual to be addicted to use social media. For example, individuals with a combination of *Agreeableness* and *Conscientiousness* at low and high levels are more likely to develop social media addiction than individuals who have such personality combinations but on a balanced and equal level (Rettner, 2018). Berita Harian also issued a statement that Dato' Seri Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail is concerned about a society that is too dependent on social media (Rosli, 2019). Thus, the user's personality is decisive to the level of social media use of the individual.

## Research Questions

Based on the previous discussion, this research is motivated to answer:

1. Does user's personality influence social media usage during Covid-19?
2. Does gender affect user's personality and frequency of social media usage during the Covid- 19 pandemic?

## Hypothesis Development

### *User Personality and Social Media Use*

There are considerable disparities between user personality and social media use, according to the first hypothesis of the present study. If social media users have a negative personality, there will be an increase in social media usage. This is due to the fact that social media users with personalities and negative characteristics, as described in The Big Five Personality, such as Neuroticism or emotional disorders, will be more prone to negative direction. This is also supported by prior research demonstrating that the influence of out-of-control emotions leads to emotional writing on Facebook (Shahbudin, 2020). This is evident when social media are frequently packed with more negative than positive remarks and attitudes (Daily News, 2021).

H1: Users who have negative personality (*Neuroticism*) will use social media more.

Extraversion is a personality trait characterised by a greater propensity to associate and socialise with the outside world (Ali, 2019). This indicates that these individuals favour outdoor activities that facilitate social interaction. This notion is supported by research carried out by Hong et al., (2014). For example, Extraversion does not play a role in social media addiction (Hong et al., 2014). Due to the shift in circumstance and environment that drove the society to restrict outdoor activities, those with extraverted personalities were compelled to curtail their interaction with the outer world and engage in individual social interactions.

H2: Users who have positive personality (*Extraversion*) will use social media less.

### *Gender Demographic Factors Influence the Personality of Social Media Users*

According to Sabik et al., (2020), young females are more likely than young males to utilise social media platforms like Facebook and Instagram. Thus, we proposed that women are more likely than men to get unpleasant remarks and criticism from social media users. A study was undertaken when a British man created a Twitter account identifying as a woman, and the account ultimately received more nasty remarks and criticism, with the majority of the comments being purposeful (Atanasova, 2016). In addition, investigations of college students and adults revealed that women had higher Neuroticism personality score values than men (Chapman, 2008). Therefore, the study proposed that university-aged women may possessed a Neuroticism personality during the Covid-19 epidemic as compared to man.

H3: Users with negative personality (*Neuroticism*) are high among women as compared to men on social media usage.

Social media use does not necessitate physical activities such as exercising or running. According to studies on the personality of women and their physical activity, women who engage in physical activity are more likely to have high social personality (Extraversion) and low emotional disorder personality (Neuroticism), whereas women with high emotional disorder personality (Neuroticism) are less likely to engage in physical activity (University of Jyväskylä, 2020). In addition, Galer (2018) suggests that social networking is related to social conduct and that, in terms of gender differences, women socialise more than men. Previous studies were conducted prior to the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic; therefore, we proposed that women are more prevalent users of social media than men during the Covid-19 pandemic era.



H4: Females use social media more than males.

## Literature Review

### *The Big Five Personality*

According to Ali (2019), each individual will react differently to a given situation due to their unique personalities. It is more likely that individuals with a hospitable personality will enjoy fulfilling lives. Researchers have identified five personalities: Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Neuroticism, and Openness to Experience. The results demonstrated that four personality traits, namely Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, and Openness to Experience, promoted innovation among individuals, however Neuroticism did not (Ali, 2019).

According to Shi et al. (2018), those with the Neuroticism personality have emotional instability, whereas those with the Openness personality are open and creative. Interpersonal connections are influenced by the allure of Agreeableness and Extraversion, that is, the personality of Extraversion is always thrilled and seeking pleasure, while the personality of Agreeableness is always calm, respectful, and dependable. Finally, conscientiousness relates to persons who are responsible and competitive (Shi et al., 2018). Which Neuroticism personalities have a positive association with psychotic experiences, whereas other personalities have a negative association. Shi et al. (2018) revealed that Neuroticism had a strong favourable link with the psychotic experiences encountered by the study population, but the other personality traits had a negative relationship. This indicates that individuals are likely to endure high levels of stress and lead to social isolation (Shi et al., 2018).

A correlational study was done between loneliness and the chain of The Big Five Personality traits by Buecker et al. (2020). According to the experts, the relationship between an individual's personality and their emotional patterns and behaviours varies from person to person. Buecker et al. (2020) utilised meta-analysis to examine the association between personality chain and loneliness. Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, and Openness were found to have a negative link with loneliness, whereas Neuroticism was found to have a positive relationship with loneliness. Suggesting that those who were lonely were likely members of the introverted and neurotic groups. These individuals also exhibited lower levels of Agreeableness and Conscientiousness than non-lonely persons. Moreover, the Extraversion personality is viewed as being more prone to social loneliness than emotional loneliness. According to the study, social loneliness arises when a person lacks a social network and is proportional to the number of friends, whereas emotional loneliness develops when a person has no personal relationships (Buecker et al., 2020).

### *Use of Social Media During The Covid-19 Pandemic*

According to Daniel et al. (2020), social media was the primary channel for information dissemination during the Covivirus-19 epidemic. The people can use social media platforms to contact with family and friends to alleviate feelings of isolation and boredom created by the Movement Control Order (MCO). Daniel and Leonardo colleagues (2020) explore the usage of social media from two distinct perspectives, namely the advantages and disadvantages of social media use for individuals.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, one of the benefits of social media is that it facilitates the rapid spread of information and educational content. This is owing to the learning components that must be completed online to prevent student infection. In addition, in the publishing industry, social media saw an increase in article downloads, enquiries, and quotations. Moreover, one of the downsides of using social media is that information on social media is likely to be unreliable, outdated, false, and false in the local community. Furthermore, social media has the capacity to disseminate false information or cause undue worry, stress, melancholy, and anxiety (González-Padilla & Tortolero-Blanco, 2020).

During the Covid-19 outbreak, Wong et al. (2020) suggest that social media usage has expanded to the point where it is incorporated into the healthcare system. This is proven by the fact that the number of professionals and healthcare organisations utilising social media platforms has increased steadily over time. The researchers stated that social media has added a new dimension to healthcare by facilitating communication on health issues between healthcare professionals, patients, and the general public. The use of social media to communicate about health during the Covid-19 epidemic is advantageous when physical separation is required to transmit health information to the general public (Wong et al., 2020).

### ***Implications Of Using Social Media***

Hong et al. (2021) contends that exposure to information regarding the emergence of the Covid-19 pandemic is responsible for the different degrees of anxiety and depression experienced by each individual. According to the research, college students who read about Covid-19 on social media platforms such as the WeChat app would have serious health problems that induce dread, worry, and sadness. Therefore, experts believe that college students who are exposed to Covid-19 information on social media are more likely to develop anxiety and despair (Hong et al., 2021).

Social media has an impact on the organisation. According to Tajudeen et al. (2016), the usage of social media has a favourable and significant effect on the organization's performance in terms of cost savings, customer retention, and information accessibility. Social media empowers prospective and potential customers with interactive communication, which indirectly helps the organization's customer relationships. The participatory feature of social media facilitates two-way contact between companies and the public, thereby enhancing their interactions. Moreover, the majority of businesses have utilised social media to promote their products and services on their corporate social media sites. Social media can also reach a wider target audience with minimum expense and effort (Tajudeen et al., 2016).

