eISSN: 2600-7819

The Relationship Between Social Media Usage Among Students of Universiti Malaysia Sabah Towards Anxiety And Depression

Nur Farina Amalia Binti Mohd Isah*
Universiti Malaysia Sabah

*Corresponding author: fleena1998@gmail.com

Dihantar:10 Mac 2024 / Diterima:10 March 2024
Received date:10 Sept 2024 / Accepted date: 10 September 2024

Abstract: *The use of social media has risen dramatically throughout the world. Because of the growth in social media usage, people spend hours each day on various social media platforms, sending messages and images, tweeting, changing status, like, and commenting on various social updates. The issue is that social media exposes individuals, especially the younger generation, to a wide range of intriguing activities and happenings. Another component of social media usage has been proven to enhance social anxiety for certain people. Previous study has shown that the number of social networking sites utilized and the time spent on them may be modifiers of anxiety and depressive symptoms. This study aims to determine the relationship between social media usage among students of Universiti Malaysia Sabah with symptoms of anxiety and depression. A total of 160 students have answered the questionnaire for this study. This study can help to see how much social media has affected the students of Universiti Malaysia Sabah in terms of anxiety and depression. The result of this study can be used to check on the students' anxiety and depression level and help to create an intervention to help the students with the problem they have faced. There is a significant relationship between social media usage among females with anxiety. It is also noted that social media usage among both male and female have significant relationship with depression.*

Keywords: social media, anxiety, depression

Introduction

The use of social media has risen dramatically throughout the world. According to recent social media use statistics, over 3 billion people use social media worldwide. Because of the growth in social media usage, people spend an average of 2 hours each day on various social media platforms, sending messages and images, tweeting, changing status, like, and commenting on various social updates (Abbott, 2017). While social media is viewed as a source of social support by the great majority of college and university students, it may also have a negative impact on mental health, particularly for those who are already experiencing extreme levels of stress and despair (Drouin et. al., 2018). Charoensukmongkol (2018) backed up this finding by stating that social use may threaten the mental health and well-being of the global population. Tang et. al. (2013) observed that sharing, tweeting, like, messaging, and other social media activity were related to a rise in stress levels. Since a result, Weng and Menczer (2015) believe that growing social media usage has become a severe source of stress, as individuals often post a broad range of feeds, articles, and comments on topics ranging from politics and economics to social and individual problems. As a result, someone who spends 2 hours on average per day on social media sites will amass a huge quantity of bad news, articles, and information, which will negatively impact their total degree of anxiety (Ley et. al., 2014).

According to Hales (2009), college is one of the most difficult times of one's life. Stress has the potential to affect our behavior, memory, and academic performance (Yerkes & Dodson, 1908). People utilized social media as a stress-relieving tool at first, according to Charoensukmongkol (2018), where they could socialize and talk about their difficulties and worries. While social media was designed to help people cope with stress, continuous exposure to other people's worries caused those people to become stressed over time (Fleck, 2015). Furthermore, social media platforms continue to be a key contributor to mood swings for the majority of individuals, where someone may be passively lurking on a social networking site yet end up with a changed mood due to the nature of the

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material seen. As a result, people's negative and depressed feelings are freely communicated on social media sites. This is becoming a problem as students at colleges and universities have been noticed expanding their use of social media apps as they have become more common in everyday life.

Research Objective

1. To determine the relationship between social media usage among students of Universiti Malaysia Sabah with symptoms of anxiety and depression.

2. To describe the sociodemographic profile of students from Universiti Malaysia Sabah.

Methodology

Due of the short period of the investigation, this research is focused on quantitative research. Because direct replies are gathered from respondents, the data collected is primary. Google Forms was used to develop and administer the survey instrument. A total of 370 students should be participating in the study, that is among the students of Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS). The number of subjects chosen is based on the Krejcie and Morgan Table (Krejcie and Morgan, 1970). According to the Krejcie and Morgan Table, if the total population is greater than 10,000, the sample size should be at least 370 persons. But due to the limited amount of time, the Movement Restriction Order as well as the limited participation for the study, the simple random sampling approach is considered to speed up the process and only a total of 160 participants responded via the Google Forms given. The random sampling approach seems rational due to the inability to meet them face to face and get their responses. The location of this research is at Universiti of Malaysia Sabah (UMS) which located in the urban setting of the medium city of Kota Kinabalu, Sabah. Using SPSS software for Windows 10, the gathered data was analysed using descriptive and inferential statistical tests (SPSS Inc., Chicago, IL, USA). The significance level was established at (p0.05), and the data that was analysed comprised Mean Standard Deviation (SD) and the frequency (%) for qualitative and quantitative variables. Pearson Chi Square tests were used to explore the relationship between social media usage among students of Universiti Malaysia Sabah with symptoms of anxiety and depression.

