

Networking Your Way into Mental Illness: SLR of Social Media Usage Among Malaysian Youth

STEPHANIE ANN

SARINA YUSUF*

Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris, Malaysia

KHAIRULNISSA ABDUL KADIR

Ministry of Health Malaysia

ABSTRACT

Youths are the most common group with social media utilisation as they are the biggest group of internet users. Their social media usage, however, poses a threat to them in the form of mental illness. Besides, there are still insufficient studies that systematically review existing literature on Malaysian youth groups concerning their social media usage and mental illness. Following that, this study aims to identify the forms of mental illness that are affecting Malaysian youths. It also highlights the specific areas and content of research that should be the focus of future studies. Therefore, this systematic literature review on the mental illness outcomes associated with social media usage among Malaysian youth is guided by ROSES (Reporting Standards for Systematic Evidence Syntheses). This study selected articles from reputable and widely recognised databases including Scopus and PubMed. Based on the thematic analysis, this review has four main themes focusing on the mental illness outcome from social media usage, namely 1) distress, 2) fear, 3) depression, and 4) anxiety. The identified themes contribute to a deeper understanding of the potential psychological impact of social media on this population thereby facilitating the development of targeted interventions and strategies to promote mental well-being among Malaysian youths.

Keywords: *Social media, mental illness, Malaysian, youths, literature review.*

INTRODUCTION

Social media sites have become increasingly pivotal in facilitating users' communication, entertainment and information. Malaysia has been foreseeing rapid growth with social media users at 86% by January 2021 (Statista, 2021), signifying 28 million social media users at that time. Therefore, social media sites have become essential for all, especially the younger generation. A recent study showed a group of adolescents using social media with a positive outlook of seeking information, communication means and to elevate towards a better mood simultaneously the study also found the same adolescents using social media with a negative purpose of seeking online validation, fear of missing out, and addiction that is worrisome as social media usage possess a bigger negative impact than positive outcomes (Lee & Zhooriyati, 2022). According to Kaplan and Haenlein (2010), social media is "a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of user-generated content". This tool often used to update statuses, pictures, videos, location and many more has become increasingly popular for its convenience as a user-generated app.

*Corresponding author: sarinayusuf@fbk.upsi.edu.my

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Moreover, social media in its essence eases interaction and establishes more connections allowing people to be hooked towards social media. Therefore, reliance on social media is growing over time. As of January 2021, the most used social media platforms are YouTube, WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter (Statista, 2021). Following that, Statista (2022) implied that every adult possesses a social media account. Following that, scholars have explained that age and personality influence differential motives and subsequent social media usage (Davenport, Bergman, Bergman, & Fearington, 2014). In line with that, several studies showed that those affiliated with a high level of social media addiction are among the youth group (Aydin et al., 2021). The youth population are recognised as the most avid users of social media (Błachnio & Przepiórka, 2016). Consequently, this makes them prone to develop addictive behaviours related to social media platforms. Notably, statistical data reveals that individuals aged 25 to 34 exhibit a high level of social media usage compared to other age groups (Statista, 2021). In 2019, Youth and Sports Minister, Syed Saddiq Syed Abdul Rahman tabled an amendment in the Malaysian Parliament to the Youth Societies and Youth Development Act (Amendment) 2019 (Act 668). 'Youth' was defined as those between 15 and 30 years of age (Yunus & Landau, 2019). Besides, studies show that young adults are the fastest and highest group of people to adopt social media (Stănculescu & Griffiths, 2022). Meanwhile, studies suggest excessive use of social media often correlates with multiple forms of mental illness (Marcus et al., 2012). It is very much known also that the Malaysian government exerts worry on the heightening cases of mental illness. In 2015, The National Health and Morbidity Survey (NHMS) that was conducted by the Ministry of Health (MOH) revealed that one in three Malaysians have mental health issues, with the highest prevalence among those aged 16-19 years. Therefore, it was predicted that by 2020, mental illness is expected to be the second biggest health problem affecting Malaysians after heart disease (Abdollahi et al., 2017).

