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## THE PRELIMINARY STUDY: SOCIAL ANXIETY AND SOCIAL MEDIA ADDICTION

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### ABSTRACT

Social interaction and personal expressions are typical functions offered by social media sites such as Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. Besides, social media also become users personal diaries to record and share their daily activities via photos, videos, music, and personal views regarding specific issues. With various kinds of activities that could be performed using social media, users tend to spend long hours on social media to get social contact and meet their need for socialising. Through social media, users are enjoying establishing the social connection. Thus, social media users who spend excessive time online tend to become addicted to the internet resulted from limited traditional social skills. As a result, users believe they are better individuals while online. The study conducted a pre-test for 110 respondents to determine the instrument reliability. The responses were recorded using an online survey. The instrument is considered reliable because the reliability value is more than 0.7 for the research instrument. The study also conducted a pre-analysis to test the research hypotheses. The pre-analysis indicated that social anxiety, happiness, and intimacy show a high relationship with the respondents' addiction to social media. The pre-analysis finding supported all the hypotheses suggested in this research. Hence, the researcher anticipates similar findings when the study conducted an actual data collection.

### ARTICLE INFO

*Keywords:*

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Happiness,  
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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

The use of social media nowadays in recent years is becoming an essential tool of communication and human interaction accessible from multiple devices. Baltaci (2019) claims that human life and behaviour constantly change, and as a result, various problems arise which is addiction. According to Bradley (1990), the term 'addiction' refers to indulgence in voluntary behaviours and dependent on an object. Many people cannot live without social media, always checking on their gadget since they awake until their bedtime. Thus, it creates dependency on social media and leads to addiction. The technological developments made social media as a part of everyone's lives.

Social media refers to the online platforms and tools that people use to share opinions and experiences including photos, videos, music, insights, and perceptions with each other (Lai & Turban, 2008). Social network services allows individuals to network for a variety of purposes including sharing information, building and exploring the relationship (Kwon & Wen, 2010). Social media can be easily accessed that everyone can use anytime without control to share their expressions of behaviours with others using photos and videos. Social media become addiction to people because it is an internet application that is used over the internet and uncontrolled. Thus, nowadays, social media is a must for an individual because everything was updated in the social media news official account. However, social media also may harm the mental health for an individual too.

Social media sites like Facebook, Instagram and Twitter are harmless platforms that allow for social interaction and personal expressions. In this study, a survey used to investigate the relationship between social anxiety, happiness, intimacy and the social media addiction. What happens is that individuals are relying on social media interaction instead of engaging in face-to-face. Individuals with social media addictions are often overly concerned about social media and are driven by an uncontrollable urge to log on to and use social media without limit.

According to the Internet World Stats (2020) reported that the number of Internet users worldwide has reached to almost five billion of the internet users. Posting and viewing Facebook photos can stimulate narcissism (Alloway, Runac, Qureshi, & Kemp, 2014), those who perceive social media to be intimate are the only ones who reap the emotional and social benefits of using them, this may help explain how social media use by itself has been linked to increase the social connection and subsequent wellbeing implications (Best, Manktelow, & Taylor, 2014; Primack et al., 2017). This study focused on the finding on social anxiety, happiness and intimacy with social media addiction.

Thus, to address the problem statement, this study has line-up to achieve the following objectives:

1. To determine the relationship between social anxiety and social media addiction
2. To determine the relationship between happiness and social media addiction
3. To determine the relationship between intimacy and social media addiction

This study aims to determine how the social media usage and mental health have prolonged use of social media such as Facebook that associate with mental health problems such as anxiety and associated with long-term of well-being. Although the negative use of technology development causes problems at every age level, youths are the significant group at risk for social media addiction. This study will better understand of the extent to which of the youth that use social media network and social problems that youth face in their social environments, their emotional, perception of happiness and intimacy. The study results provide information on social media addiction among the youth. |

## 2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

### **Social Anxiety and Social Media Addiction**

Social anxiety disorder (SAD) is a mental health issue that involves a dread of social situations including performing or speaking in front of others for fear of being negatively judged (Marsh, 2020). According to Richards (n.d.) explains

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that if a person usually becomes (irrationally) anxious in social situations, but seems better when they are alone, then “social anxiety” may be the problem. The person who has a social anxiety disorder may understand that their fears are irrational or unreasonable, but feel powerless to overcome them (Legg & Higuera, 2018). Therefore, social anxiety can be described as feeling nervous or anxious in the society or meeting a new person because you think you are not good enough or lack confidence to face new people.

