Self-Esteem as the Moderator in the Relationship between Usage of Social Media and Help-Seeking Behaviors among University Students

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Abstract

With the rise of digital communication platforms, social media has become a double-edged sword, offering opportunities for self-expression and social support. Hence, this study investigates the relationship between social media usage and help-seeking behaviours among university students in Malaysia, with self-esteem as the moderating effect. This study utilised a quantitative research design and gathered data from 383 respondents using the survey. The results showed that most of the respondents had a moderate level of social media usage and a help-seeking attitude. Findings also indicate that self-esteem plays a crucial role in moderating the effects of social media on help-seeking behaviours, suggesting that enhancing self-esteem could improve mental health outcomes. The study recommended that a larger sample should be utilised to represent the whole population better.

Keywords: Social Media Usage, Help-seeking Attitude, Self-esteem

Introduction Background of the Study

Social media has become essential to the daily lives of university students, influencing multiple facets of their academic and personal experiences (Dongke & Sannusi, 2021). It is essential to comprehend the intricate relationship among Malaysian university students' social media usage, self-esteem, and help-seeking behaviours as they increasingly interact with social media platforms (Mahadi et al., 2016; Amin et al., 2019).

The psychological health of youth is a major societal issue. Research conducted in the United States from 1976 to 2017 indicates significant rises in loneliness post-2011 (Twenge et al., 2019), anxiety (Duffy et al., 2019), depressive symptoms (Keyes et al., 2019), self-injurious behaviour (Mercado et al., 2017), and suicidal thoughts (Twenge et al., 2019) among adolescents. Comparable trends are evident in the United Kingdom, where incidences of anxiety, depression, and suicide have significantly increased (McManus & Gunnell, 2020;

National Health Services, 2018). These concerns have escalated during the coronavirus pandemic (Jia et al., 2020; Kwong et al., 2021).

According to the 2015 National Health and Morbidity Survey (NHMS), 29 percent of Malaysian adults experienced a mental health problem. In the 2019 NHMS, 2.3 percent of Malaysian adults were diagnosed with depression. These alarming trends necessitate the implementation of support strategies that aim to educate young people and create more awareness about mental health issues, promoting mental health literacy. Mental health literacy is defined as "understanding how to obtain and maintain positive mental health; comprehending mental disorders and their treatments; reducing stigma associated with mental disorders and enhancing help-seeking efficacy" (Kutcher et al., 2016, p. 155).

In this contemporary era, technological advancements have opened up extensive opportunities for maintaining connections. Notably, social media plays a significant role in the lives of individuals. According to Dixon (2022), the average daily social media usage globally has increased to nearly 147 minutes per day, a substantial rise from the 90 minutes recorded in 2012. While social media platforms initially served as personal spaces for sharing pictures, preferences, and dislikes, our society has swiftly transformed them into crucial communication channels. Social media now goes beyond connecting with distant friends, extending its reach to facilitating business exposure to the public, offering limitless possibilities for interpersonal connections.

Andreas Kaplan defines social media as the platforms through which individuals engage in creating, sharing, and exchanging information and ideas within virtual communities and networks. This facilitates the opportunity to connect with like-minded individuals who share similar interests, dreams, and goals. The advent of WhatsApp Messenger has significantly simplified and accelerated mobile communication and made it more cost-effective than traditional phone messaging.

Social media utilisation is a double-edged sword, possessing neither intrinsic virtue nor vice. User engagement with these platforms is paramount (Kross et al., 2021). Social media promotes self-expression, social support, and personal development. Challenges encompass exposure to unrealistic standards, adverse feedback, and perpetual social comparison. Research findings are inconsistent: certain research indicates positive correlations between social media usage and well-being, whereas others underscore conflicting outcomes (Gilmour et al., 2020). Factors like individual differences and demographics play a crucial role. Being mindful of our emotional investment and recognising person-specific variables can help us navigate social media's impact on psychological well-being (Cingel et al., 2022).

As social media has grown, more and more people are opting to use it to share and get health-related information because this platform is crucial for the constructive dissemination of knowledge about depression (Guo & Cai, 2022). More recently, computer-mediated technologies have started to impact the process of seeking help because the internet provides an additional avenue for young people to receive care and support when they are dealing with mental health issues (Pretorius et al., 2019). It is further added that since young people rely on the internet for all of their daily information, it makes sense that they would use it to obtain information about their physical and mental health.

According to Astuti et al. (2021) psychological help-seeking behavior refers to an act of seeking psychological assistance from others to address an issue. It is further said that psychological help-seeking behavior is the practice of interacting with others both formally and informally in order to obtain guidance, knowledge, compassion, and support when handling challenging circumstances or issues. There are two primary categories of help-seeking which are formal and informal sources of assistance. According to Pretorius et al. (2019), seeking assistance from any professional who has a recognized and valid role in offering support is considered formal help-seeking and seeking support from unofficial social networks with whom one may or may not have a personal relationship is known as informal help-seeking. Informal social interactions, including those with partners, friends, parents, and relatives, as well as self- help resources like websites and information, are sources of informal assistance (Astuti et al., 2021).

There are numerous factors that affect psychological help-seeking behavior. According to Ningrum and Mulawarman (2024), self-esteem is one of the significant factors that affects psychological help-seeking behavior and is intricately linked to psychological well-being. It is further added that students with strong self-esteem are more inclined to possess confidence in their talents and exhibit a heightened sense of competence because self-confidence renders individuals more receptive to accepting aid when necessary, as they perceive that requesting help does not undermine their worth or ability. Ningrum and Mulawarman (2024), also said that students with poor self-esteem may grapple with feelings of inadequacy, frequently viewing their need for assistance as indicative of weakness or incompetence and such students may experience embarrassment or shame regarding their illness, concerned that obtaining psychiatric assistance would result in adverse judgments from others, particularly their peers.