A recent study highlighted that social media is an important factor leading to addiction (Zaw & Azenal, 2021), especially among Malaysian university students who showed alarming addiction levels (Fauzi et al., 2021) to social media. Moreover, a recent study on social media usage among adolescents revealed that most spend more than seven hours on social media platforms daily indicating social media addiction (Victor et al., 2024). This phenomenon is a behavioural addiction closely related to conditions of problematic internet-related behaviours such as smartphone addiction or gaming addiction (Billieux et al., 2015). Social media aggravation results in an increased number of people diagnosed with syndromes of mental illness such as depression, anxiety, and stress (Azenal & Zaw, 2021; Akin & Iskender, 2011; Baker & Algorta, 2016; Wong et al., 2020; Sam et al., 2022), burnout (Liu & Ma, 2020; Zhang et al., 2016), sleeping disorder (Ilham et al., 2022) and many more. This condition elicits worry as a study showed that suicide has been recognised as the second leading cause of death for people between 15 and 24 years old (National Center for Health Statistics, 2021). In addition to that, a study shows that the younger ones are more vulnerable towards developing suicide ideation than the older ones (Liem et al., 2022). Besides that, social media addiction also shows an inclination towards cyberbullying (Fadhli et al., 2022). Therefore, Malaysian youths are known to be cyberbullies and victims of cyberbullying as well (Lai et al., 2017). This condition raises far more complicated alarms as multiple other outcomes are predicted for victims of cyberbullying (Lee et al., 2023). Moreover, a study showed that social media users are inclined towards addiction to watching pornographic content on social media (Kholisoh et al., 2022).

Moreover, the last few years saw a worrying growth in the aspects of social media addiction as a product of the pandemic outbreak. Giannakos et al. (2021) highlighted that educational acquisition has foreseen a shift towards social media due to its flexibility and convenience factor. However, students were among the biggest groups to be affected as Victor et al. (2021) found university students to be experiencing psychological distress due to the shift from face-to-face to online platforms. In addition to that, the pandemic too has loaded its users with an abundance of information as people were using all platforms available to be equipped with as much information as possible concerning the pandemic, consequently, this led to a frequent use of social media that subsequently led towards a poorer mental health level among the multitude (Geirdal et al., 2021). Besides, social media users desire to be accepted socially and acknowledged by their peers (Orsolini et al., 2022; Huang et al., 2023). Conclusively, social media has become a catalyst in ensuring social media usage is heightened which conversely results in increased mental health issues as well. Therefore, there is a need for this systematic review of mental health outcomes associated with social media usage among Malaysian youths. This review is important as there is an absence of a comprehensive review considering all mental illness outcomes due to social media usage in the context of Malaysian youths. This review would be able to consider all mental illness diagnoses to help clarify the effects of social media usage on the mental health domain as well as computer-mediated usage.

METHODOLOGY

1. *Review Protocol—ROSES*

This systematic literature review is guided by ROSES (Reporting Standards for Systematic Evidence Syntheses) developed by Haddaway et al. (2018). This guide aims to strengthen and retain a methodology of ensured and controlled quality by increasing the transparency of a systematic literature review. Despite this review focusing on health communication and given the fact that ROSES being explicitly developed for the field of environmental management, the review protocol suits the current literature review as it is designed to adapt the subtle distinction and diversity across the multitude of situations and research regarding synthesis method (Haddaway et al., 2018). ROSES as the guide for this systematic literature review paves a pathway to research question formulation by applying the PICo method; wherein 'P' stands for Problem or Population, 'I' for interest and 'Co' for Context. Following that, the next strategy would be planning document searching that was eventually conducted according to three systematic phases: identification, screening, and eligibility. The quality of the individually selected articles was determined before being inserted into this review. Finally, the chosen articles were processed through multiple stages including data extraction and analysis. Guided by the primary research question, the data extraction process was carried out. Then the qualitative data synthesis (thematic synthesis) was undertaken to analyse the extracted data. Under suitable circumstances, the suggestions placed forward are followed by considering alternatives that ensure the review protocol fulfils the objectives of this literature review.

2. Research Question Formulation

Two sources were utilised to formulate research questions, namely; ideas from previous studies (Keles et al., 2020; Baker & Algorta, 2016) relating to how and why youths are diagnosed with problems relating to mental health. Secondly, the usage of the PICO mnemonic signifies 'P' (Population or Problem), 'I' (interest) and 'Co' (Context) (Lockwood et al., 2015). Following these concepts, three main aspects are inserted as part of the review, the Malaysian youths (Population), social media usage (Interest) and mental health outcome (Context). This proceeds to the formulation of the main research question of this study, "What are the types of mental health problems Malaysian youths are prone to due to social media usage?"

3. Systematic Searching Strategies

Mohamed Shaffril et al. (2021), proposed the three systematic processes of identification, screening and eligibility were employed to retrieve the relevant articles. Throughout the implementation of these processes, this systematic literature review enables authors to comprehensively recognise and synthesise studies accordingly.

a) Identification

From the research questions, the formulated keywords are identified as mental health, youths, and social media. Following that, synonyms, related terms and variations are sought after via online thesaurus by referring to keywords of past studies and experts' opinions to enable a diverse range of keywords from the formulated research questions. Therefore, similar keywords to mental health, youths, and social media such as social network, social media usage, depression, anxiety, stress, loneliness, adolescents, mental disorder, and mental distress were added. The combination of these keywords was processed using functions compromising field code functions, phrase searching, wildcards, truncation, and Boolean operators in the databases of the journals shortlisted (see Table 1).