Social media addiction is a big issue among people nowadays since everything was updated on social media. Online social networking sites, and Facebook, in particular, can offer great opportunities, in terms of interaction with others, for individuals with social anxiety, (Dobrea & Pasarelu, 2016). Therefore, social anxiety can be related to social media addiction because social anxiety people love to interact more people in social media. After all, it is not in a face to face situation. According to citation, Lee-Won, Herzog, Park (2015) and Mikulich (2016) they agreed that one of the main reasons why texting and other forms of social media are preferable, especially in the case of those struggling with social anxiety, to real-time interactions is that the awkward nature of the conversation in-person is replaced with the quickly sent text, which can be edited and manipulated before it is sent, thus allowing more control over the interaction than is possible in real-time social situations. Therefore, this study is hypothesised:

H1: There was a significant relationship between social anxiety and social media addiction

### **Happiness and Social Media Addiction**

Happiness is an emotional state characterised by feelings of joy, satisfaction, contentment and fulfilment (Cherry, 2020). Social media network has made it very convenient for people to connect with their loved ones regardless of their geographical location and quitting social media altogether can make them feel isolated from friends and family (Salim, 2019). Happiness is not something you obtain, but it is something you inhabit (Sundaram, 2019). Therefore, happiness can be described as something that brings you joy or feels connected by people that you love can bring you a happiness and help build a strong relationship with others.

According to citation, Whiting & Williams (2013) and Pittman (2018) they agreed that the more frequently one uses social media, the more likely it is to lead to gratifications such as social interaction, entertainment or relaxation. Happiness can also be created by socialising on social media even if it is not in a face to face conversation but connected with people can build a good relationship and happiness. Happy individuals who use social media are even more likely to perceive it as intimate, or at least more useful in facilitating disclosure and self-presentation to others and the world (Pittman, 2018). Therefore, this study is hypothesised:

H2: There was a significant relationship between happiness and social media addiction

### **Intimacy and social media addiction**

Clark and Reis (1988) claims that intimacy as a process in which one person expresses important self-relevant feelings and information to another. As a result of the other's response comes to feel known, validated and cared. According to previous researches it have shown that social media use can strengthen weaker relationships (Ellison, Steinfield, & Lampe, 2007). The more frequently one uses social media, the more likely it is to lead to gratifications such as social interaction, information seeking, pass time, entertainment, relaxation, expression of opinions, communicatory utility, information sharing and watching of others (Whiting & Williams, 2013). On the other hand, individuals who use social media are even more likely to perceive it as intimate, or at least more useful in facilitating disclosure and self-presentation to others and the world.

Reis and Shaver (1988) claims that intimacy involves feeling understood, validated, cared for and closely connected with another person. In other words, the more social media uses, the intimate may perceive their usage. That perceived intimacy with others is what makes one feel better. Therefore intimacy is being there for one another or to show concern or give support. Hence, it is essential to determine the relationships between intimacy and social media addiction in their social environments. Thus, this study hypothesised:

H3: There was a significant relationship between intimacy and social media addiction.

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The conceptual study is to determine the overall in how social media addiction might influence or be influenced by the social environment. The study consists of the relationship between social anxiety, happiness and intimacy for the independent variables, while social media addiction as the dependent variable (refer figure 1).