Additionally, Daniel et al. (2012) study focused on the influence of social media and Web 2.0 on the decision-making process. Indeed, social media makes it easier for Internet users to converse and exchange information with their social network (Daniel et al., 2012). In terms of individuals, social media serves as a forum for evaluating matters prior to making a decision. Before the management of a firm makes a choice, social media is often utilised to gather authentic consumer feedback (Phillips-Wren, 2012).

### ***Gender Influence and User Personality (The Big Five Personality)***

According to a study conducted by Mastor (2003) on the association between personality chains and gender disparities in academic choices among Malay students, personality chains and gender differences are positively correlated. Where male students were more satisfied and

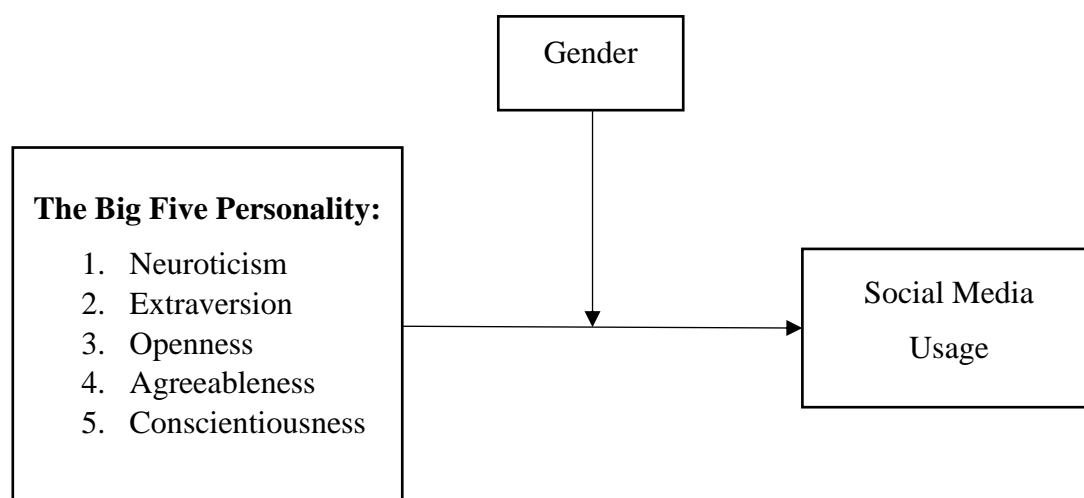
had an easier time selecting their major. As compared to female students who had a higher mean Neuroticism personality score (Mastor, 2003).

A report by University of Jyvaskyla (2020) found that women with a high Neuroticism personality trait were connected with a lower level of physical activity. Particularly, middle-aged women with a high Extraversion personality and a low Neuroticism personality are related to the time they spend engaging in physical activities, whereas women with a high Neuroticism personality are related to a decrease in the occurrence of physical activities. Another study examining gender variations in Neuroticism among Indonesian college students is done by Djudiyah (2016). The study found individual hormones influence the personality and genetics of the individual (Djudiyah, 2016). For example, women have larger hormonal fluctuations than men. This is due to the fact that the onset of menstruation leads women to suffer heightened emotional instability. In connection to this, the results indicated that men had a lower Neuroticism personality than women. Men have lower levels of anxiety, rage, and despair than women, and their emotions are more stable. In general, women are more susceptible to hormonal fluctuations that have a significant impact on their emotions than men. This is because they experience the onset of menstruation, conceiving a child and giving birth, breastfeeding, and developing monoparesis. Hence, women may be having a more neurotic personality than men (Djudiyah, 2016).

### ***Gender and Use of Social Media***

Randler et al., (2013) found that male students were more dependent on Internet use than female students. In addition, the personalities of Agreeableness and Conscientiousness shown a negative correlation with online addiction, but the personalities of Openness, Extraversion, and Neuroticism exhibited no significant correlation with internet addiction (Randler et al., 2013). Furthermore, gender disparities in social media addiction among the younger generation are imminent (Choudhury & Ali, 2020). Suggesting that male and female have different behaviour when utilising social media. Past research also urges that social media use be regulated and that users be aware of the risks associated with excessive social media use (Choudhury & Ali, 2020).

### **Conceptual Framework**



**Figure 1: Conceptual Framework of the Study**



## Methodology

This study uses a quantitative method to answer research questions. Specifically, the data was collected with survey questionnaire. Quantitative method is the most effective process for obtaining information from large groups of respondents (Debois, 2019). We distribute questionnaires through *Google Forms* to randomly selected respondents. The target respondents are those between the ages of 19 and 30 that is also known as youth. They are often referred to as the generation obsessed with the world of technology (Halim et al., 2018) and this led to researchers selecting respondents from youths with different educational backgrounds. The study was conducted at Universiti Utara Malaysia involving a total of 23,907 student population comprising Foundation, Bachelor's Degree, Master's Degree and Doctoral (PhD) students. A total of 200 samples of respondents involved in this study (Dzandza, 2018).

The questionnaires to be distributed are related to this study, namely demographics, social media users and the personality of social media users during the Covid-19 pandemic. This form has three sections, namely Part A related to the use of social media, Part B related to the personalities of social media users during the Covid-19 pandemic, and Part C related to the demographics of the respondents. Researchers will distribute questionnaires through *Google Forms* in WhatsApp and Facebook apps that have a student population of communications majors.

### WhatsApp

The Whatsapp app is the preferred social media at this point where users will use the app for social purposes and as a medium of message delivery either individually or group (Trisnani, 2017). He noted that the WhatsApp app acts as a medium of communication and satisfaction in the process of delivering messages to others.

### Facebook

Facebook is a role medium for finding the latest information and building networks (Feezel & Ortiz, 2021). In addition, Facebook is also identified as a very influential online communication medium as it helps connect and inspire users (Harris, 2020).

### Twitter

Twitter is a *microblogging* service and social site where users send messages using "*tweets*" with a maximum of 240 letters. In addition, Twitter is also used as a platform where medical practitioners exchange ideas, information, and comments on an issue (Rosenberg et al., 2020).

### Instagram

Instagram is a tool that is often used to generate information in the form of images, videos, music, and text notes with thousands of daily views (Niknam et al., 2021).

### Youtube

The YouTube app is one of the most dominant sources of online information, with over 2 billion users. Plus, YouTube is a powerful educational tool that healthcare professionals can mobilise to disseminate information and influence people's behavior (Li et al., 2020).

### **TikTok**

The TikTok app is a social network where users are allowed to post videos of users' arguments and opinions, dances and lip movements only. Additionally, TikTok will target a wider audience than focusing on original followers only (Ostrovsky & Chen, 2020).

### **Study Instruments**

The research instruments are based on past research and adapted in this study – a) user personality (John & Srivastava, 1999) and b) social media use (Akidah, 2016). According to Siddiqui and Singh (2016), social media is a medium used to discuss the latest opinions and issues that allow users to share information, ideas, videos, and images through certain channels. Social media is an electronic application that allows humans to connect and access information more easily and quickly via internet (Ahmat, 2015). In addition, this social media as a group of internet-based applications developed in terms of ideological policy and Web 2.0 technology enables the creation and exchange of user-generated content (Andreas et al., 2010).