Table 1: Search string used according to the selected database

Database	String
Scopus	(TITLE-ABS-KEY(social AND media AND mental AND health AND in AND Malaysia) OR TITLE-ABS-KEY(social AND network AND mental AND health AND in AND Malaysia) OR TITLE-ABS-KEY(social AND network OR social media AND mental AND distress AND in AND Malaysia)) OR Malaysian youths OR Malaysian young adults OR Malaysian adolescents W/ Malaysia
PubMed	(((((social media) AND (mental health)) AND (Malaysian youth)) OR (social network)) OR (mental illness)) OR (Malaysian adolescents)) OR (Malaysian young adults)) OR (mental distress)

The search process was also inclusive of a manual searching technique. The outcomes of negative mental health on Malaysian youths due to social media usage may vary in the context of used terms comprising social networks or mental distress. Therefore, it is important to note that the present study addresses the types of mental health issues Malaysian youths are facing. Based on the search efforts, a total of 62 potential articles were identified from Scopus and 41 potential articles from PubMed.

b) Screening

After identification, screening is carried out. This stage decides if articles were to be included or excluded which may be by the database assistance or by manual screening based on a set of specific criteria (see Table 2). Kraus et al. (2020) emphasised the concept of ‘research field maturity’, therefore, this review limits the screening process to include articles published in the last five years (2019 to 2023) only. This allows a sufficient representative review of the current situation according to the number of published studies. This review focuses on quantitative research papers as they offer primary data. Moreover, English articles were considered to avoid information being lost via translation. According to the objective drawn concerning Malaysian youths with mental health issues due to social media usage, research on social science studies and medicine area was set as one of the criteria as a possibility to heighten the number of articles possible to acquire. Thus, a total of 34 Scopus articles were excluded from the review at this stage as they were in line with the required inclusion criteria. This then proceeded to result in 5 articles remaining for subsequent stages of evaluation. Following that, a total of 38 PubMed articles were excluded resulting in 3 articles remaining for the following stage.

Table 2: Inclusion and exclusion criteria

Criterion	Inclusion	Exclusion
Timeline	2019–2023	2018 and earlier
Document Type	Articles (with empirical data)	Review article, chapter, book, conference proceeding, etc.
Language	English	Non-English
Subject Area	Social Science	Non-social science studies