Results

This chapter will discuss about the data analysis and the result of the analysis. It begins with sociodemographic characteristics of respondents, followed by frequency and percentage distribution of respondents by dependency on technologies, social anxiety from social media usage, generalized anxiety disorder scale, and by depression scale. Furthermore, this chapter will discuss about the relationship between demographic characteristics and social anxiety, generalized anxiety, and depression scale. Lastly, the result of instruments reliability analysis was also showed in this chapter.

Table 1

Sociodemographic Characteristics of Respondents

Characteristics	**N**	**(%)**
Age of Respondent (Years)		
20-22	39	(24.4)
23-25	115	(71.9)

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>26	6	(3.7)
Gender of Respondent		
Male	66	(41.3)
Female	94	(58.8)
Course of Study		
Business, Economics & Accountancy	47	(29.4)
Computing & Informatics	7	(4.4)
Engineering	19	(11.9)
Food Science & Nutrition	8	(5.0)
Humanities, Art & Heritage	13	(8.1)
International Finance	5	(3.1)
Medicine & Health Science	3	(1.9)
Psychology & Education	47	(29.4)
Science & Natural Resources	8	(5.0)
Sustainable Agriculture	3	(1.9)
Year of Study		
1-2	21	(13.1)
>3	139	(86.9)
Used of Social Media Sites		
Facebook	139	(86.9)
Snapchat	61	(38.1)
Instagram	154	(96.3)
Youtube	160	(100.0)
Twitter	107	(66.9)
Tik-Tok	119	(74.4)
Whatsapp	160	(100.0)
Social Media Usage		
Less than 1 hour	6	(3.8)
1-3 hours	22	(13.8)
4-6 hours	35	(21.9)
>6 hours	97	(60.6)
Access to Social Media		
Smartphone or Tablet	158	(98.8)
Desktop or Laptop	2	(1.3)

Table 2

Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Respondents by Dependency on Technologies

How difficult would it be to	**Don't Know**		**Not Too Hard**		**Somewhat Hard**		**Very Hard**	
	N	**(%)**	**N**	**(%)**	**N**	**(%)**	**N**	**(%)**

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give up in your life								
Television	8	(5.0)	119	(74.4)	28	(17.5)	5	(3.1)
Smartphone	1	(0.6)	15	(9.4)	50	(31.3)	94	(58.8)
The Internet	0	(0.0)	12	(7.5)	32	(20.0)	116	(72.5)
Social Media	3	(1.9)	41	(26.3)	60	(37.5)	55	(34.4)

Table 3

Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Respondents by Social Anxiety from Social Media Usage

Statements	**Not At All**		**A Little**		**A Lot**		**All The Time**	
	N	**(%)**	**N**	**(%)**	**N**	**(%)**	**N**	**(%)**
S1 (I worry about what others say about me)	53	(33.1)	55	(34.4)	30	(18.8)	22	(13.8)
S2 (I worry that others don't like me)	60	(37.5)	43	(26.9)	39	(24.4)	18	(11.3)
S3 (I'm afraid that others will not like me)	56	(35.0)	54	(33.8)	35	(21.9)	15	(9.4)
S4 (I worry about what others think of me)	49	(30.6)	54	(33.8)	36	(22.5)	21	(13.1)
S5 (I feel that others make fun of me)	67	(41.9)	51	(31.9)	26	(16.3)	16	(10.0)
S6 (I worry about being teased)	80	(50.0)	42	(26.3)	21	(13.1)	17	(10.6)
S7 (I feel that peers talk about me behind my back)	34	(21.3)	50	(31.3)	37	(23.1)	39	(24.4)
S8 (If I get into an argument, I worry that the other person will not like me)	62	(38.8)	43	(26.9)	35	(21.9)	20	(12.5)