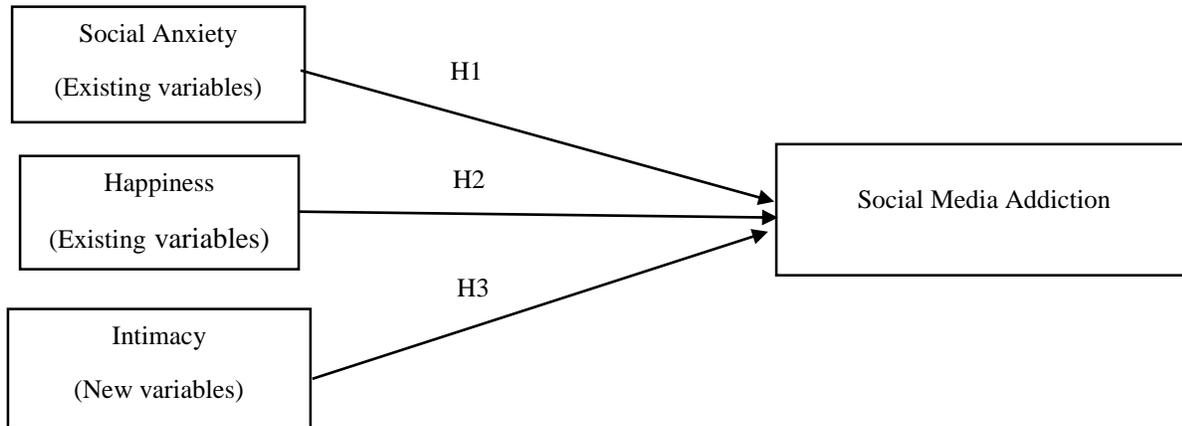


Figure 1: The conceptual research framework

### 3.0 METHODOLOGY

The study investigates the relationship between the social anxiety disorder that affects the respondents from social media addiction. A survey was conducted to gather the data to reach the research objectives. The questionnaire consisted of 40 questions divided into four sections, and each section consisted of 10 questions. Each section based on the variables related to the study. The study applied the 5-point Likert Scale from 1 – Strongly disagree, 2 – Disagree, 3 – Somewhat agree, 4 – Agree, 5 – Strongly agree.

The online data collection for the preliminary study was derived from the Kolej University Poly-Tech MARA Kuala Lumpur. The study collected 110 responses for the preliminary study.

This unit of analysis is the student from Kolej University Poly-Tech MARA Kuala Lumpur. The questionnaires were distributed through Google Form, and the link was sent online via WhatsApp application to the potential respondents. The survey was distributed online because it is low cost and it is the best approach during this Covid-19 pandemic. Thus, the study applied quota sampling to select the respondent due to it is easy to access. According to Brick (2014), the study used quota sampling technique because it requires sample that meets the target number of individuals with specific characteristics, which normally used in market research. The content validity test is conducted in this study by sending the proposed questionnaire to the content expert to ensure that all of the questionnaire items are suitable for measuring the variables in the research.

The study conducted a reliability test to ensure that the instrument can measure the substantiality of the research. A general accepted rule is 0.6-0.7 indicates an acceptable level of reliability, and 0.8 or greater an outstanding level (Ursachi, Horodnic & Zait, 2015). The study used Cronbach alpha value to ensure that the questionnaire items are consistent. The items are considered reliable if the Cronbach alpha value is more than 0.7 as suggested by Hulin, Netemeyer, and Cudeck (2001).

The study used the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) to analyse the data. The data were analysed descriptively and inferential. The study used descriptive analysis to described the respondent background. Then, the study conducted a correlation test to test the hypotheses. For the type of correlation test, the study used a Pearson

correlation. According to Schober, Boer & Schwarte (2018), Pearson correlation is to measure a monotonic association between two variables. ]

#### 4.0 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

**Table 1: Respondent demographic analysis**

Measurement	Item	Percentage, %
Gender	Male	26.4
	Female	73.6
Age	20-22	47.3
	23-25	46.4
	26-28	6.4
Course	BK201	39.1
	AB201	30.9
	BE101	10.0
	BE201	2.7
	CT205	7.3
	CC202	0.9
	AB202	3.6
	CM201	2.7
	AC201	0.9
	AA201	1.8
Own a social media	Yes	100
Spending hours on social media.	1-4 hours	26.4
	4-12 hours	56.4
	More than 12 hours	17.3

Table 1 shows the respondent demographic analysis. The previous finding from Baltaci (2019) showed that 53% of female’s university student and 47% of male university students which age ranged between 19 and 25 are more on social media usage. Table 1 showed that gender for females is 73.6% and male is 26.4%. The respondents from age 20-22 had 47.3% as the highest response. The majority of them own a social media and This indicated that there are more youths female students who have social media addiction which is most of the respondent are females answered they spending 4-12 hours on social media.