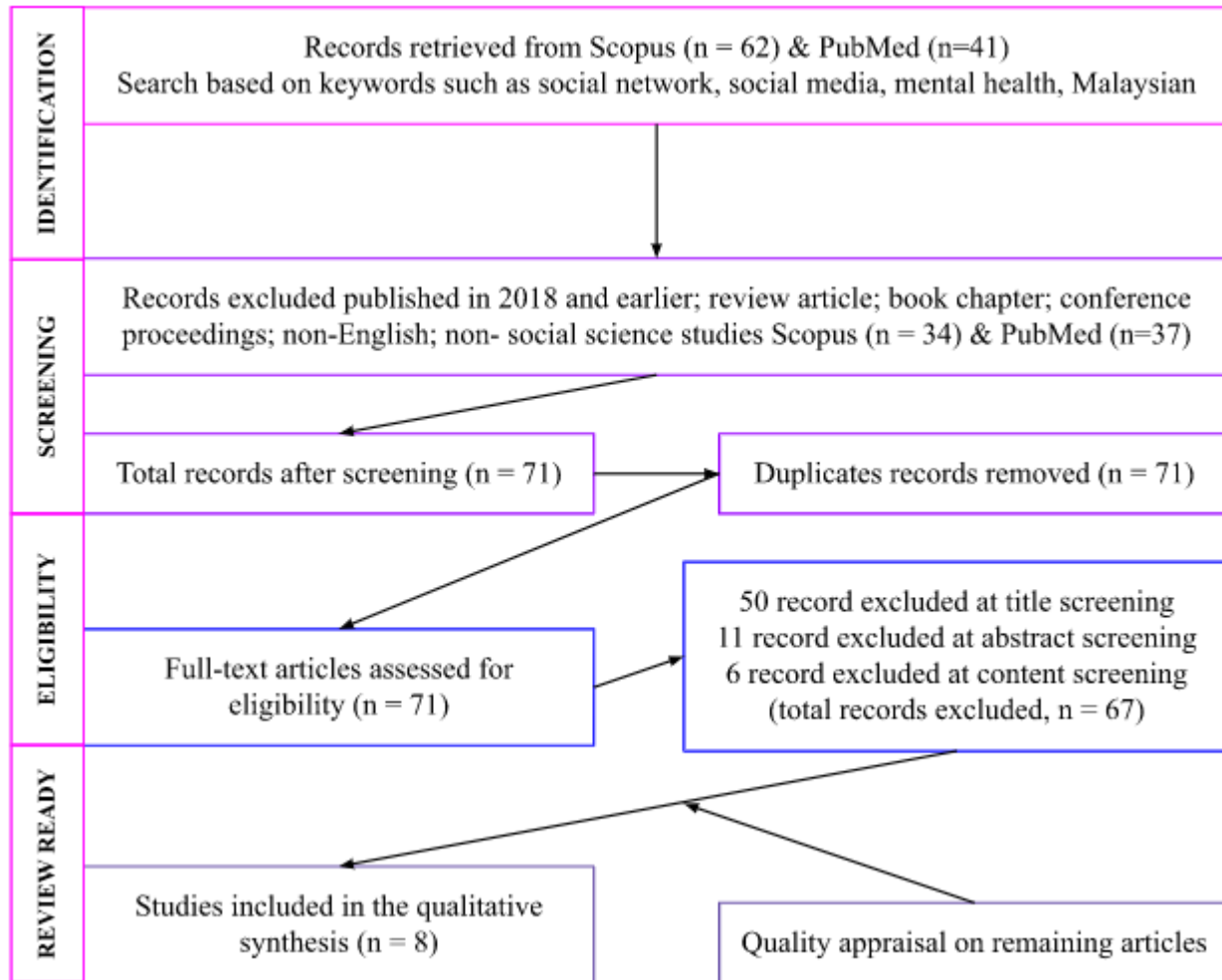


Figure 1: Flow diagram of the search process

c) Eligibility

The remaining papers were then manually checked to ensure they matched the established inclusion criteria. As for the articles from Scopus, 24 were excluded through the title screening stage and 3 articles were removed during the abstract screening stage. Following that, two articles were excluded after content reading of the selected articles. As for PubMed 26 were excluded through the title screening stage and 8 articles were removed during the abstract screening stage four articles were excluded after content reading of the selected articles. A total of 66 articles were removed at this stage as it does not focus on Malaysian youths facing mental health issues from their social media usage. The final number of articles for the quality appraisal stage was finalised at 8 (see Figure 1).

4. Quality Assessment

The eligible articles were assessed by a couple of experts in the field of health communication. This is to ensure the content of the articles is of good quality and as suggested by Popay et al. (2006) that the experts recognised should rank the eligible articles into categories of high, moderate and low. Following that, the articles falling under the high and moderate category are

reviewed. The author and the experts have agreed on ensuring the articles of moderate level and high level are qualified to be included in the review. Therefore, five articles were ranked high, and three articles were ranked moderate making all the articles eligible for this review.

RESULTS

1. *Background of the Selected Studies*

This literature review has resulted in nine articles being finalised. Three out of nine articles were published in 2021 (Ting & Essau, 2021; Kong, 2021; Loh et al., 2021), four were published in 2022 (Zhang et al., 2022; Amran & Jamaluddin, 2022; Liu et al., 2022; Tung et al., 2022) and one published in 2023 (Lee et al., 2023). Proceeding to the methodology of the articles, the review shows that most of the articles have utilised a quantitative research design (Zhang et al., 2022; Ting & Essau, 2021; Kong, 2021; Liu et al., 2022; Loh et al., 2021; Lee et al., 2023; Tung et al., 2022) employing survey questionnaires, while one study utilised a qualitative method using semi-structured interview (Amran & Jamaluddin, 2022). Moreover, the review reveals 676 samples with Malaysians aged 18 and above (Zhang et al., 2022), 178 students from public universities aged 18 and above (Ting & Essau, 2021), 30 adolescents (Amran & Jamaluddin, 2022), 386 first-year undergraduates aged between 19 to 22 (Kong, 2021), 622 Malaysians aged 18 and above (Liu et al., 2022), 384 university students mainly 25 years and below, 270 medical students of a public university in Kuching, Malaysia with a mean age at 21.98 years (Lee et al., 2023), and 380 students from Malaysian university with a mean age of 24 years. As for the publication house of the articles, one article is published by the *Frontiers in Public Health* (Zhang et al., 2022), and one is published by Elsevier (Ting & Essau, 2021). It is then followed by one article published by the *Journal of Cyberpsychology, Behavior, and Social Networking* (Amran & Jamaluddin, 2022), another article in the *Asia Pacific Journal Of Educators And Education* (Kong, 2021) two articles published in the *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* (Liu et al., 2022; Lee et al., 2023) one from *Information Systems Frontier* (Loh et al., 2021) and one was published by the *Healthcare Journal* (Tung et al., 2022).