This study instrument uses Bahasa Melayu to make it easier for the respondents to understand the questions given as the respondents are Malaysians only. For social media usage instruments there are three main sections which are the type of social media, the purpose of social media use, and the frequency of social media use. The social media type section has two items, and the researchers use the answer option to the question. The purpose section of social media use has six items and uses a measurement scale starting "1" to "7" i.e., 1 = "Strongly Disagree", 2 = "Disagree", 3 = "Somewhat Disagree", 4 = "Not Sure", 5 = "Quite Agree", 6 = "Agree" and 7 = "Strongly Agree". The social media usage frequency section has six items, and the researchers use a measurement scale starting "1" to "7" i.e. 1 = "Strongly Disagree", 2 = "Disagree", 3 = "Strongly Disagree", 4 = "Not Sure", 5 = "Agree", 6 = "Agree" and 7 = "Strongly Agree".

For user personality instruments, there are five dimensions used, namely the dimension of emotional disorders (*Neuroticism*), the social dimension (*Extraversion*), the dimension of openness (*Openness*), the agreeableness dimension and the *conscientiousness* dimension. Each dimension has four items and the overall item for this instrument is 20 items. The measurement scale used for this instrument is "1" so that "7" i.e., 1 = "Strongly Disagree", 2 = "Disagree", 3 = "Somewhat Disagree" 4 = "Uncertain", 5 = "Somewhat Agree", 6 = "Agree" and 7 = "Strongly Agree".

### **Social Media Usage**

Items for social media use are combined through three main sections, namely social media types, frequency of negative social media use (Cronbach's  $\alpha=.560$ ) (i. When in class, ii. When at the eatery, iii. When attending feasts and celebrations, iv. Before going to bed, v. When eating with the family, vi. As early as waking up from sleep) and the purpose of positive use of social media (Cronbach's  $\alpha=.676$ ) (i. To communicate with friends and family, ii. As a learning platform, iii. To get the latest information on Covid-19, iv. To share my thoughts on Covid-19, v. To express my feelings, vi. To get rid of daily stress and stress) (Khan et al., 2022).

### User Personality

There are five personality types based on the Big Five theory, the personality instrument is adapted from John and Srivastava (1999): **Extraversion** (Cronbach's  $\alpha = .614$ ) (i. I speak a lot on social media, ii. I feel motivated when discussing issues related to Covid-19, iii. I always give a positive aura and cheer others up, iv. I am easy to get along with new acquaintances when the issues discussed are the same), **Agreeableness** (Cronbach's  $\alpha = .614$ ) (i. Helping and not arrogant when discussing issues concerning Covid-19, ii. Apologies when there is a misunderstanding about the statement issued on social media, iii. Always trust the information issued by the Ministry of Health Malaysia on SOPs and Covid-19, iv. Easily tolerates the opinions and acceptances of others about Covid-19), **Conscientiousness** (Cronbach's  $\alpha = .793$ ) (i. Research and vigilance when sharing information on Covid-19, ii. Reliable when sharing information about Covid-19 on my social media sites, iii. Patience and patience until the Movement Control Order (MCO) is terminated, iv. Systematic and always adhere to the instructions issued by the Ministry of Health Malaysia), **Neuroticism** (Cronbach's  $\alpha = .913$ ) (i. Experiencing depression and always being in stress, ii. Quickly angry and outraged by the statement of increase in Covid-19 positive cases issued by the Ministry of Health Malaysia, iii. It is easy to experience extreme anxiety and anxiety while waiting for the announcement from the Ministry of Health Malaysia, iv. It is easy to be moody and sensitive due to the extension of the Movement Control Order), and **Openness** (Cronbach's  $\alpha = .900$ ) (i. Always curious about the development of Covid-19 issues, ii. Always have new ideas and activities when the Movement Control Order continues, iii. Have an active and creative imagination in adapting new norms, iv. Be smart and always think about the cause and effect of something that happens).

### Data Analysis and Results

#### Data

The gender of the respondents in this study was female gender with 55% representing 110 respondents while the male gender of 43.5% represented 87 respondents. The results showed that the number of female respondents was higher than that of male-gender respondents. The highest age of respondents was respondents between the ages of 24 and 29 years, with 106 samples and respondents aged 18 years to 23 years old had 92 samples. Finally, two samples were respondents who were 30 years old. The respondents who had SPM as the highest approval were 10 respondents (5.0%) and the respondents with STAM as the highest approval were 2 respondents at 1.0%. Next, the respondents with STPM, Foundation and Matriculation as the highest approval were 17, 16 and 14 respondents and represented 8.5%, 8.0% and 7.0% respectively. For the respondents who are diploma graduates, there are 20 people, and they represent 10.0%. Respondents with a bachelor's degree as the highest graduation were 87 respondents and they represented 43.5% in this study. For postgraduate and PhD respondents, a total of 23 respondents were postgraduate students while 11 respondents were PhD.

#### Frequency Of Social Media Usage

This section contains two items, namely the duration of social media usage and the amount of social media used within 5 hours and above.

**Table 1: Social Media Usage Period of n=200 Respondents**

Frequency	Per cent	Valid Percent	Accumulated Percent
1. 1 hour - 213 hours	6.5	6.5	6.5
2. 3 hours - 476 hours	38.0	38.0	44.5
3. 5 hours - 657 hours	28.5	28.5	73.0
4. 7 hours - 854 hours	27.0	27.0	100.0
Total 30	100.0	100.0	

Based on the Table 1, 76 respondents representing 38.0% spent their time using social media for 3 hours to 4 hours in a day. Respondents who used social media for 5 hours to 6 hours were 57 respondents (28.5%) and respondents who spent 7 hours to 8 hours were 54 respondents representing 27.0% in the survey. A total of 13 respondents with a percentage value of 6.5% spent their time with social media for 1 hour to 2 hours only. This shows that the majority of respondents spend a lot of their time using social media in their daily activities starting 3 hours and above.

**Table 2: Total Social Media Used within 5 Hours and above**

Frequency	Per cent	Valid Percent	Accumulated Percent
1. 1 - 2 56	28.0	28.0	28.0
2. 3 - 4 98	49.0	49.0	77.0
3. 5 and up 46	23.0	23.0	100.0
Total 30	100.0	100.0	

Based on the Table 2, a total of 98 respondents (49.0%) for this study used 3 to 4 social media within 5 hours and above. Respondents who used 1 to 2 social media within 5 hours and above were 56 respondents i.e. 28.0% and respondents who used more than 5 social media were A total of 46 respondents represented 23.0%. The results showed that almost half of the sample of 98 respondents used 3 to 4 social media within 5 hours and above.

### ***Instruments of Positive Use of Media***

The instrument contains as many as six items and results out of 200 data collected and analysed, the Cronbach Alpha value ( $\alpha$ ) for this instrument is ( $\alpha = .697$ ). For this instrument, a One-Sample analysis of the T-Exam has been carried out to identify the min score value for each item contained in this instrument.