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S9 (I get nervous when I interact with new people)	51	(31.9)	48	(30.0)	31	(19.4)	30	(18.8)
S10 (I feel shy around people I don't know)	38	(23.8)	48	(30.0)	40	(25.0)	34	(21.3)
S11 (I get nervous when I talk to peers I don't know very well)	45	(28.1)	62	(38.8)	30	(18.8)	23	(14.4)
S12 (I only talk to people I know really well)	64	(40.0)	35	(21.9)	26	(16.3)	35	(21.9)

Table 4

Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Respondents by Generalized Anxiety Disorder Scale

GAD-7	**None**		**Several Days (1-5 Days)**		**Over half of the days (6-10 Days)**		**Nearly Every Day (11+ Days)**	
	N	**(%)**	**N**	**(%)**	**N**	**(%)**	**N**	**(%)**
S1 (Feeling nervous, anxious, or on edge)	96	(60.0)	46	(28.7)	14	(8.8)	4	(2.5)
S2 (Not being able to stop or control worrying)	105	(65.6)	29	(18.1)	20	(12.5)	6	(3.8)
S3 (Worrying too much about different things)	66	(41.3)	53	(33.1)	31	(19.4)	10	(6.3)
S4 (Trouble relaxing)	95	(59.4)	41	(25.6)	18	(11.3)	6	(3.8)
S5 (Being so restless that it is hard to sit still)	110	(68.8)	30	(18.8)	16	(10.0)	4	(2.5)
S6 (Becoming easily annoyed or irritable)	99	(61.9)	29	(18.1)	24	(15.0)	8	(5.0)

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S7 (Feeling afraid, as if something awful might happen)	84	(52.5)	41	(25.6)	26	(16.3)	9	(5.6)

Table 5

Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Respondents by Depression Scale (CES-D).

CES-D	**Not At All**		**A Little**		**A Lot**		**All The Time**	
	N	**(%)**	**N**	**(%)**	**N**	**(%)**	**N**	**(%)**
S1 (I was bothered by things that usually don't bother me)	65	(40.6)	53	(33.1)	28	(17.5)	14	(8.8)
S2 (I did not feel like eating; my appetite was poor)	106	(66.3)	35	(21.9)	9	(5.6)	10	(6.3)
S3 (I felt that I could not shake off the blues even with help from my family or friends)	80	(50.0)	45	(28.1)	21	(13.1)	14	(8.8)
S4 (I felt I was just as good as other people)	63	(39.4)	51	(31.9)	34	(21.3)	12	(7.5)
S5 (I had trouble keeping my mind on what I was doing)	68	(42.5)	40	(25.0)	38	(23.8)	14	(8.8)
S6 (I felt depressed)	87	(54.4)	35	(21.9)	22	(13.8)	16	(10.0)
S7 (I felt that everything I did was an effort)	6	(3.8)	27	(16.9)	69	(43.1)	58	(36.3)
S8 (I felt hopeful about the future)	22	(13.8)	31	(19.4)	43	(26.9)	64	(40.0)
S9 (I thought my life had been a failure)	65	(40.6)	56	(35.0)	24	(15.0)	15	(9.4)
S10 (I felt fearful)	71	(44.4)	55	(34.4)	18	(11.3)	16	(10.0)
S11 (My sleep was restless)	93	(58.1)	32	(20.0)	19	(11.9)	16	(10.0)

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S12 (I was happy)	12	(7.5)	34	(21.3)	75	(46.9)	39	(24.4)
S13 (I talked less than usual)	85	(53.1)	32	(20.0)	27	(16.9)	16	(10.0)
S14 (I felt lonely)	61	(38.1)	60	(37.5)	17	(10.6)	22	(13.8)
S15 (People were unfriendly)	95	(59.4)	48	(30.0)	11	(6.9)	6	(3.8)
S16 (I enjoyed life)	9	(5.6)	33	(20.6)	70	(43.8)	48	(30.0)
S17 (I had crying spells)	71	(44.4)	39	(24.4)	25	(15.6)	25	(15.6)
S18 (I felt sad)	65	(40.6)	58	(36.3)	17	(10.6)	20	(12.5)
S19 (I felt that people dislike me)	74	(46.3)	57	(35.6)	18	(11.3)	11	(6.9)
S20 (I could not get going)	99	(61.9)	30	(18.8)	21	(13.1)	10	(6.3)