2. *Mental Health Problems Malaysian Youths are Prone due to Social Media Usage*

The research question of this study focuses on recognising the types of mental health problems dawning on Malaysian youths due to extensive and addictive usage of social media platforms. Therefore, eight articles were finalised for this review extracted from Scopus and PubMed databases in the last five years. Subsequently, the types of mental illness that Malaysian youths are facing due to social media addiction are recognised. Thus, this review highlights four subdimensions of mental health issues extracted from the articles. Five studies focus on distress. Following that, two more articles focus on fear such as fear of missing out and nomophobia. Three articles focus on depression. Lastly, two articles focus on the outcome of anxiety.

a) *Distress*

The first study highlights stress as the overwhelming level of information that arose due to the pandemic that was received via social media by the users positively related to the perceived stress of their respondents (Zhang et al., 2022). Technically, the focus of this article is on the information engagement on social media while linking it to the information overload measured by a simplified

Cancer Information Overload Scale adopted for this study and perceived stress measured by two items that are; “Currently, I feel so down in the dumps that nothing could cheer me up” and “Currently, I feel downhearted and blue” as a prominent mental health issue due to the Covid-19 infodemic. Thus, this study establishes that an individual actively engaged with COVID-19 information concurrently with their social media usage would be feeling overwhelmed and fatigued as the individuals feeling overwhelmed with Covid-19 information would likely be suffering from stress (Zhang et al., 2022).

The second article highlights psychological distress as the time spent on social media increases (Ting & Essau, 2021). Similarly, this article discusses the impact of the pandemic on individuals. This study highlights the mental health issues arising due to the pandemic outbreak that forced individuals to maintain social distancing and sent them into lockdown consecutively leading people towards misuse of substances as well as prolonged social media usage and gaming. Thus, this study tries to understand the addictive behaviours among university students while trying to cope with the pandemic as well as to identify the psychological impacts such as distress measured by six items from the Kessler Distress Scale of the pandemic and the associations of the mentioned issue to assist university authorities in understanding the psychological impacts of the unforeseen crisis. Therefore, this study finds that the time spent on social media and psychological distress increases accordingly during the lockdown period (Ting & Essau, 2021).

Another article by Loh et al. (2021) showcases their respondents comprising university students in Malaysia to be experiencing technostress and exhaustion due to informational overload with their usage of social media for academic purposes. This study looks into the usage of social media via mobile phones for information dissemination as part of the educational process for university students. Following that, the volume of information obtained while seeking academic needs exerted an impact on the students. In addition to information overload, these respondents have portrayed that life invasion via social media impacts them with technostress and exhaustion as well. The study highlights that the element of invasion with social media usage becomes inevitable, especially with the need to stay in touch with needed connections besides also having students troubled in defining the fine line of balance between their studious needs and personal needs causing exhaustion and stress. Interestingly, this study also found privacy invasion resulting in technostress due to the concerns of social media users especially when these students lean towards sharing personal details online for assignment purposes. However, due to the availability of privacy adjustment settings in most mobile phones and social media platforms, this study shows the existence of no exhaustion due to privacy invasion. Conclusively, this study highlights that these students experience technostress that drives stress and exhaustion that heightens fatigue due to their education taking place via social media which eventually drives them to reduce their usage intention.

Lee et al. (2023) finds a majority of male medical students are vulnerable towards stress due to social media addiction. The level of social media addiction that was measured by the Bergen Social Media Addiction Scale (BSMAS) among the respondents is seen to be at a high level as easy accessibility and ample availability are among the characteristics that are often related to social media usage. This level of addiction towards social media consequently leads towards stress measured by the Depression Anxiety Stress Scale of 21-items (DASS-21) for these medical students from Kuching, Malaysia.

Tung et al. (2022) in a study that was conducted to examine the validity and the robustness of several instruments relating to problematic internet usage behaviours to fit the Malaysian context eventually found the existence of a significant relationship between social media addiction using the Bergen's Social Media Addiction Scale and Stress using the Depression Anxiety Stress Scale of 21-items DASS-21 among university students in Malaysia.

b) Fear

The third paper shows fear of missing out as a mental health issue among social media users (Amran & Jamaluddin, 2022). Likewise, this article also focused on post pandemic. This article highlights that an increased screen time due to an investing engagement with social media due to the social distancing imposed by the Covid-19 pandemic has induced an increased level of fear of missing out measured by a semi-structured interview to explore their respondent's output in terms of thoughts, feelings and belief among adolescents. Therefore, conclusively, the outcome of this article shows that fear of missing out due to social media usage resulting in high screen time has caused loneliness; due to the absence of physical companionship, life satisfaction; exaggerated content affecting their day to day mood, self-disclosures; receiving positive and negative feedback on their image and social comparison; constant comparison on the luxuries portrayed by the social influencers and online posts (Amran & Jamaluddin, 2022).