**Table 3: One T-test Sample**

I often use my social media to..	N	Min	Standard deviation	Mean Standard Error
1. To communicate with friends and family	200	6.47	.862	.061
2. As a learning platform	200	6.34	.909	.064
3. To get the latest information about Covid-19	200	6.33	.838	.059
4. To share my thoughts on Covid-19	200	5.69	1.380	.098
5. To relieve stress and daily stress	200	6.35	.849	.060
6. Before bedtime	200	6.29	.817	.058

**Table 4: t-test Sample**

Test Score = 0

I often use my social media to..	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	(2-Mean Difference
1. To communicate with friends and family	106.106	199	.000	6.465
2. As a learning platform	98.522	199	.000	6.335
3. To get the latest information about Covid-19	106.692	199	.000	6.325
4. To share my thoughts on Covid-19	58.326	199	.000	5.690
5. To relieve stress and pressure harian	105.752	199	.000	6.350
6. Before bedtime	108.823	199	.000	6.285

Table 3 shows respondents who use social media as a platform to communicate with friends and family reported the highest score ( $M = 6.47$ ,  $SD = .862$ ) of the total student population at Universiti Utara Malaysia,  $t(200) = 106.106$ ,  $p = .000$  while Table 4 shows group youths who use social media you want to share their opinions on Covid-19 reporting the lowest score ( $M = 5.69$ ,  $SD = 1.380$ ) of the overall student population at Universiti Utara Malaysia,  $t(200) = 58.326$ ,  $p = .000$ .

### ***Instruments Of Negative Use of Media***

The instrument contains as many as six items and results out of 200 data collected and analysed, the Alpha Cronbach value ( $\alpha$ ) for this instrument is ( $\alpha = .674$ ). This value indicates that the item for this instrument is at a modest level.



**Table 5: One t-test Sample**

I often use my social media to..	N	Min	Standard deviation	Mean Standard Error
1. To express my feelings	200	4.85	1.773	.125
2. When in the classroom	200	5.43	1.499	.106
3. While in the eatery	200	6.01	1.305	.092
4. When attending feasts and festivals	200	5.56	1.703	.120
5. When eating with family	200	3.02	1.838	.130
6. As early as I wake up from sleep	200	5.70	1.414	.100

**Table 6: t-test Sample**

Test Score = 0

I often use my social media to..	t	df	Sig. (2-Mean tailed)	Difference
1. To express my feelings	38.687	199	.000	4.850
2. When in the classroom	51.236	199	.000	5.430
3. While in the eatery	65.067	199	.000	6.005
4. When attending feasts and festivals	46.120	199	.000	5.555
5 When eating with family	23.243	199	.000	3.020
6. As early as I wake up from sleep	57.000	199	.000	5.700

Young people who use social media in food stalls report the highest score ( $M = 6.01$ ,  $SD = 1.305$ ) of the overall student population at Universiti Utara Malaysia,  $t(200) = 65.067$ ,  $p = .000$  while the young group using social media family meal ethics reported the lowest score ( $M = 3.02$ ,  $SD = 1.838$ ) than the overall student population at Universiti Utara Malaysia,  $t(200) = 23.243$ ,  $p = .000$ .

### Analysis Of the Study Hypothesis

To analyse the hypothesis of the study, regression analysis will be used to identify the level of use of social media (*Neuroticism* and *Extraversion*) and user personality while ANOVA analysis is used to analyse the respondent's gender factors with both variables, namely the level of social media use and the user's personality (*Neuroticism*).

### User Personality and Social Media Use

**H<sub>1</sub>:** Users who have negative personality (*Neuroticism*) use social media more.

This Regression Analysis is used to identify that the hypothesis of users with negative personalities (*Neuroticism*) uses more social media. Table 7 below is the result of the analysis done on the personality of *Neuroticism* and the frequency of social media use.

**Table 7: Summary of Models in Regression Analysis between Neuroticism Personality and Social Media Use**

Model	R	Multiple R	Multiple barrels	R-Approximate Standard Error
1	.360 <sup>a</sup>	.130	.125	1.45977

**Table 8: ANOVA in Regression Analysis between Neuroticism Personality and Social Media Use**

Model	Multiple Amounts	df	Double Min	F	Itself.
1 Regression	62.972	1	62.972	29.551	.000 <sup>b</sup>
Residual	421.925	198	2.131		
Total	484.897	199			

**Table 9: Coefficient in Regression Analysis between Neuroticism Personality and Social Media Use**

Model		Non-standard coefficient		Standard Coefficient		t	Itself.
		B	Standard Error	Beta			
1	(Fixed)	.355	.855			.415	.678
	Use of social media	.814	.150	.360		5.436	.000

Regression analysis is used to study the personality of *Neuroticism* based on the use of social media. A significant regression equation was built which is  $F(1, 198) = 29.55$ ,  $p < .000$ , with a value of  $R^2 = .13$ . The expected personality value of *Neuroticism* is  $y = .355 + .814$  (social media use) personality *Neuroticism* when social media use is measured using time periods. The personality of *Neuroticism* of the youth increased by  $\beta = .814$  per period of social media use.

This suggests that the study hypothesis ( $H_1$ ) is accepted. In this study, the personality of youth *Neuroticism* increased by  $\beta = .814$  per period of their social media use.

**H<sub>2</sub>:** Users who have positive personality (*Extraversion*) do not use social media less.

**Table 10: Summary of Models in Regression Analysis between Extraversion Personalities and Social Media Use**

Model	R	Multiple R	Multiple R-barrels	Approximate Error	Standard
1	.601 <sup>a</sup>	.361	.357	.83464	

**Table 11: ANOVA in Regression Analysis between Extraversion Personality and Social Media Use**

Model		Multiple Amounts	df	Double Min	F	Itself.
1	Regression	77.804	1	77.804	111.687	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	137.933	198	.697		
	Total	215.737	199			

**Table 12: Coefficient in Regression Analysis between Extraversion Personality and Social Media Use**

Model	Non-standard coefficient		Standard Coefficient		t	Itself.
	B	Error	Beta			
(Fixed)	.468	.489			.957	.340
Use of Social Media	.905	.086	.601		10.568	.000

Regression analysis is used to study *Extraversion* personalities based on social media use. A significant regression equation was built which is  $(F(1,198) = 111.687, p < .000)$ , with a value of  $R^2 = .361$ . The expected *Extraversion* personality value is  $y = .468 + .905$  (social media use) *Extraversion* personality when social media usage is measured using time periods. The *Extraversion* personality of the youth increased by  $\beta = .905$  per period of social media usage.

This suggests that the hypothesis of the study ( $H_2$ ) is rejected. In this study, the *Extraversion* personality of the youth increased by  $\beta = .905$  per period of their social media use.

### ***Gender Demographic Factors Affect The Personality Of Social Media Users***

**H<sub>3</sub>:** Female has a negative personality (*Neuroticism*) compared to the male.

The T-Test analysis is used to analyse the personality of *Neuroticism* and the gender factors of the respondent (Female and Male). Table 13 is the result of the analysis of the T test on the *Neuroticism* personality and gender of the respondent.

**Table 13: Model Summary in Dummy Regression Analysis between Neuroticism Personality and Respondent Gender**

Model	R	Multiple R	Multiple barrels	R- Rectification Budget Skills	of
1	.236 <sup>a</sup>	.056	.051	1.52066	

**Table 14: ANOVA in Regression Analysis between Neuroticism Personality and Respondent Gender**

Model	Multiple Amounts	df	Double Min	F	Itself.
Regression	27.043	1	27.043	11.695	.001 <sup>b</sup>
Residual	457.854	198	2.312		
Total	484.897	199			

**Table 15: Coefficient in Regression Analysis between Neuroticism Personality and Respondent Gender**

Model		Non-standard coefficient		Standard Coefficient	t	Itself.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Fixed)	5.378	.160		33.550	.000
	Gender	-.739	.216	-.236	-3.420	.001

Based on the regression analysis used to determine the personality of *Neuroticism* based on gender in this study. A significant regression equation was built which is  $(F(1, 198) = 11.695, p < .000, \text{ with a value of } R^2 = .056)$ . The expected personality value of *Neuroticism* is  $5.378 + (-.739)(\text{gender})$  personality *Neuroticism* when gender is measured using  $0 = \text{male}$  and  $1 = \text{female}$ . Two regression equations based on  $Y = a + bX$ .