Table 6

Relationship Between Demographic Characteristics and Social Anxiety

Characteristics	**Low**		**High**		**z**	**(df)**	**p**
	N	**(%)**	**N**	**(%)**			
Age of Respondent (Years)					7.521		0.018
20-22	16	(41.0)	23	(59.0)			
23-25	61	(53.0)	54	(47.0)			
>26	6	(100.0)	0	(0.0)			
Gender of Respondent					3.430	1	0.064
Male	43	(45.7)	51	(54.3)			
Female	40	(60.6)	26	(39.4)			
Course of Study					6.696		0.696
Business, Economics & Accountancy	22	(46.8)	25	(53.2)			
Computing & Informatics	3	(42.9)	4	(57.1)			
Engineering	7	(36.8)	12	(63.2)			

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Food Science & Nutrition	4	(50.0)	4	(50.0)			
Humanities, Art & Heritage	7	(53.8)	6	(46.2)			
International Finance	3	(60.0)	2	(40.0)			
Medicine & Health Science	3	(100.0)	0	(0.0)			
Psychology & Education	28	(59.6)	19	(40.4)			
Science & Natural Resources	4	(50.0)	4	(50.0)			
Sustainable Agriculture	2	(66.7)	1	(33.0)			
Year of Study					0.175	1	0.815
1-2	10	(47.6)	11	(52.4)			
>3	73	(52.5)	66	(47.5)			
Used of Social Media Sites							
Facebook	74	(53.2)	65	(46.8)			
Snapchat	28	(45.9)	33	(54.1)			
Instagram	79	(51.3)	75	(48.7)			
YouTube	83	(51.9)	77	(48.1)			
Twitter	49	(45.8)	58	(54.2)			
Tik-Tok	63	(52.9)	56	(47.1)			
Whatsapp	83	(51.9)	77	(48.1)			
Social Media Usage					5.314		0.143
Less than 1 hour	10	(45.5)	12	(54.5)			
1-3 hours	13	(37.1)	22	(62.9)			
4-6 hours	3	(50.0)	3	(50.0)			
>6 hours	57	(58.8)	40	(41.2)			
Access to Social Media							1.000
Smartphone or Tablet	82	(51.9)	76	(48.1)			

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Desktop or Laptop	1	(50.0)	1	(50.0)			

Table 7

Relationship Between Demographic Characteristics and Generalized Anxiety

Characteristics	**Low**		**High**		**z**	**(df)**	**p**
	N	**(%)**	**N**	**(%)**			
Age of Respondent (Years)					3.131		0.207
20-22	19	(48.7)	20	(51.3)			
23-25	62	(53.9)	53	(46.1)			
>26	1	(16.7)	5	(83.3)			
Gender of Respondent					15.301	1	0.000
Male	46	(69.7)	20	(30.3)			
Female	36	(38.3)	58	(61.7)			
Course of Study					8.590		0.483
Business, Economics & Accountancy	22	(46.8)	25	(53.2)			
Computing & Informatics	4	(57.1)	3	(42.9)			
Engineering	11	(57.9)	8	(42.1)			
Food Science & Nutrition	3	(37.5)	5	(62.5)			
Humanities, Art & Heritage	7	(53.8)	6	(46.2)			
International Finance	2	(40.0)	3	(60.0)			
Medicine & Health Science	2	(66.7)	1	(33.3)			
Psychology & Education	28	(59.6)	19	(40.4)			
Science & Natural Resources	1	(12.5)	7	(87.5)			
Sustainable Agriculture	2	(66.7)	1	(33.3)			