Following that, the fourth paper portrays a relatively new form of mental health issue, nomophobia (Liu et al., 2022). Technically, this study highlights the problematic internet use in terms of social media addiction and smartphone addiction relating to nomophobia measured by the Nomophobia Questionnaire, weight-related self-stigma, and physical activity among university students in China, Taiwan, and Malaysia. At the end of the day, this study conclusively showed that social media addiction is positively associated with nomophobia. However, nomophobia in Malaysia does not relate and similarly, there is no positive association between weight-related self-stigma and physical activity among Malaysian students (Liu et al., 2022).

Besides that, Ting and Essau (2021) studied the psychological distress experienced post lockdown in relation towards gaming addiction, social media addiction, and eating addiction among university students. Interestingly, the outcome showed these students scoring high for the fear of the Covid-19 scale. The author suggests that the extended amount of time spent on social media raises the worry of students due to misleading information or an uncontrollable surge of information causing overload. Thus, this condition leads towards the students experiencing fear towards Covid-19.

c) Depression

Lastly, the fifth article shows that depression is very much prevalent with a significant association with increased investment in social media usage among first-year undergraduate students (Kong, 2021). Parallel to the other articles discussed in this review, this article also looks over the aftereffects of the Covid-19 pandemic. This article highlights the relationship between social media usage and the mental-health outcome of depression measured by the Patient-Reported Outcomes Measurement Information System (PROMIS) of first-year undergraduate students during the pandemic as physical classes were executed by remote classes. Conclusively, this study finds a significant amount of association between a high level of social media usage and

depression among first-year undergraduate students. This study also finds the fact that not the time spent on social media, but the level of emotional investment on social media stands as the measurement towards determining mental health outcomes. Another outcome of this study is the fact that students of East Malaysia in rural or remote areas are more prone to getting depressed.

In addition to that, Lee et al. (2023) highlights the significant existence of depression due to social media addiction among medical students from a university in Kuching, Malaysia. The same study that studies the prevalence of social media addiction found an extended engagement with social media sites highlighting a high level of social media addiction that consequently leads towards the students experiencing depression as well.

On the other hand, Tung et al. (2022) found depression as an outcome of social media addiction among university students in Malaysia. This study that aimed to recognise the validity and reliability of Bergen's Social Media Addiction Scale among Malaysian university students was deemed valid and robust while also recognising the correlation between social media addiction and depression.

d) Anxiety

A study by Lee et al. (2023) highlights the existence of anxiety among medical students in a university located in Kuching, Malaysia due to the existence of a high level of social media addiction. This study also highlights cyber victimisation also contributes towards the students experiencing mental illness. In line with that, this study also highlights that there may be a varying existence of influential factors between social media addiction and psychopathological conditions.

In addition to that, a study by a group of scholars shows anxiety as a form of mental illness among Malaysian university students (Tung et al., 2022). This significant association was recognised while the study was executed to ensure the validity and reliability of multiple instruments relating to problematic behaviour of internet problems including social media addiction in the Malaysian context.

Table 3: Summary of included articles

No.	Author & Year	Source	Study Design	The Outcome of Mental Illness	Instrument used	Findings
1.	Zhang et al. (2022)	Scopus	Cross-sectional online survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information Overload Perceived Stress 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Simplified Cancer Information Overload Scale Adopted from Ngien & Jiang (2021) 	Significant relationship with social media engagement and information overload and perceived stress
2.	Ting & Essau (2021)	Scopus	Cross-sectional online survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fear of Covid-19 Distress 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fear of COVID-19 Scale Kessler Distress Scale 	Significant relationship between social media addiction and fear Significant relationship between social media addiction and psychological distress
3.	Amran & Jamaluddin (2022)	Scopus	Qualitative method using a semi-structured interview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fear of Missing Out 	-	High screen time on social media led to Fear of Missing Out
4.	Kong (2021)	Scopus	Online Survey Study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Depression 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Patient-Reported Outcomes Measurement Information System (PROMIS) Depression Scale 	Significant relationship between social media usage and depression
5.	Liu et al. (2022)	Scopus	Survey study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nomophobia 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nomophobia Questionnaire (NMPQ) 	Significant relationship between social media addiction and nomophobia
6.	Loh et al. (2021)	PubMed	Survey study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Technostress Exhaustion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Items adapted from Luqman et al. (2017) Items adapted from Cao and Sun (2018) 	Significant relationship with Information overload and technostress and exhaustion Significant relationship with life invasion and technostress and exhaustion Significant relationship with technostress and exhaustion
7.	Lee et al. (2023)	PubMed	Survey study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Depression Anxiety Stress 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Depression Anxiety Stress Scale 21-items (DASS-21) 	Significant relationship between social media addiction and depression, anxiety and stress
8.	Tung et al. (2022)	PubMed	Survey study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Depression Anxiety Stress 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Depression Anxiety Stress Scale 21-items (DASS-21) 	Significant relationship between social media addiction and depression, anxiety and stress

DISCUSSION

Over the years, multiple studies have embarked on recognising the impacts of social media on the younger generation. Some include aspects such as a high level of screen addiction (Ali et al., 2020) and an effect on the user's communication and interaction with each other (Diva et al., 2023). With that, this literature review has recognised the three types of mental health problems dawning on Malaysian youths as a result of the extensive usage of social media platforms.