1. Personality *Neuroticism* =  $5.378 + ((-.739) \times 0) = 5.378$  (male)
2. Personality *Neuroticism* =  $5.378 + ((-.739) \times 1) = 4.639$  (female)

Based on the above equation, the hypothesis ( $H_3$ ) is rejected due to the personality of *Neuroticism* of the male gender ( $\beta = 5.378$ ) is higher than personality *Neuroticism* for the female gender ( $\beta = 4.639$ ).

**H<sub>4</sub>** : Females use social media more than males.

Independent T-Test analysis is used to analyse the respondent's gender factors (Female and Male) and frequency of social media use. Table 16 is the result of the analysis of the T test on the *personality of Neuroticism* and the gender of the respondent.

**Table 16: Summary of the Model in Regression Analysis between Social Media Use and Gender Respondents**

Model	R	Multiple R	Multiple barrels	R- Rectification of Budget Skills
1	.150 <sup>a</sup>	.022	.017	.68462

**Table 17: ANOVA in Regression Analysis between Neuroticism Personality and Respondent Gender**

		Multiple Amounts		Double Min F		Itself.
Model			df			
1	Regression	2.126	1	2.126	4.536	.034 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	92.804	198	.469		
	Total	94.930	199			

**Table 18: Coefficient in Regression Analysis between Neuroticism Personality and Respondent Gender**

Model		Non-standard coefficient	Standard Coefficient	t	Itself.
		B	Error		
1	(Fixed)	5.781	.072	80.114	.000
	Gender	-.207	.097	-.150	.034

Based on the regression analysis used to determine the use of social media based on gender in this study. A significant regression equation was built which is  $(F(1, 198) = 4.536, p < .000)$ , with a value of  $R^2 = .022$ . The expected social media usage value is  $5.781 + (-.207)(\text{gender})$  personality *Neuroticism* when gender is measured using 0 = male and 1 = female. Two regression equations based on  $Y = a + bX$ .

1. Personality *Neuroticism* =  $5.781 + ((-.207) \times 0) = 5.781$  (male)
2. Personality *Neuroticism* =  $5.781 + ((-.207) \times 1) = 5.574$  (female)

Based on the above equation, the hypothesis ( $H_4$ ) was rejected because the use of social media for the male gender ( $\beta=5.781$ ) is higher than the use of social media for the female gender ( $\beta=5.574$ ).

### Research Findings

According to the findings of the study, the objective of the study to identify whether the user's personality can influence the use of social media during Covid-19 has been achieved where the hypothesis ( $H_1$ ) and ( $H_2$ ) was answered by the researchers.

#### H1 = Users Who Have Negative Personality (Neuroticism) Use Social Media More

The first hypothesis ( $H_1$ ) is that users who have negative personality (*Neuroticism*) use social media more. The results of data from regression analysis accept the hypothesis that is fostered when the data results show that respondents who have personality *neuroticism* use social media more. The results of the analysis stated that respondents who had personality *neuroticism* would increase by  $\beta=.814$  for each period of social media use.

These findings are supported by a study conducted by Shi et al. (2018) when he believed that *the personality of Neuroticism* has a positive relationship with psychotic experiences while other personalities are negative. The results showed that the personality of *Neuroticism* had a very positive relationship with the psychotic experiences experienced by the study sample while the other personalities were negative (Shi et al., 2018).

Moreover, the results of this study show that the personality of *Neuroticism* significantly influences the addiction of social media use. Researchers argue that the prevalence of addiction to social media use is due to the fact that individuals choose to do things alone. This is to avoid happening something untoward when interacting with others (Alhad, 2019).

Through items found in the emotional disorder personality instrument (*Neuroticism*), the item "Easy to be moody and sensitive as a result of the extension of the Movement Control Order (MCO) received the highest mean score of 5.04. This shows that the use of social media during the Covid-19 pandemic era caused users to become moody and sensitive by spreading news



and statements about the extension of the Movement Control Order (MCO). This can be evidenced when the Utusan Malaysia newspaper issued a perception that the public would be depressed if the Movement Control Order (MCO 3) was implemented. The Royal Malaysian Police reported an increase in suicides since 2020 of 631 cases and January to March 2021 recorded a total of 336 suicide deaths (Hashim, 2021; Mental Health Psychosocial Support Services, 2021). In addition, the statistics on the usage of phones, WhatsApp and Facebook increased by 31.9% in 2020 compared to the previous year (Mbodila et al., 2020).

### **H2 = Users Who Have Positive Personalities (Extraversion) Use Less Social Media.**

The second hypothesis (H<sub>2</sub>) built by the researchers is that users with positive personalities (*Extraversion*) use less social media and this hypothesis is rejected. The results showed that respondents with *Extraversion* personalities used social media more during the Covid-19 pandemic. The results also stated that *Extraversion* personalities will increase by  $\beta=0.91$  over the time period of their social media use.

The results of this study are quite similar to previous studies from Sumaryanti (2019). Researchers conducted a study on university students in Bandung, Indonesia. Researchers argue that Facebook has a relationship with *Extraversion* personalities. The results showed that *Extraversion* personality and personality *Neuroticism* are the personalities of individuals who are addicted to the use of social media. The researchers concluded that the higher the personality of *Neuroticism*, *Agreeableness* and *Extraversion*, the higher the addiction to social media use (Sumaryanti, 2019).

This may be because individuals with an *Extraversion* personality are synonymous with individuals who like to socialize and get along with the outside world. However, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, this has caused these individuals to turn to social media to socialize. The sophistication of social media that has allowed its users to view and chat virtually such as through Zoom, Webex or *Skype* apps (Ariffin, 2020) helps this individual a lot to stay socialized even online.

### **Analyse Whether Gender Can Influence Users' Personality and Frequency Of Social Media Use During The Covid-19 Pandemic.**

For the objective of the second study, the researchers analysed whether gender demographic factors that could affect users' personality and frequency of social media use during the Covid-19 pandemic were achieved when the study hypothesis (H<sub>3</sub>) related to user personality (*Neuroticism*) and gender demographics was answered by the researchers. In addition, H<sub>4</sub> related to social media use and gender demographics was also answered using regression analysis.

### **H3= Female Has A Negative Personality (Neuroticism) Compared To Males.**

The results of the study show that the hypothesis (H<sub>3</sub>) is rejected. Analisis regression was carried out to determine that the personality of *Neuroticism* for the female gender is higher than that of men. The results found that the male gender has a *Neuroticism* personality value of M=5.378 compared to the *Neuroticism* personality of the *female* gender of M=4.639.

These findings may be related to past studies on the level of mental health and gender (Mohamed, 2020). Researchers conducted studies on university students by testing general health and mental health levels including anxiety levels and levels of depression. The results showed a significant association when the mean GHQ-12 score for male students was higher

than for female students. In addition, the researchers also conducted depression (BDI) tests to both genders of the study sample and the researchers found that the mean score of male students was higher than that of female students (Mohamed, 2020).

Nowadays, due to the spread of the Covid-19 pandemic, there are individuals who have lost their jobs, sources of income and can even cause emotional disorders (*Neuroticism*). As an example of problems involving men and emotional disorders (*Neuroticism*) when a man is believed to have hanged himself after killing his wife and man is believed to have committed suicide due to love problems by connecting a hose from the car's exzoz into the car through the rear windscreen of the car (Ismail, 2021a; Riduan, 2021).