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Year of Study					2.300	1	0.129
1-2	14	(66.7)	7	(33.3)			
>3	68	(48.9)	71	(51.1)			
Used of Social Media Sites							
Facebook	71	(51.1)	68	(48.9)			
Snapchat	29	(47.5)	32	(52.5)			
Instagram	79	(51.3)	75	(48.7)			
YouTube	82	(51.2)	78	(48.8)			
Twitter	49	(45.8)	58	(54.2)			
Tik-Tok	62	(52.1)	57	(47.9)			
Whatsapp	82	(51.2)	78	(48.8)			
Social Media Usage					1.229		0.770
Less than 1 hour	9	(40.9)	13	(59.1)			
1-3 hours	19	(54.3)	16	(45.7)			
4-6 hours	3	(50.0)	3	(50.0)			
>6 hours	51	(52.6)	46	(47.4)			
Access to Social Media							
Smartphone or Tablet	82	(51.9)	76	(48.1)			
Desktop or Laptop	0	(0.0)	2	(100.0)			

Table 8

Relationship Between Demographic Characteristics and Depression Scale

Characteristics	**Low**		**High**		**z**	**(df)**	**p**
	N	**(%)**	**N**	**(%)**			
Age of Respondent (Years)					10.055		0.005
20-22	11	(28.2)	28	(71.8)			
23-25	66	(57.4)	49	(42.6)			
>26	3	(50.0)	3	(50.0)			

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Gender of Respondent					5.055	1	0.025
Male	40	(60.6)	26	(39.4)			
Female	40	(42.6)	54	(57.4)			
Course of Study					3.226		0.973
Business, Economics & Accountancy	20	(42.6)	27	(57.4)			
Computing & Informatics	3	(42.9)	4	(57.1)			
Engineering	11	(57.9)	8	(42.1)			
Food Science & Nutrition	4	(50.0)	4	(50.0)			
Humanities, Art & Heritage	7	(53.8)	6	(46.2)			
International Finance	2	(40.0)	3	(60.0)			
Medicine & Health Science	2	(66.7)	1	(33.3)			
Psychology & Education	25	(53.2)	22	(46.8)			
Science & Natural Resources	4	(50.0)	4	(50.0)			
Sustainable Agriculture	2	(66.7)	1	(33.3)			
Year of Study					0.493	1	0.482
1-2	9	(42.9)	12	(57.1)			
>3	71	(51.1)	68	(48.9)			
Used of Social Media Sites							
Facebook	70	(50.4)	69	(49.6)			
Snapchat	32	(52.5)	29	(47.5)			
Instagram	77	(50.0)	77	(50.0)			
YouTube	80	(50.0)	80	(50.0)			
Twitter	49	(45.8)	58	(54.2)			
Tik-Tok	62	(52.1)	57	(47.9)			

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Whatsapp	80	(50.0)	80	(50.0)		
Social Media Usage					8.948	0.025
Less than 1 hour	6	(27.3)	16	(72.7)		
1-3 hours	14	(40.0)	21	(60.0)		
4-6 hours	3	(50.0)	3	(50.0)		
>6 hours	57	(58.8)	40	(41.2)		
Access to Social Media						0.497
Smartphone or Tablet	80	(50.6)	78	(49.4)		
Desktop or Laptop	0	(0.0)	2	(100.0)		

Table 9

Instrument Reliability Analysis

Scale	**N of items**	**Cronbach's Alpha**
Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD-7)	7	.922
Depression Scale (CES-D)	20	.876
Social Anxiety Scale (SAS)	12	.902

Discussion

This study is conducted with the aim to identify the relationship of social media usage with symptoms of anxiety and depression among students of Universiti Malaysia Sabah by using the Social Anxiety Scale (SAS), Generalized Anxiety Disorder Scale (GAD-7) and Center for Epidemiological Studies Depression Scale (CES-D). In order to evaluate the usage of social media, researcher included the familiar site of social media, daily social media duration as well as the difficulties to live without technologies. These sections are included to determine the respondents' dependency towards social media. According to Table 2, the dependency of using the internet and smartphone are above average (n=116, 72.5%; n=94, 58.8%). However, the access to the Internet is closely linked to the usage of social media as the ability to access social media requires the Internet, therefore it isn't adequate to conclude that majority of the respondents are able to live without social media. About 71.9% (n=115) of the respondents claims they find it somewhat hard or very hard to live without social media, thus concluding that majority of the respondents are at high dependency toward social media.