The descriptive analysis of the social anxiety in table 2 shows most of the respondent who has social anxiety indicated feel shy around people (SA2: M=3.60) and easily to get nervous around strangers (SA1: M=3.32). The respondent also agreed that they used a social media to get peer support by expressing themselves online. Texting and other forms of social media are preferable by those who struggling with social anxiety, they feel awkward to real-time interactions. Texting and social media allow the text to be edited and manipulated before it is sent (Lee-Won, Herzog & Park , 2015; Mikulich, 2016). Therefore, how we determined the respondent with social anxiety through the question for the first variables which is about social anxiety, we asked if they were feeling nervous or anxious when meeting a new person. The findings show that most of the respondent voted agreed that social anxiety can be related to social media addiction.

**Table 2: Descriptive Analysis of Social Anxiety**

Items	Percentage, %					Mean	Std. Deviation
	1	2	3	4	5		
(SA2) I feel shy around people I don't know.	.9	13.6	29.1	37.3	19.1	3.60	.979
(SA1) I get nervous when I meet new people.	2.7	23.6	29.1	28.2	16.4	3.32	1.092
(SA5) I used social media to gain peer-to-peer support.	3.6	27.3	37.3	30.0	1.8	2.99	.893
(SA4) I become more anxious when I spend more time on social media than usual.	7.3	35.5	34.5	13.6	9.1	2.82	1.060
(SA3) I express my feeling easily on the internet.	16.4	32.7	18.2	25.5	7.3	2.75	1.215
(SA9) I will not leave my house if my phone battery is not full or did not bring my charger.	17.3	34.5	21.8	15.5	10.9	2.68	1.241
(SA7) I will get anxious when I saw someone who better than me in the social media.	22.7	40.9	20.9	11.8	3.6	2.33	1.068
(SA6) I become anxious when I am not up to date with social media.	19.1	49.1	17.3	14.5	0.0	2.27	.938
(SA8) I showed my good sides on social media because I am fearful of losing my followers and friends.	26.4	50.9	10.0	6.4	6.4	2.15	1.085
(SA10) I feel anxious if I do not update my social media status.	42.7	43.6	5.5	5.5	2.7	1.82	.960

**Table 3: Descriptive Analysis of Happiness**

Items	Percentage, %					Mean	Std. Deviation
	1	2	3	4	5		
(H9) I feel happy when I received a positive vibes.	.0	0.0	7.3	48.2	44.5	4.37	.619
(H6) I feel happy when I have a trustable relationship.	.0	3.6	18.2	52.7	25.5	4.00	.766
(H10) I feel happy when I received adequate social support.	.0	2.7	23.6	50.9	22.7	3.94	.758
(H5) I feel happy to use social media to connect with others.	.0	1.8	28.2	55.5	14.5	3.83	.689

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(H8) My happiness is depending on the right physical environment.	1.8	5.5	36.4	41.8	14.5	3.62	.867
(H3) I am happy to join online networks to share ideas with others.	2.7	9.1	40.0	39.1	9.1	3.43	.883
(H7) My happiness is depending on an excellent social environment.	4.5	15.5	27.3	38.2	14.5	3.43	1.062
(H2) I am happy when I actively chat in my social media with friends and family.	3.6	18.2	25.5	41.8	10.9	3.38	1.023
(H4) I found that social isolation can lead to social happiness.	4.5	15.5	41.8	27.3	10.9	3.25	.997
(H1) I feel my life is satisfying when I have a broad social connection.	3.6	19.1	39.1	30.9	7.3	3.19	.953

As shown in table 3, the descriptive analysis of happiness shows most of the respondent who are feeling of joy indicated feel happy when received something positive (H9: M=4.37). The respondent also feel happy on trustable relationship (H6: M=4.00) and happy to receive social support through social media platform. This indicated that the respondent get more connected and feel happy to share positive information. Therefore, we determined the respondent that feeling of happiness through the question for the second variables by answered the question above. Most of the respondent feeling of joy when they get connect with others through social media. The findings show that most of the respondents voted agree that they feel feeling happy is of happiness that can be related with social media addiction.