Distress, fear in the form of fear of missing out and nomophobia and depression are the forms of mental health seen to be highly affecting avid social media users. Conclusively this review shows that social media usage during the Covid-19 pandemic leads to stress among Malaysian youths in two ways. Firstly, it is influenced by infodemic resulting in an overload of information from social media (Zhang et al., 2022). Covid-19 pandemic saw the movement of multiple social media accounts taking the responsibility to ensure the multitude of people are equipped with precautionary steps concerning the pandemic (Huang, 2020; Liu et al., 2021) by providing abundant information. However, there was an instance of too much information or instances of misinformation being spread via social media resulting in the users feeling fatigued over too much information (Lee et al., 2019; Islam et al., 2020) as a recent study implies that individuals possess a limited capacity towards information processing according to the theory of limited capacity model (Lang, 2000). With that, the review also highlights youths experiencing fear of the Covid-19 pandemic due to extensive time spent on social media (Ting & Essau, 2021). The long exposure that likely happened during the lockdown exposes young people to misinformation or an overload of information.

Secondly, the pandemic has altered the normal lifestyle of most. It has produced a young society with addictions, especially on social media as a coping mechanism that was embarked on bracing through the pandemic (Ting & Essau, 2021). This becomes an important issue as these negative addictions seem to be developed during the lockdown and are productive among adolescents (Kar et al., 2020). However, compulsive social media usage is detrimental as it is regarded as a coping strategy in this pandemic due to the need for emotional support (Liang et al., 2019). This can lead to psychological distress according to Ting and Essau (2021) due to issues such as too much social information for individuals and feeling like contributing too much social support (Maier et al., 2015).

Moreover, a study by Loh et al. (2021) shows Malaysian university students experiencing technostress and exhaustion due to the usage of social media for learning. This condition is often found when there is an overload of information from social media that users are often not able to restrict themselves from causing them to experience exhaustion. This condition is often known as social media fatigue (Ravindran et al., 2014) due to an overwhelming usage of social media. Additionally, Tarafdar et al. (2020) highlights the existence of technostress when overwhelmed and exhausted with social media usage. Referring to the articles in this review, this condition is driven due to overuse or overwhelming input or social media users concerned over privacy or invasion while using social media too. On the other hand, Lee et al. (2023) and Tung et al. (2022) showcase Malaysian university students experiencing stress due to social media addiction. This comes as no surprise as multiple studies highlight similar findings that university students in Malaysia are experiencing stress due to their social media usage (Zaw & Azenal, 2021) and (Akin & Iskender, 2011) showed that social media addiction becomes a serious source of stress.

Besides that, social media usage has elicited fear of various types. First, young people experience fear of missing out due to high screen time with social media usage further leading to experiencing loneliness, dissatisfaction towards life, and evaluating oneself according to the social standard and thus social comparison (Amran & Jamaluddin, 2022). Additionally, a local study showed nearly half of their sample inclining towards frequent social media usage which the researcher believes is due to not wanting to feel missing out (De Rycker & Jamal, 2023). The increase in the number of social media users' especially adolescents, is rapid (Kemp et al., 2021) and leads to the vulnerability of mental health issues. Social media undoubtedly leads to fear of missing out (Richter, 2018) as it leads users to fear that others would be having a better experience when they are absent and the constant need to maintain a connection with their networks (Przybylski et al., 2013). At the same time, studies have shown adolescents to be vulnerable towards the state of fear of missing out as it interferes with their emotional and behavioural development (Baker et al., 2016; Bloemen & De Coninck, 2020) and can potentially lead to greater stress and a lower satisfaction towards life.

The second fear would be nomophobia (fear of no mobile phone) due to problematic internet use in terms of social media usage (Liu et al., 2022). Studies show that weight-related self-stigma is often due to physical inactivity among university students (Bevan et al., 2021; Pearl et al., 2021; Saffari et al., 2022). Following that, this condition has been linked to negative mental health outcomes (Pearl & Puhl, 2018). Fung et al. (2021) found social media addiction increases weight stigma among schoolchildren and it plays an important role in serving body shaming (Eow & Gan, 2018) and at the same time in promoting positive body image (Clark et al., 2021). Besides the association, this article also explores addiction to social media, relatively increasing the fear of not having smartphones around developing an increased nomophobia and mental health issues (Liu et al., 2022). This shows that problematic internet usage leads to an individual's fear of not having a smartphone as nomophobia stands for no-mobile phobia (Notara et al., 2021) an emerging threat to the social, mental and physical health of young adults.