Kimberly was among the first to shed light on Internet-related issues such as social isolation, depression, and psychological alienation, and according to the American Association, internet addiction is defined as "using the Internet beyond 38 hours per week for non-work needs, with a tendency to increase hours of use to satisfy the same desires." They were

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satisfied for less hours and suffered from psychological and physical symptoms when the connection was lost, such as psychomotor tension, anxiety, and obsessive Internet thinking (Essam and Abdullah, 2011). Many studies on social media and mental health have discovered that long-term usage of social media sites such as Facebook is positively associated with mental health problems such as stress, anxiety, and depression and negatively associated with long-term well-being (Eraslan-Capan, 2015). Regular social media usage, however, does not always indicate social media addiction (Griffiths, 2010), and hence does not always have negative repercussions for individuals' mental health (Jelenchick, 2013).

Previous studies have found a relationship between depression symptoms and the quantity of time spent on social media (Akkn Gürbüz et al., 2017; Belfort & Miller, 2019). The relationship between social media hours and depression is not apparent. As a result, it is impossible to establish a causal relationship between the two variables. Despite the fact that the source of the relationship is unknown, these findings are important to investigate since they allow for hours spent on social media and symptoms of depression to both positively and negatively influence one another. According to the literature, suicidal thoughts or self-harm actions, as well as the possibility of cyberbullying, may be present or exacerbated when using social media. (Memom et al., 2018; O'Reilly et al., 2018). Suicide is the second largest cause of mortality among teenagers, according to the World Health Organization (WHO), and youngsters with depressed symptoms should have their activities monitored (Arendt, Scherr, & Romer, 2019).

97 out of 160 respondents (60.6%) spends more than 6 hours of the daily lives on social media according to Table 1 whereas majority of them (n=115, 71.9%) finds it difficult to give up social medias from their lives in Table 2. The usage of social media by students is not commonplace on campus. However, studies suggest that it may become addictive and create health issues. Many studies have been conducted to assess the impact of social media addiction, but according to Dr. Naomi Bahm, a psychology professor at Cosumnes River College, it is not formally classified as an addiction disease in the Diagnostic Statistical Manual (Vyalkov, 2020). People who use social media on a daily basis feel more isolated and lonely than those who do not, according to a report published by the American Journal of Preventive Medicine. According to a survey performed by the University of Pittsburgh's Center for Research on Networking, Technology, and Health, people who frequent seven to eleven social networking sites are three times more likely to experience sorrow and 3.3 times more likely to experience high level of anxiety. According to a Pew Research Center poll on social media use in 2018, the top two sites used by individuals aged 18 to 24 are YouTube and Facebook. However, in this study researcher have noted similar sites as well as Instagram and WhatsApp are the top 4 social medias sites. WhatsApp has been socially approved to be used for passing on information during this pandemic and is used vastly in every sector including education.

During the course of this research, researcher have attempted to study the prevalence of social media addiction among students of University Malaysia Sabah of various sociodemographic profiles. One of the most prominent factors studied is the relationship between the age of the respondents and their risk of developing social anxiety. Based on the results collected and analysed, a significant relationship was noticed between the age of respondents and their risk of developing social anxiety where none of the respondents above the age of 26 reported feeling high levels of social anxiety whereas 47% of the respondents between the ages of 23 and 25 as well as 59% of the

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respondents between the ages of 20 and 22 reported feeling high levels of social anxiety. The reason for these findings may be due to only a very limited number of respondents being older than 25 years of age.

In this research, researcher have analysed the relationship between the gender of respondents and their risk of developing social anxiety. The results of this research clearly show that a respondent's gender has no bearing on their risk of developing social anxiety. These findings are supported by the results published in a research conducted by Baloglu et al where they reported that they did not find any disparity between genders in experiencing social anxiety among the group of college students being studied (Baloglu et al, 2018). Another research conducted by Aluh et al also reflected our findings where the results of their research revealed that even though the prevalence of social anxiety was found to be higher among female students than male ones, there was no statistical significance between gender and social anxiety faced by students of the University of Nigeria (Aluh et al, 2019). This finding may be due to the fact that the roles of individuals of both genders have become increasingly similar in recent years which may be a result of increased opportunities for education and leadership roles for women resulting in the gap of social anxiety levels between men and women being narrowed (Baloglu et al, 2018).