**Table 4: Descriptive Analysis of Intimacy**

Items	Percentage, %					Mean	Std. Deviation
	1	2	3	4	5		
(I3) Based on my experience, social media present social interaction and I get more information sharing.	.0	2.7	20.0	57.3	20.0	3.95	.715
(I4) Based on my experience, I get connected with other activities through the social media.	.0	2.7	26.4	58.2	12.7	3.81	.684

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(I6) Based on my experience, people attracted to positive post.	3.6	7.3	24.5	42.7	21.8	3.72	1.006
(I2) Based on my experience, humans are more connected to each other using social media.	1.8	6.4	28.2	48.2	15.5	3.69	.875
(I7) Based on my experience, I get connected when I update something positives.	1.8	10.0	24.5	51.8	11.8	3.62	.888
(I10) Based on my experience, technologies can influence on the romantic relationship.	3.6	10.9	26.4	45.5	13.6	3.55	.983
(I5) Based on my experience, social media increase the intimacy of each other.	.0	10.0	38.2	41.8	10.0	3.52	.810
(I1) Based on my experience, viewing photos can increase the interest or admiration of oneself.	.9	10.9	34.5	43.6	10.0	3.51	.854
(I8) Based on my experience, I feel more comfortable when communicating using social media.	2.7	11.8	33.6	44.5	7.3	3.42	.892
(I9) Based on my experience, the face-to-face argument will make it less intimate.	10.9	26.4	20.9	34.5	7.3	3.01	1.161

Table 4 shows most of the respondents who are experienced of intimacy indicated social media is not only as social interaction, it is also to get more information from it (I3: M=3.95) and get connected on social media (I4: M=3.81). The respondent also agreed humans are more connected to each other using social media. This indicated that the respondent get social interaction and increase intimacy of each other through social media. Therefore, we determined the respondent perceive intimacy through the question for the third variables by answered the question above. Most of the respondent feel more intimate when they socialising on social media. The findings shows that most of the respondent voted agree on intimacy question that can be related with social media addiction.

**Table 5: Descriptive Analysis of Social Media Addiction**

Items	Percentage, %					Mean	Std. Deviation
	1	2	3	4	5		
(SMA4) Based on my experience, youths generation today spend most of their time on social media to attract more likers of their post.	.0	.9	16.4	35.5	47.3	4.29	.770
(SMA1) Based on my experience, social media has the potential lead to social media addiction	.9	.0	14.5	50.0	34.5	4.17	.740
(SMA10) Based on my experience, people spend most of their time through social media than other activities.	.0	2.7	18.2	45.5	33.6	4.10	.789
(SMA2) Based on my experience, social media affects other social activities of individuals.	.9	2.7	13.6	51.8	30.9	4.09	.796
(SMA8) Based on my experience, interactive web technologies will increase social media addiction.	.0	.9	27.3	56.4	15.5	3.86	.670
(SMA3) Based on my experience, I easily distracted with social media addiction.	1.8	12.7	23.6	39.1	22.7	3.68	1.022
(SMA9) Based on my experience, the benefits of social media include maintaining a social relationship.	1.8	10.9	16.4	63.6	7.3	3.64	.843
(SMA6) Based on my experience, social media is platform to build new relationship.	5.5	7.3	26.4	44.5	16.4	3.59	1.025
(SMA5) Based on my experience, I get more interaction using social media platform.	.9	18.2	30.9	38.2	11.8	3.42	.952
(SMA7) Based on my experience, I like to share any information through social media.	11.8	13.6	25.5	40.0	9.1	3.21	1.158

While table 5 shows most of the respondent who experienced in social media addiction indicated young generation today spend most of their times on social media (SMA4: M=4.29) and social media platform potential lead social media addiction (SMA1: M=4.17). The majority of the respondent agreed people spend most on their times on social media than doing other activities and it affects other social activities too. Therefore, we determined the respondent addicted to social media through the question above for the fourth variables. The study also performed a correlation analysis to test the relationship between the variables. The relationship between variables was determined using Guilford Rule of Thumb (refer table 6).

