

Perception and Attitude towards Online Dating Relationships

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Abstract – The advancement of technology especially social media had influenced how we communicate in daily lives especially towards our partners. Thus, this study is executed in order to identify the perception and attitude towards online dating relationships among Malaysian. 316 respondents which consisted of Malaysians had taken part in this research. This study uses descriptive analysis and the results are reported in the form of frequency and percentage. The research instrument which is in the questionnaire had been used by the researcher for this study. The study found out that 46.5% of the respondent had the right perception about the online dating relationships. Meanwhile, 52.5% of them gave the positive perception to the online dating of relationship and 61.7% of respondent accepted online dating relationship. The results for attitude towards this type of relationship showed that most of the respondents which amounted to 60.1% did not experience an online relationship. The researcher concluded that even the socially accepted and gave a positive reaction to an online romantic relationship; it does not practice by a lot of people. This situation might happen because the public is aware of the risks getting in an online relationship such as fraud and sexual harassment.

Keyword: Online Dating, Romantic Relationship, Perception, Attitude, Malaysian's

I. INTRODUCTION

Online dating was referred to as an alternative to meet the potential partner through various media such as through dedicated websites or online dating application via smartphones [1]. The way in which romantic relationships were formed has changed considerably in the past few decades [2]. In fact, just within the last 15–20 years, online dating has substantially altered the dating environment [3]. Online dating has proliferated rapidly in the world since it first appeared around 1997 and it later expanded with Web 2.0 technology growth [4].

The market for niche websites in the United States has also grown exponentially as there are now 1,378 dating websites, an increase from 876 online dating services three years ago [2]. With its growing popularity and wide usage, online dating websites and online romantic relationships are meritorious to study in order to understand the implications of this phenomenon. There are certain reasons to use social networking site (SNS) to find potential partner including its credibility, depth of information shared in profiles that are provided and the sentiment that it is a more natural environment where people with the same interests can meet and interact [5].

According to [6] followed by [7], there are three major disadvantages regarding the online dating websites as it involves issues related to limited social presence, listening, and physical presence. In addition, [8] found that those who engage in online relationships tend to have low levels of concern rather than those with high levels of concern and people who are engaged in sexual risk behaviors are more likely to be involved in online interaction [9].

The involvement of people with online dating websites or applications may also be related to their individual attitudes and perceptions about it, for instance; they believe online dating is a quick and easy way to meet new acquaintances [10], [4]. Hence, the aim of the study is to explore the change of Malaysians' perception and attitude towards an online romantic relationship.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 The Concept of Online Dating

Online dating is "the practice of using dating sites to find romantic couples" [3]. On the other hand, conventional offline dating is "the way one satisfies the potential of romantic couples in their daily lives through non-internet activities such as social networks, face-to-face meetings (FTF) and so on" [11]. Online dating differs from the conventional form of offline dating primarily through the use of computer media communications (CMC), which gives users "the opportunity to interact with potential couples through a site or dating service before meeting face" [12]. The dating website is a "focused website that offers users the opportunity to create new romantic relationships" [13]. These pages are assessed by their ability to produce a joyous romantic relationship and to what extent someone values positively or intends to pursue a certain person [3].

2.2 Factors that Leads to Online Dating

One of the main reasons' individuals use online dating and other online platforms to meet their romantic couples is that they have had an endless dating experience [14]. [8] found that those with low levels of confidence are more likely than those with high confidence to engage in online relationships and people who engage in risky sexual behaviors are more likely to be more involved in online dating [9].

According to [15] differences in demographic conditions led to online dating and they found that finding a life partner, sex,

fun, serenity, boredom, and "easier to meet people" are among the main motivations. According to [16] personal change is also a factor in engaging to online dating. For instance, having a solid working schedule, unable to leave freely, separated from their significant other and move to the new city.

2.3 Scams in Online Dating

Not surprisingly, the scams in order to obtain online appointments have becoming a widespread practice for a long time [17]. [18] defines fraud as "deliberate or omission of deliberate information by a communicator in order to mislead a conversation partner". By using an online dating site some people argue that appearances are deceptive or dishonest as well as raising suspicions of prospective couples who want to meet new people [19]. In fact, online magazines are one of the largest online dating sites which encourage consumers to be strategic, including encouraging them to produce interesting profiles. According to [20] fraud is often something that deliberately "people lie for reason". Although individual motives are not always clear, the nature of strategic fraud in online dating profiles is evident in specific ways to serve a particular purpose.

Although some people do not fully represent themselves with honesty, they usually try to make an impression that may retain the interactions they had with their partner [21]. Review by [22] individuals are more likely to exaggerate their positive qualities if they believe future interactions will happen online and not face to face, perhaps because meeting someone face-to-face can increase the likelihood of detecting fraud. Since most people who use online dating profiles hope to meet at least one prospective partner, it is directly understood that little percentage of the public is rather small [23]. While previous studies show that fraud and fraud perceptions are important for online dating profiles, they only provide an initial overview of information and do not address some of the key issues, such as the importance of fraud in interactions that follow initial creation of profile and profile viewing or whether fraud is actually important for the development of relationships in online dating [23]. However, given the importance of contexts to fraud perception of fraud possibilities will be made differently in online dating profiles, whose purpose is to highlight potential candidates, as opposed to personal messages, targeted at specific people [24].

III. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Instrument

This study is conducted in a form of quantitative research by using questionnaires [27]. This research uses two (2) different set of questionnaires in order to answer the research objectives which are the perception and attitude online dating relationships. The questionnaires for the perception of online romantic relationships use a Likert scale which contains 3 items to determine the level of perception towards an online romantic relationship. The responses range from Very Wrong = 1 to Very Right (question 1), Very Negative = 1 to Very

Positive = 4 (question 2) and Very Unacceptable = 1 to Very acceptable = 4 (question 3).

1. In your opinion, is an online romantic relationship right or wrong?
2. In your opinion, does online romantic relationship have a positive or negative impact?
3. In your opinion, is an online romantic relationship can be accepted by society?

Meanwhile, in order to measure the attitude towards love, the researcher uses The Love Attitude Scale (LAS) using the measurement scale Yes or No. The Love Attitude Scale consisted of 25 questions and they are as below:

1. Not searching for love online.
2. Feel a lot more confidence in the online romantic relationship.
3. Tends to give in, in an online romantic relationship.
4. More straightforward an honest in an online love affair
5. Tend to lay low on your identity in an online relationship.
6. Do not like my online partner to know my real attitude offline
7. Very romantic and intimate towards the significant other
8. Find it best to take care of the feelings and emotions
9. More loving to their couple
10. Do not become too choosy in selecting the online partner to be my love partner
11. Choose a beautiful/handsome couple to be in love with
12. Do not prefer online lovers who are too sensitive
13. Prefer someone with open minded
14. Prefer someone who is talkative online
15. Prefer an online partner who is caring and always asks about their condition
16. Become easily bored with my online love partner
17. Find it easy to change online love partner if there is some problem in the relationship
18. Very loyal with my current online lover
19. Do not prefer an online lover who is meticulous and always asking about our day
20. Easily bored with an online lover
21. Always changing online lover
22. Prefer to look at the online relationship as merely for fun instead of for marriage
23. Willing to spend anything in order to make my current lover as husband/wife
24. Feel regret to pursue a romantic online relationship because a lot of time has been wasted
25. Plan to break up the relationship with a partner in the near future

Respondents are asked to answer questions related to them by giving a statement on the Measurement scale.

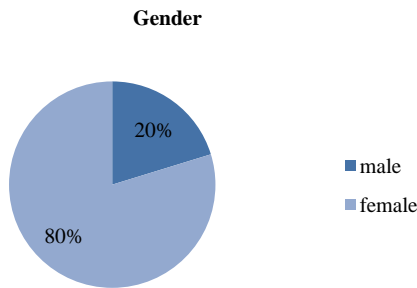
3.2 Data Analysis

The researcher uses descriptive analysis to obtain the frequency value and percentage in order to explain in detail about the perception and attitude in online dating relationships.

IV. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The data is collected from 316 respondents from all around Malaysia. 316 respondents are involved in this study which is in the range of 13 to 50 years old and above. A total of (20.0%) are male and (80.0%) are female.

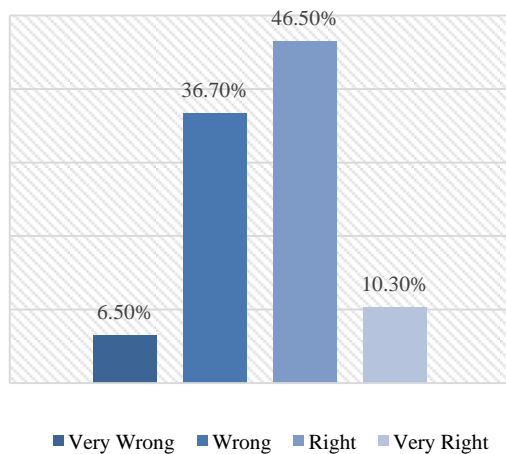
Figure 1: Several Respondents by Gender



Perception of Online Dating Relationships

As can be seen in (Figure 1), most respondents consider online romance relationships to be correct with the highest percentage rate of 46.5%. The results of this study are in line with the study of [10]but the higher percentage rate of 47.0% gives the perception that romance online is correct because the reason for this kind of romance allows one to find a good partner because they know more people [10][26].