This review also shows that there is a need for the medical department to come up with an outbreak or disaster coping mechanism for young adults. This is so they do not get addicted to social media when in search of a coping mechanism. Similarly, development should be encouraged for self-regulation for social media usage to limit excessive usage. Subsequently, awareness level of the risk of mental health issues should be disseminated well and in detail to young adults to better guard their future from deteriorating. Moreover, technologists should take into consideration the mental health of users while dealing with creating or improvising social media applications to ensure it is much safer according to their age group and as well as to their mental health.

IMPLICATION, RESEARCH GAPS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE STUDIES

It is important for precautionary steps to be taken before it lands off the lines of severity that cause irreversible actions. Among the implications that can be done to ensure healthier social media usage among Malaysian youths to avoid them from experiencing issues of mental health would be for the members in the field of health communication to educate on the severity the infodemic could cause the public. Covid-19 was not just a pandemic, but also an infodemic (Bradd, 2021). Therefore, relevant information must be constantly monitored to ensure the outcome

does not overcome one's ability to comprehend it. Along the way, healthcare communications need to be improved to educate and reduce problematic social media usage to prevent mental health issues following it.

Studies show that social communication is not the only reason for social media usage, online learning post-pandemic also drives university students to switch to social media platforms and face distress as well (Victor et al., 2021), therefore as a recommendation further studies need to be done on investigating how different factors of social media usage leads to mental illness among the Malaysian youths as well. Multiple other studies are encouraged to be conducted to identify factors leading to avid social media usage as well as the existence of different factors contributing to the mental illness of Malaysian youths.

The fact that most of these studies were conducted during the epidemic and the data was gathered online presents a research gap. Thus, this study's outcome may differ while conducting the study offline. In addition, most studies revolve around the consequences of the pandemic outbreak, making Covid-19 pandemic a factor. Besides, it is as obvious as daylight that adolescents are very much directed to digital content widely (Bowden-Green et al., 2021; Rettew et al., 2021). Thus, there is a dire need for detailed studies to be conducted with the multiple differing groups of young adults scrutinising elements such as gender, age, or location to identify deeper problems among them as well as to identify solutions for controlled social media usage.

This review also shows that there is a need for the medical department to come up with an outbreak or disaster coping mechanism for young adults. This is so they do not get addicted to social media when in search of a coping mechanism. Similarly, development should be encouraged for self-regulation for social media usage to limit excessive usage. Subsequently, awareness level on the risk of mental health issues should be disseminated well and in detail to young adults to better guard their future against deteriorating. Moreover, technologists should take into consideration the mental health of users while dealing with creating or improvising social media applications to ensure it is much safer according to their age group and as well as to their mental health.

CONCLUSION

It comes as no surprise that technology and humans are almost inseparable. As much as benefits are abundant to it, there is also grave danger coming by. The young people are in a vulnerable state as they reach adulthood. Therefore, the threats to technological advancement, namely social media, threaten their growth. Accordingly, the mental health condition of these young adults comes into question as social media is a factor contributing towards a deteriorating mental condition among the youths. The Covid-19 pandemic has caused social media users to grow increasingly dependent towards it inducing an unbalanced commitment towards social media. Thus, resulting in an increased physical and mental health condition post pandemic.

This literature review poses a question on recognising the types of mental health problems dawning on Malaysian youths due to the extensive usage of social media platforms assisted by the PICO mnemonic. The ROSES guide finalised the articles for this review. The article search was directed by the pathway of three systematic phases of identification, screening, and eligibility that resulted in 5 articles finalised on mental health outcomes with social media usage among Malaysian youths resulting in three forms of mental health issues, namely; distress, fear (fear of missing out and nomophobia), depression and anxiety as a conclusion.

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BIODATA

Stephanie Ann Victor is a lecturer at the Department of Communication and Media, Faculty of Language and Communication at Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris, Malaysia specialising in health communication, mental health, social media and new media writing. Her most recent work includes studying the mental health issues of Malaysian youths concerning the field of communication. Email: stephanie@fbk.upsi.edu.my

Sarina Yusuf is a senior lecturer in the Department of Communication and Media, Faculty of Language and Communication at Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris in Malaysia, where she teaches courses in communication, data analysis, and research methods. Her most recent work focuses on health communication, the effects of new media, mental health well-being, and the online behaviours of adolescents and youth. Email: sarinayusuf@fbk.upsi.edu.my

Khairulnissa Abdul Kadir is a prominent figure in the field of health communication, serving at the Ministry of Health Malaysia. She has made significant contributions to research in this area, collaborating extensively with academic researchers from numerous public universities (IPTA). Her work focuses on improving public health through effective communication strategies, and public awareness on various health issues. Email: khairulnissa@moh.gov.my

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