Other than that, the results of this research has also revealed that the social media site used does not significantly influence the risk of students of Universiti Malaysia Sabah developing social anxiety. The reason for these findings may be due to the fact UMS students opt to use multiple social media sites for communication and entertainment rather than having one primary preferred social media site. This situation occurs due to competition among social media sites which results in each social media site developing their own specific features or carving out their own niche to both appeal to the consumer base as well as distinguish themselves from their competitors providing college students with numerous social media sites to choose from as well as use simultaneously. However, these results cannot be sufficiently corroborated as there are insufficient studies published which study the association between the various social media sites accessed by college students and their risk of developing social anxiety.

Another significant finding in this study was the absence of a relationship between the extent of social media usage and the possibility of respondent acquiring social anxiety. These findings may be linked to the fact that the social anxiety suffered by these students may be a result of the duration of social media prohibition and the symptoms of withdrawal of social media addiction rather than the duration of social media usage alone. Despite this, there are insufficient studies published to sufficiently corroborate this finding.

Based on the results collected and analysed a significant relationship was noticed between the age of respondents and their risk of developing general anxiety where majority of the respondents age 26 and above reported feeling high level risk of general anxiety whereas more than half (51.3%) of respondents age 20 to 22 experience higher degree of generalized anxiety which is also noted in the results on social anxiety among that very age group. These findings might be explained by the fact that only a small proportion of respondents were beyond the age of 25. In this research we have analysed the association between the gender of respondents and their risk of developing general anxiety. The results of our research clearly show that a respondent's gender has association with general anxiety as the P value is less than 0.05 but the results shows that more male respondents has lower general anxiety levels (n=46, 69.7%) whereas 61.7% of female in this study experiences general anxiety.

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According to anxiety disorder section in DSM 5, general anxiety among females are higher (7.1%) compared to males (1.1%) making its ratio (3:1) (Christiansen, 2015). One in every three women fulfilled the criteria for an anxiety condition at some point in her life, compared to 22% of males. Overall, women had 1.5 to 2 times the lifetime and previous year rates, with the largest disparities in posttraumatic stress disorder, generalized anxiety disorder, and panic disorder (McLean, 2011). With some variation in prevalence rates for specific disorders, the pattern of gender differences among anxiety disorders is similar with findings from the NCS survey of DSM-III-R disorders (Kessler et al., 1994). Anxiety appears to be closely linked to social media use in some sense, and plenty of other papers published tend to suggest that this association is one of the major drivers of internet usage.

These results indicate that, while many people who use social media are frequently anxious, when they are not using social media, they resort to it to soothe this 'withdrawal' anxiety, resulting in some other type of anxiety caused by interacting with their online platforms. The implications of this "double anxiety wallop" on mental health are noticeable, and research even reveals that some people turn to alcohol to ease tension when posting on social media. One of these latest research discovered that greater screen time is associated with higher levels of generalised anxiety (Boers, 2019), adding to the already vast literature on the subject (Keles, 2019). This new study is notable for providing longitudinal data demonstrating that, over a four-year period, teens who use social media intensively have corresponding increases in their feelings of anxiety and despair.

The "fear of missing out," or FOMO, is another anxiety-inducing mechanism that fuels social media use for the digital addict (McAlaney,2020). FOMO is a general term describing the dread of being cut off from digital resources such as social media. It may occur if you are in a remote location with no connectivity, or if you are trapped in a genuine "face to face" scenario and are unable to use your gadget for a few minutes because it might be inappropriate. FOMO may develop when people have multiple devices and social media accounts and have little time or the energy to check them all, according to the authors of a new paper. FOMO may also develop when people are distressed by the failure of others to respond (McAlaney,2020). This anxiety stimulates a need to connect digitally, and the cycle repeats itself. It is uncertain whether people with Generalized Anxiety Disorder experience FOMO at a higher rate than others, although it is quite likely.