#### **H4= Females Use Social Media More Than Males.**

The findings show that the hypothesis that the researcher has built is rejected. This is because, the results showed that male respondents used social media with a regression value of  $\beta=5.781$  compared to female respondents with a regression value of  $\beta=5.574$ . Therefore, the hypothesis ( $H_4$ ) is rejected.

The use of social media is increasing due to the presence of users at home as a result of the Movement Control Order (MCO). Currently, the use of social media is essential to maintain the relationship between family and friends, to get the latest information and no exception when a man uses social media platforms such as Mi-Chat and WhatsApp to blackmail his victims who want sexual services online (Ismail, 2021b).

To support the findings of this study which states that male respondents use social media more than women, a study of the Facebook page usage population showed that 53.5% of the 85.6% of Facebook users in Malaysia are men and the respondents are between 25 and 34 years old (Hassan, 2021). Hence, the majority of men are heavy social media users in Malaysia.

The results of this study can also be explained again by Azizi et al. (2019) who examines the relationship between addiction to social networks and academic achievement among medical science students in Iran. The results showed that the min score for addiction to social network use among male students was higher than that of female students. According to the reviewer, male students who are addicted to the use of social networks are from the lower 20 years of age. In addition, a negative relationship between the use of social networks and the academic achievement of learners (Azizi et al., 2019).

#### **Study's Implications**

The Big Five Personality theory used supports the findings of this study. Based on the results of the study conducted in chapter 4, there is a positive relationship for both personalities with the use of social media. Both were tested using the regression analysis of this study. The first hypothesis ( $H_1$ ) shows the value of Neuroticism personality improvement of  $\beta=0.814$  per time period of social media use where the second hypothesis ( $H_2$ ) also shows an increase in Extraversion personality by  $\beta=0.905$  per period of social media usage.

The Big Five personality and addiction to internet use are often discussed in past studies (Kircaburun & Griffiths, 2018). This user personality model contains five different dimensions such as *Extraversion* dimensions, *Agreeableness* dimensions, *Neuroticism* dimensions, *Conscientiousness* dimensions and *Openness* dimensions. This dimension can be seen from the way social media users interact and share information on social media. According to Ali

(2019), the theory of personality chains holds that individuals deal naturally with different situations and respond to the environment in different ways. In addition, personality plays a role in the relationship between innovation and life satisfaction.

Based on the current issue, the spread of Covid-19 has led the government to implement the Movement Control Order (MCO) to control the widespread spread of the pandemic. The government also issued official statements in stages such as employment sectors should reduce the presence of workers to the office, households can only go out by two people per vehicle, a ban on public areas and crowded areas. Such situations have forced Malaysians to work from home and limit outdoor activities during the pandemic.

This situation has caused Malaysians to spend a lot of time using social media for work, learning, entertainment, getting the latest information and connecting with family and friends. This situation will change the personality of the individual by taking advantage of the use of social media either positively or negatively in line with the detention (Choudhury & Ali, 2019), in which the theory of the personality chain will cause the individual to respond to environmental situations in different ways to achieve their innovation and life satisfaction.

## Conclusion and Recommendations

### Conclusion

Overall, the study conducted on youths aged 19 to 30 years old and students at Universiti Utara Malaysia, respondents with personality *Neuroticism* will increase by  $\beta=0.814$  according to the duration of social media use. In addition, respondents with an *Extraversion* personality will increase by  $\beta=0.905$  for the duration of social media usage. This proves that during the Covid-19 pandemic era, individuals who use social media today have a high *Extraversion* personality as their time is spent online in line with the government's recommendation to reduce physical activities and meetings to avoid the spread of the Covid-19 pandemic. In addition, the researchers found that male respondents had more *Neuroticism* personalities than women and they used social media more. Every individual needs to have a positive personality at this point as the implementation of the Movement Control Order (MCO) has resulted in hundreds of suicides due to depression and extreme stress as stated in this study. The researchers hope that this study will benefit the management of higher institutions such as the government, university top authorities, instructors, and students on the excessive use of social media will affect the health of students and their personalities.

### Recommendations

There are five recommendations for improvement for future studies. Among the recommendations proposed by the researchers are that future researchers should broaden the scope of the study, set a more specific scope of the study, use different study methods, selection of respondents from among the experienced, and a more in-depth study of the use of social media during the Covid-19 pandemic era.

Future researchers will have to choose a larger scope of study. This is because, in this study, the researchers only focused on 200 respondents, and they were from youths aged 19 to 30 years old. In addition, the researchers selected only respondents from among the students of Universiti Utara Malaysia. Therefore, the researchers suggest that future studies should be extended to youths from various universities in Malaysia. This is because, each student from different universities has a different experience and environment and at the same time can

influence the individual's personality towards the use of social media during the Covid-19 pandemic era. For example, some universities in Malaysia have established rules whereby only first-year students are allowed to reside within the campus area and other students are required to rent outside the campus area. This results in individuals who are students who are students with varying experiences and environments according to the current situation. For students living within the campus, they are exposed to facilities such as buses, cafeterias and their surroundings are safer (Lah, 2017).

The second suggestion of improvement is a more specific scope of study. For this study, researchers conducted a study on the use of social media during the Covid-19 pandemic era and the researchers also used *The Big Five Personality* theory and the respondents' gender factors in this study. Researchers suggest that future studies are more specific to some of the factors that are important during this pandemic era such as the use of social media in health, education, entertainment or social. The Covid-19 pandemic has a significant impact on the education, health, political, economic and social systems (Aziz, 2020). The researchers suggest a more specific scope as the mean score value to be obtained in the future will give different results based on more specific aspects. In this study, the researchers did not set a specific scope of study and it was more general.

Next, the researchers suggest that future studies use different research methods from these studies. This is due to the fact that the respondents only chose the answers listed by the researchers. If the future study uses a method such as a qualitative method i.e., an interview method, the answers received will be of higher quality and more in-depth. Moreover, through the interview method, the understanding of the question expressed will be deeper. In addition, future researchers can also use content analysis methods where researchers can select a social media site such as Facebook for a period of one month during the Covid-19 pandemic period. This method can give researchers a clear picture of the topics discussed on social media during the Covid-19 pandemic (Jasmi, 2021).

Recommendation four is the selection of experienced respondents. In this study, the respondents were from youths who were 19 years old and 30 years old. This is because the youths are called the generation obsessed with the world of technology (Halim et al., 2018). Therefore, the researchers selected the respondents of youths with different educational backgrounds. Therefore, the researchers recommend that future studies use respondents from adults and be more experienced in the use of social media. This is because most of the studies found by the researchers were related to youth and youth only. Future researchers can use a sample of experienced adult respondents such as educators, civil servants, and parents. The adults recommended by the researchers range in age from 30 years to 45 years. The surveyor's recommendation on the selection of more experienced respondents is supported when stating that students from adults have a wider and better-quality experience than youths (Al Amin & Juniati, 2017; Azman, 2016).

The latter recommendation is a study of the more in-depth use of social media. For example, future researchers can examine the factors that influence the level of social media use that causes them to develop social media addiction. This is because in foreign countries such as Hong Kong, their health centers attribute internet addiction to traffic frivolity, air pollution and life satisfaction. In addition, one study stated that the factors that influence youths to become addicted to the use of social media are due to unlimited internet ownership, wide social

networks and reliance on social media as a sharing site of the latest information (Sualman, 2019; Andrew et al., 2020).