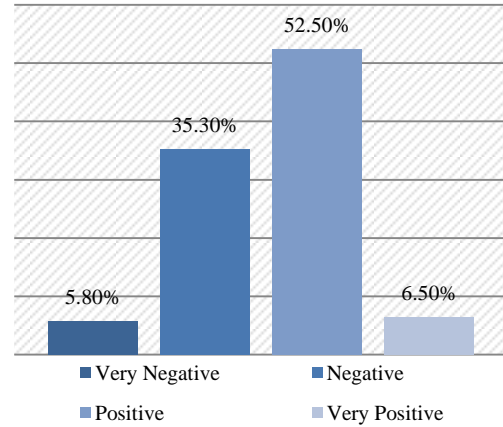
Figure 2: Online Romantic Relationship is Right or Wrong



Apart from that, when asked their perception on whether online romance is positive or negative, the majority of respondents responded with 'positive' with a percentage of 52.5% (Figure 3). This finding is in line with an online

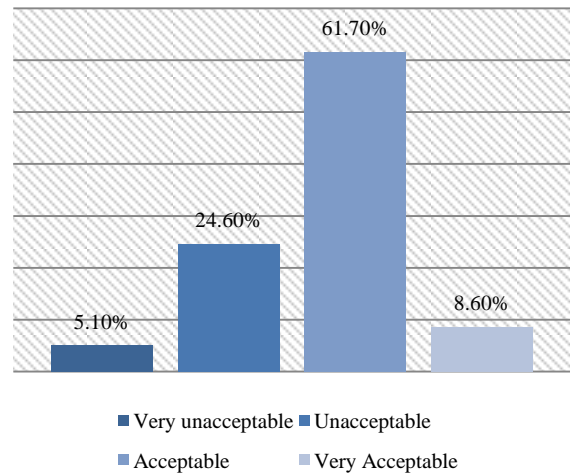
romance research study in 2016, indicating that majority of survey respondents believe that social media cause positive acceptance in online romance relationship[4].

Figure 3: Online Romantic Relationship is Positive or Negative



While for the next question which asked is online romance is acceptable or unacceptable, all respondents can accept this type of relationship which records the highest percentage of 61.7% (Figure 4). The study was also supported by the study of [10]which showed that 44% of respondents accepted online romance in their life because this type of relationship is the best way to meet partners[10].

Figure 4: Online Romantic Relationship Can Be Acceptable or Not Acceptable



Attitude Towards Online Dating Relationships

Based on Table 5 which indicates an attitude towards online dating, the findings show that respondents have various attitudes in an online romance. Not having an online relationship (60.1%) recorded the highest percentage of attitude towards online dating. Next, 'prefer an open-minded online partner' and 'prefer an online partner who is caring and always asks about their condition' received the same amount

of percentage which is 55.4 percent. Furthermore, 53.2 percent of respondents 'do not like online love couples who are too sensitive'. In addition, preferably a partner who is talkative online gained 52.5%. Meanwhile, preferring for a partner who cares for the feelings and emotions of their partner gained 50%. Meanwhile, the study conducted by [25] states that a person's negative attitude in romance can influence their behavior when interacting with other individuals online.

Table 5: Attitude towards Online Dating Relationships

No	Attitude	Frequency	Percentage
1	Not searching for love online	190	60.1
2	Feel a lot more confidence in the online romantic relationship.	74	23.4
3	Tends to give in, in an online romantic relationship.	69	21.8
4	More straightforward an honest in an online love affair	100	31.7
5	Tend to lay low on your identity in an online relationship.	100	31.7
6	Do not like my online partner to know my real attitude offline	67	21.2
7	Very romantic and intimate towards the significant other	105	33.2
8	Find it best to take care of the feelings and emotions	158	50.0
9	More loving to their couple	137	43.4
10	Do not become too choosy in selecting the online partner to be my love partner	94	29.8
11	Choose a beautiful/handsome couple to be in love with	49	15.5
12	Do not prefer online lovers who are too sensitive	168	53.2
13	Prefer someone with open minded	175	55.4
14	Prefer someone who is talkative online	166	52.5
15	Prefer an online partner who is caring and always asks about their condition	175	55.4
16	Become easily bored with my online love partner	55	17.4
17	Find it easy to change online love partner if there is some problem in the relationship	29	9.2
18	Very loyal with my current online lover	118	37.3
19	Do not prefer an online lover who is meticulous and always asking about our day	97	30.7
20	Easily bored with an online lover	54	17.1
21	Always changing online lover	19	6.0
22	Prefer to look at the online relationship as merely for fun instead of for marriage	37	11.7
23	Willing to spend anything in order to make my current lover as husband/wife	56	27.2
24	Feel regret to pursue a romantic online relationship because a lot of time has been wasted	56	27.2
25	Plan to break up the relationship with a partner in the near future	50	15.8

V. CONCLUSION

As a conclusion, love relationship which utilizes the online medium can be accepted by the society which is aligned with nowadays technological development. However, Malaysians prefer to choose a non-online relationship and tend to use the face-to-face traditional method of dating. The researcher hopes with the publication of this thesis, the public will be much aware and careful in using online medium as a method to find romantic partners to avoid scams.

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