**Table 6: Guildford Rule of Thumb Table**

Value, r	Strength
<0.2	Negligible Relationship
0.2 to 0.4	Low Relationship
0.4 to 0.7	Moderate Relationship
0.7 to 0.9	High Relationship
>0.9	Very High Relationship

**Table 7: The result of the correlation test for the level of social anxiety with social media addiction.**

		r	P < .05	Result
Social Anxiety	→ Social Media Addiction	.701	.002	Significant

The correlation test finding between social anxiety with social media addiction is indicated in table 7. The analysis shows that H1 is supported. The level of social anxiety and social media addiction is highly correlated. The direction of the relationship is also positive. The possible explanation for this relationship is people get more anxious when spend more time on social media. As reported the respondents spend four to twelve hours on social media per day. People become addicted to social media because they have social anxiety. Most of the respondent indicated they feel shy and get nervous to meet new people. Thus, the respondents spend more time on social media than usual as an alternative to express their feeling and to gain peer support online. Therefore, the respondent who has social anxiety tend to be addicted to social media.

**Table 8: The result of the correlation test for the level of happiness with social media addiction.**

		r	P < .05	Result
Happiness	→ Social Media Addiction	.808	.000	Significant

The correlation test finding between the levels of happiness with social media addiction is shown in table 8. The analysis shows that H2 is supported. The level of happiness with social media addiction is highly correlated. The direction of the relationship is also positive. The possible reason for this relationship is that the respondent believes that happiness can be created by connected more people on social media. The respondent become addicted to social media because they feel happy while online. The respondents feel happy for the social support and trustable relationship they have while online. Thus, the respondent who is happy online tend to be addicted to social media.

**Table 9: The result of the correlation test for the level of intimacy with social media addiction.**

		r	P < .05	Result
Intimacy	→ Social Media Addiction	.846	.000	Significant

The correlation test finding between intimacy with social media addiction is shown in table 9. The analysis shows that H3 is supported by showing a highly correlated between the variables. The direction of the relationship is positive. The justification of this relationship is the majority of the respondent agree that sharing information and positive post, and doing online activities together would increase intimacy with their online friends. Thus, the intimacy leads to social media addiction.

## 5.0 CONCLUSION

The study was conducted to identify a significant relationship between social anxiety that affect students from Kolej University Poly-Tech MARA Kuala Lumpur from social media addiction. The three factors taken into account in this study are social anxiety, happiness and intimacy towards the respondent's social media addiction. During the preliminary study on 110 respondents, the analysis indicated that people struggling with social media addiction may caused a social anxiety, happiness and intimacy in their life and society. Thus, the better at social media use can create better and healthier mental health and society. However, many people will experience social media addiction issues once in a life from time to time. The finding there are a significant correlation of these three factors with social media addiction.

The study encountered several limitations while conducting the study. The research's data collection process used survey where the questionnaire is disseminated through Google Form. Due to the Covid19 pandemic, the study conducted the online survey because it is the safest approach. However, several other ways to obtain the data for research purposes, such as a direct interview.

Secondly, this study used a quantitative research-based design that focuses on the mean and standard deviation by using the Guildford rule of thumb to find its correlation value. The study focuses on quantitative research because it can help the researcher better understand the creation of more reliable research. Thus, this study also should be planned for the qualitative research to gain better insight to social media addiction.

For the future studies, the researcher wishes to suggest to put an extra effort to check on the respondent's feedback to ensure all the questions have been appropriately addressed. The researcher could check on the respondents within a time frame to confirm if they have answered the survey. Next, the study also wishes to recommend several ideas on overcoming the social anxiety related to social media addiction problems. The psychological counselling services need to be active to spread the awareness about social anxiety by giving a psychological support for people who struggling with social anxiety.

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