## References

- Adnan, A. S. (2020, April 9). *PKP: Penggunaan internet meningkat, kelajuan menurun*. Retrieved from Berita Harian: <https://www.bharian.com.my/berita/nasional/2020/04/674880/pkp-penggunaan-internet-meningkat-kelajuan-menurun>
- Ahmat, M. A. (2015). Penggunaan Media Sosial Secara Lestari Di Kalangan. Retrieved from <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/32600556.pdf>
- Al Amin, M., & Juniati, D. (2017). Klasifikasi Kelompok Umur Manusia Berdasarkan Analisis Dimensi Fraktal Box Counting Dari Citra Wajah Dengan Deteksi Tepi Canny. *Jurnal Ilmiah Matematika*, 2(5), 33–42.
- Alhad, M. A. (2019). Neuroticism and social media addiction. *Interaktif: Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Sosial*, 11(2), 148-154.
- Ali, I. (2019). Personality traits, individual innovativeness and satisfaction with life. *Journal of Innovation & Knowledge*, 4(1), 38-46.
- Kaplan, A. M., & Haenlein, M. (2010). Users of the world, unite! The challenges and opportunities of Social Media. *Business horizons*, 53(1), 59-68.
- Andrew, F. T., Tahir, Z., Malek, J. A., & Yusof, A. R. M. (2020). Ketagihan Penggunaan Media Sosial Terhadap Gaya Hidup Belia. *Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities*, 17(9), 126-139.
- Ang, E. (2017). *Hubungan Antara Kecerdasan Emosi Dan Personaliti "Big Five" Dalam Kalangan Guru Sekolah Rendah Daerah Kota Tinggi*. Universiti Teknologi Malaysia.
- Ariffin, P. M. (2020, Mac 29). Manfaatkan teknologi mudah alih sewaktu krisis Covid-19. *Astro Awani*. Retrieved from Astro Awani: <https://www.astroawani.com>
- Atanasova, A. (2016, November 6). Gender-Specific Behaviors on Social Media and What They Mean for Online Communications. *Social Media Today*. Retrieved from <https://www.socialmediatoday.com>
- Aziz, A. R. A., Sukor, M. N., & Razak, N. H. (2020). Wabak Covid-19: Pengurusan Aspek Kesihatan Mental Semasa Norma Baharu. *International journal of Social Science Research*, 156-174.
- Azizi, S. M., Soroush, A., & Khatony, A. (2019). The relationship between social networking addiction and academic performance in Iranian students of medical sciences: a cross-sectional study. *BMC psychology*, 7(1), 1-8.
- Azli, F. (2020, Desember 31). Pandemi COVID-19 dorong Badan Kehakiman lebih aktif dalam media sosial - Tengku Maimun. *Astro Awani*. Retrieved from <https://www.astroawani.com>
- Azman, N. (2016). *Pembelajaran Dewasa*. In Panduan Amalan Pengajaran dan Pembelajaran Berkesan (pp. 67-92). UKM, Selangor: PPA UKM.
- Berita Harian. (2021, Mac 17). Banyak 'jiwa kacau' di media sosial, perlu dikawal sebelum parah. *Berita Harian*. Retrieved from <https://www.bharian.com.my>
- Buecker, S., Maes, M., Denissen, J. J., & Luhmann, M. (2020). Loneliness and the big five personality traits: a meta-analysis. *European Journal of Personality*, 34(1), 8-28.
- Chapman, B. P., Duberstein, P. R., Sörensen, S., & Lyness, J. M. (2008). Gender differences in Five Factor Model personality traits in an elderly cohort. *Personality and individual differences*, 43(6), 1594-1603.



- Choudhury, M., & Ali, A. (2020). Social media addiction among youth: a gender comparison. *International Journal of Indian Psychology*, 8(3).
- CSSE, C. f. (2020, April 4). COVID-19 Dashboard by the Center for Systems Science and Engineering (CSSE). Retrieved from Johns Hopkins University (JHU): <https://coronavirus.jhu.edu/map.html>
- Debois, S. (2019, March 8). 10 Advantages and Disadvantages of Questionnaires. *Survey Anyplace*. Retrieved from <https://surveyanyplace.com>
- Djudiyah, M. S. (2016). Gender Differences in Neuroticism on College Students. ASEAN Conference, 723-728.
- Dzandza, B. J. (2018). Effect of Social Media on Academic Performance of Students in Ghanaian Universities: A Case Study of Univeersity of Ghana, Legon. *Library Philosophy and Practise*, 1-25.
- Feezell, J. T., & Ortiz, B. (2021). 'I saw it on Facebook': an experimental analysis of political learning through social media. *Information, Communication & Society*, 24(9), 1283-1302.
- Free Malaysia Today. (2020, April 10). Capaian internet di Malaysia meningkat 90%. *Free Malaysia Today*. Retrieved from <https://www.freemalaysiatoday.com/category/bahasa/2020/04/10/capaian-internet-di-malaysia-meningkat-90/>
- Galer, S. S. (2018, January 19). How much is 'too much time' on social media? *BBC*. Retrieved from <https://www.bbc.com>
- Gani, F. A. (2020, Jun 7). Bimbang sepanjang masa: Adakah ia satu penyakit? *Astro Awani*. Retrieved from <https://www.astroawani.com>
- Ghazali, A. (2019, Jun 12). Banyak kajian bukti media sosial punca isu kesihatan. *Sinar Harian*. Retrieved from <https://www.sinarharian.com.my>
- González-Padilla, D. A., & Tortolero-Blanco, L. (2020). Social media influence in the COVID-19 Pandemic. *International Braz J Urol*, 46(suppl 1), 120–124. <https://doi.org/10.1590/s1677-5538.ibju.2020.s121>
- Halim, F. W., Amin, A. S., Khairudin, R., Ibrahim, N., Sham, F. M., & Zuki, Z. (2018). Identiti generasi Z dari perspektif personaliti, motivasi pencapaian dan kesukarelawan: Impaknya terhadap kesediaan ke tempat kerja. In *Proceedings International Colloquium on Integration Platform: Binding Differences and Diversity* (pp. 25-45).
- Harris, J. (2020, March 22). Facebook is still far too powerful. It's also how millions are coping with this crisis. *The Guardian*. Retrieved from <https://www.theguardian.com>
- Hashim, N. (2021, Mei 4). Ramai murung jika PKP 3.0 dilaksana. *Utusan Malaysia*. Retrieved from <https://www.utusan.com.my>
- Hassan, H. M. (2021, Jun 11). Lelaki Malaysia kuat 'main' Facebook. *Sinar Harian*. Retrieved from <https://www.sinarharian.com.my>
- Hassan, M. S. (2020, April 1). Penggunaan Internet naik 9 peratus. *Harian Metro*. Retrieved from <https://www.hmetro.com.my>
- Hong, F. Y., Huang, D. H., Lin, H. Y., & Chiu, S. L. (2014). Analysis of the psychological traits, Facebook usage, and Facebook addiction model of Taiwanese university students. *Telematics and Informatics*, 31(4), 597-606.
- Hong, W., Liu, R. D., Ding, Y., Fu, X., Zhen, R., & Sheng, X. (2021). Social media exposure and college students' mental health during the outbreak of CoViD-19: the mediating role of rumination and the moderating role of mindfulness. *Cyberpsychology, Behavior, and Social Networking*, 24(4), 282-287.