This research results have revealed that a significant relationship exists between the age of Universiti Malaysia Sabah students and the level of depression they may face where we have discovered that the proportion of younger UMS students faced higher levels of depression than older UMS students. These findings are inconsistent with the results recorded in a study conducted by Ghaedi et al in 2014 where they determined that the levels of depression experienced by university students of different age groups were not statistically significant (Ghaedi et al, 2014). My findings also contradict with the results recorded by Naushad et al in their study where they determined that depression was more prevalent and severe among older college students in Mangalore City than younger ones (Naushad et al, 2014). The results recorded in this research may be due to the proportion of respondents aged older than 25 years being smaller than those of younger age groups in my study.

Based on the results of the research that the researcher have conducted, it has been determined that there is a significant relationship between the gender of the respondents and the level of depression they may face based on the depression scale where around 57.4% of all female

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respondents reported feeling high levels of depression whereas only 39.4% of all male respondents reported feeling high levels of depression. The results of this research are supported by the findings recorded by Ghaedi et al in 2014 where they discovered that a significantly greater number of female university students faced high levels of depression compared to male university students (Ghaedi et al, 2014). This is suggested by Ghaedi et al to be due to a combination of several factors within university life that results in university students especially females developing high levels of stress or experience maladjustment (Ghaedi et al, 2014). However, my research results are in contrast with the research results recorded by Bavisakar et al in 2012 where it was discovered that there was no significant difference in the level of depression faced by both male and female students in several rural colleges in India (Bavisakar et al, 2012). Bavisakar et al attributed these findings to a limited sample size of respondents and suggests carrying out further studies with a larger sample sizes (Bavisakar et al, 2012). My research results were also at odds with the results recorded in a study conducted by Naushad et al where they recorded that the prevalence of depression was higher among male college students in Mangalore City compared to female college students (Naushad et al, 2014). Naushad et al suggested that the male preponderance for depression among their respondents may be due to several external factors afflicting male college students in Mangalore City such as difficulties in securing employment specially to fulfil familial responsibilities, substance abuse or peer pressure (Naushad et al, 2014).

Other than that, researcher have also discovered that no significant relationship exists between the course of study of respondents and the level of depression faced by them. The results of this research are supported by the findings recorded by Ahmed et al among students in Jimma University where it was recorded that the prevalence of depression was higher among students from departments like the Department of Social Sciences and the Department of Humanities than students from other departments like the Department of Law (Ahmed et al, 2020). Ahmed et al suggests that this situation arises due to the future employment prospects for students in some departments of Jimma University being better than others (Ahmed et al, 2020). Despite this, our findings are inconsistent with the study results recorded in a study conducted in 2014 among college students from various universities in Mangalore City where the results recorded show that college students from commerce based courses experienced higher levels of depression than college students from science based courses (Naushad et al, 2014). These findings may have been present due to the different academic performance requirements of different courses influencing the mental health burden of said courses on college students (Naushad et al, 2014).

Besides that, researcher have also determined that there is a significant relationship between the duration of social media usage by Universiti Malaysia Sabah's students and the levels of depression faced by them. This research findings are consistent with the findings of a study conducted by Rajesh et al in 2020, which determined that there was indeed a significant relationship between the span of hours students spent on social media sites and their level of depression, where students who spent more time on social media sites experiencing higher level of depression (Rajesh et al, 2020). This results of my research are inconsistent with the findings in a study done among the students in USA in 2017 where it was noted that the amount of time student spent on social media did not significantly influence their level of depression (Krylova, 2017).

Conclusion

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Because social media has grown increasingly essential in the social life of university students across the pandemic, students may be more prone to social media addiction, which may be harmful to their mental health. Researcher has observed in this study that excessive social media usage likely harms university students' mental health, since students with higher social media addiction scores had a greater probability of suffering from mild depression. This study backs with the findings of Gao et al. (2020), who discovered that excessive social media use harmed mental health during the Wuhan pandemic. Social envy abounds on social media. In WhatsApp groups or on Facebook, students regularly compare themselves to others with higher social or economic status. Students' psychological behaviour may contribute to unhappiness if they feel inferior or defeated in the online social network.

This study contributes to importance of understanding university students' use of social media and how it effects their lives. From this study we can see a few important implications for example the significance of monitoring technology or online platform for vulnerable university students as well as the influence of social media may have on students or individuals.

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