- Ismail, K. (2021a, Julai 10). Lelaki gantung diri selepas dipercayai bunuh diri. *Utusan Malaysia*. Retrieved from <https://www.utusan.com.my>
- Ismail, K. (2021b, Julai 23). 'Dulu jadi mangsa peras ugut khidmat seks, kini guna cara sama peras ugut orang lain'. *Utusan Malaysia*. Retrieved from <https://www.utusan.com.my>
- Jasmi, K. A. (2021). Metodologi Pengumpulan Data Dalam Penyelidikan Kualitatif.
- John, P. O., & Srivastava, S. (1999). The Big Five Trait Taxonomy: History, Measurement, and Theoretical Perspectives. In *Handbook of Personality: Theory and Research* (2nd ed., pp. 102–138). New York, United States of America: The Guildford Press.
- Khan, N. A., Azhar, M., Rahman, M. N., & Akhtar, M. J. (2022). Scale development and validation for usage of social networking sites during COVID-19. *Technology in Society*, 70, 102020.
- Kim, J., Lee, D., & Park, E. (2021). Machine Learning for Mental Health in Social Media: Bibliometric Study. *Journal of Medical Internet Research*, 23(3), e24870. <https://doi.org/10.2196/24870>
- Kircaburun, K., & Griffiths, M. D. (2018). Instagram addiction and the Big Five of personality: The mediating role of self-liking. *Journal of behavioral addictions*, 7(1), 158-170.
- Lah, F. C. (2017, November 6). Di dalam lebih selamat, di luar lebih berdikari. *Harian Metro*. Retrieved from <https://www.hmetro.com.my>
- Li, H. O. Y., Bailey, A., Huynh, D., & Chan, J. (2020). YouTube as a source of information on COVID-19: a pandemic of misinformation? *BMJ global health*, 5(5), e002604.
- Liao, S. H., Widowati, R., & Hsieh, Y. C. (2021). Investigating online social media users' behaviors for social commerce recommendations. *Technology in Society*, 66, 101655. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.techsoc.2021.101655>
- Mamat, N. S. (2020, Mac 28). Hadkan penggunaan media sosial ketika PKP, bantu kurangkan kerisauan pandemik. *Astro Awani*. Retrieved from <https://www.astroawani.com>
- Master, K. A. (2003). Personality Traits and Gender Differences in the Selection of Academic Major Among Malay Students. *Jurnal Pendidikan Malaysia*, 28(1).
- Mbodila, M., Marongwe, N., & Kwahene, F. (2020). The Use of Social Media As A Knowledge Sharing Platform During Covid-19 Among Students In A Rural University: A Comparison Of Email And Whatsapp. *ICERI Proceedings*. <https://doi.org/10.21125/iceri.2020.0287>
- Mental Health Psychosocial Support Services (MHPSS). (2021, Jun 29). Kesihatan Mental dan Sokongan Psikososial ketika Pandemik Covid-19. *Kementerian Kesihatan Malaysia*. Retrieved from <https://covid-19.moh.gov.my>
- Mohamed, H. (2020). Jenis Personaliti dan Tahap Kesihatan Mental dalam Kalangan Mahasiswa di Institusi Pengajian Tinggi. *Jurnal Personalia Pelajar*, 7-17.
- Nasir, M. A. (2021, Februari 10). Kisah suka duka 'rider' wanita. *Harian Metro*. Retrieved from <https://www.hmetro.com.my>
- Niknam, F., Samadbeik, M., Fatehi, F., Shirdel, M., Rezazadeh, M., & Bastani, P. (2021). COVID-19 on Instagram: A content analysis of selected accounts. *Health Policy and Technology*, 10(1), 165-173.
- Ostrovsky, A. M., & Chen, J. R. (2020). TikTok and its role in COVID-19 information propagation. *Journal of adolescent health*, 67(5), 730.
- Phillips-Wren, D. J. (2012). Impact of Social Media and Web 2.0 on Decision Making. *Journal of Decision Systems*, 249-261.
- Randler, C., Horzum, M. B., & Vollmer, C. (2013). Internet Addiction and Its Relationship to Chronotype and Personality in a Turkish University Student Sample. *Social Science Computer Review*, 32(4), 484–495. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0894439313511055>

- Rettner, R. (2018, March 12). These Personality Traits Could Put You At Risk for Social Media Addiction. *Live Science*. Retrieved from <https://www.livescience.com>
- Rosenberg, H., Syed, S., & Rezaie, S. (2020). The Twitter pandemic: The critical role of Twitter in the dissemination of medical information and misinformation during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Canadian journal of emergency medicine*, 22(4), 418-421.
- Rosli, F. A. (2019, September 7). TPM Bimbang Masyarakat Ketagih Teknologi, Media Sosial. *Berita Harian*. Retrieved from <https://www.bharian.com.my>
- Sabik, N. J., Falat, J., & Magagnos, J. (2020). When self-worth depends on social media feedback: Associations with psychological well-being. *Sex Roles*, 82(7), 411-421.
- Salman, A., Salleh, M. A. M., Yusoff, M. A., & Abdullah, M. Y. (2018). Political engagement on social media as antecedent for political support among voters in Malaysia. *Malaysian Journal of Communication*, 34(2), 152-165.
- Shahbudin, M. S. (2020). Kepanikan Pengguna Media Sosial Terhadap Virus COVID-19. *PENDETA Journal of Malay Language, Education and Literature*, 1-10.
- Shi, J., Yao, Y., Zhan, C., Mao, Z., Yin, F., & Zhao, X. (2018). The Relationship Between Big Five Personality Traits and Psychotic Experience in a Large Non-clinical Youth Sample: The Mediating Role of Emotion Regulation. *Frontiers in Psychiatry*, 9. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyt.2018.00648>
- Singh, S. S. (2016). Social Media its Impact with Positive and Negative Aspects. *International Journal of Computer Applications Technology and Research*, 71-75.
- Sualman, D. I. (2019, November 03). Ketagihan media sosial sudah serius. *Sinar Harian*. Retrieved from <https://www.sinarharian.com.my>
- Sumaryanti, I. U. (2019). Personality and Social Media Addiction Among College Students. *Advances in Social Sciences, Education and Humanities Research*, 376-379.
- Tajudeen, F. P., Jaafar, N. I., & Ainin, S. (2018). Understanding the impact of social media usage among organizations. *Information & Management*, 55(3), 308-321.
- Thibaut, F., & van Wijngaarden-Cremers, P. J. (2020). Women's mental health in the time of Covid-19 pandemic. *Frontiers in global women's health*, 1, 588372.
- Trisnani. (2017). Pemanfaatan WhatsApp Sebagai Media Komunikasi dan Kepuasan Dalam Penyampaian Pesan Dikalangan Tokoh Masyarakat. *Jurnal Komunikasi, Media dan Informasi*, 1-12.
- University of Jyväskylä. (2020, August 28). Women with higher neuroticism are less physically active. *Science News*. Retrieved from <https://www.sciencedaily.com>
- Wong, A., Ho, S., Olusanya, O., Antonini, M. V., & Lyness, D. (2021). The use of social media and online communications in times of pandemic COVID-19. *Journal of the Intensive Care Society*, 22(3), 255-260.
- Zurawski, N. (2004). " I Know Where You Live!"—Aspects of Watching, Surveillance and Social Control in a Conflict Zone (Northern Ireland). *Surveillance & Society*, 2(4).