Problem Statement
Nowadays, the majority of social media users are college students and they use the platform for communication, entertainment, relaxation, social interaction, opinion sharing, information gathering, and monitoring of others (Gere et al., 2020). It is further added that social networks are crucial to the help-seeking process in today's world. Not just that, social media also significantly shapes attitudes and ideas about mental health and getting help (Muhammad Talha, 2021). It is further added that social media may distribute harmful presumptions and false information, even if it can also provide access to resources and assistance for mental health.

Around 29 percent of adults in Malaysia are affected by mental health disorders, with 2.3 percent reporting depression, according to the 2019 National Health and Morbidity Survey (NHMS). These troubling statistics underscore the urgent need for programs aimed at educating young people and raising awareness about mental health issues to enhance mental health literacy. However, Muhammad Talha (2021) discovered that social media exposure was linked to more pessimistic views about help-seeking behaviour. Goodwin and Behan (2023) indicate that the media influences attitudes around getting mental health treatment. According to reports, the media has shaped young people's unfavourable opinions about mental hospitals, and it has been proposed that these opinions could prevent them from getting treatment.

With the growing prevalence of mental health challenges in Malaysia, it is essential to explore the factors that influence help-seeking behaviors in individuals experiencing psychological distress. According to Mohan et al. (2023), although social media communication seems like a good substitute, there isn't enough research on how well it works to support college students with psychological and emotional issues. Hence, the ways in which social media usage impacts help-seeking behavior remain largely unexplored in Malaysia, particularly among university students.

Another important area to investigate is the role of self-esteem in encouraging help-seeking actions because according to Topkaya (2020), self-esteem could be a significant factor influencing a person's help-seeking behavior. Nevertheless, Topkaya (2020) also mentioned that despite the fact that the significance of self-esteem in understanding the start and maintenance of many mental health issues is widely established, relatively few research have examined the connection between self-esteem and help-seeking attitude and the intention of it.

Hence, this study aims to fill these gaps by examining how social media use impacts help-seeking behavior and how self-esteem moderates the relationship between social media usage and help-seeking behavior among university students in Malaysia.

Significance of Study
There is a notable gap in research concerning the correlation between social media usage on help-seeking behaviors. Existing studies have predominantly concentrated on the adverse impacts of social media, placing minimal emphasis on its potential role in improving mental health literacy. This holds significance not only for young individuals currently grappling with mental health issues but also for those at risk of encountering challenges in the future. Social media awareness can engage with young people proactively, addressing potential mental health concerns before they escalate. This is particularly crucial for a demographic susceptible to the development of severe mental illnesses.

Research Objectives
This study aims to:
1) Identify the level of social media usage among university students.
2) Identify the level of help-seeking attitude in university students.
3) Examine the influence of social media usage on help seeking behaviours among Malaysian university students.
4) Examine the influence of self-esteem as the moderator between social media usage and help seeking behaviours among Malaysian university students.

Research Questions
In this study, four research questions were built.
1) What is the level of social media usage among university students?
2) What is the level of help-seeking attitude among university students?
3) Is there a significant relationship between usage of social media and help seeking behaviour?
4) Does self-esteem moderate the relationship between social media usage and help seeking behaviours?

Research Hypothesis

This study aims to examine two research hypotheses.

1) There are significant associations between usage of social media and help-seeking behaviour among Malaysian university students.
2) There are significant moderating effects of self-esteem on the relationship between social media and help-seeking behaviour among Malaysian university students.

Operational Definition Social Media

Social media is online platforms where people share and connect with one another through sharing of knowledge via text, images, and videos. Examples include Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube, Snapchat, and TikTok (Khursheed & Rasul, 2024). Within the Malaysian context, recent research has highlighted the prominence of social media in the daily lives of university students (Dongke & Sannusi, 2021).

Mental Help-Seeking Behaviour

Help-seeking behavior refers to the coping strategy used to improve a person's uncomfortable psycho-emotional condition (Best et al., 2014). In this study, help-seeking behavior refers to the actions individuals take to seek assistance, support, or guidance when facing challenges, problems, or emotional distress and it involves reaching out to friends, family, professionals, or support services to address and cope with various issues such as mental health concerns, personal difficulties, or stressful situations. Help-seeking behavior is a critical aspect of maintaining well-being and finding solutions to life's challenges (Gere et al., 2020). Attitudes toward help-seeking reflect an individual's overall evaluation (both positive and negative) of the act of seeking help from a mental health professional.

Self Esteem

Self-esteem is described as an individual's subjective appraisal of their own value, comprising both positive and negative perceptions of themselves. It shows the amount to which a person feels competent, valuable, and worthy of respect (Landa-Blanco et al., 2024). This study will evaluate self-esteem as an individual's comprehensive self-perception and their confidence in managing obstacles and seeking assistance, especially concerning mental health.

Literature Review Usage of Social Media

Considerable academic research has delved into examining the influence of technology on healthcare, as evidenced by the work of Panda et al. (2023). In the context of smokeless tobacco (SLT) interventions, the implementation of mobile health (mHealth) has demonstrated success, with participants finding mobile message counseling to be both helpful and acceptable. Nonetheless, challenges such as lacking access to a mobile phone and illiteracy were identified as barriers. Conversely, the ease of access and the increasing popularity of social media applications were acknowledged as factors facilitating the utilization of Health for tobacco cessation (Panda et al., 2023).

Social media platforms provide users with the ability to create personal profiles and access information about other people's lives, presenting opportunities for comparison (Fardouly et al., 2015). Although social media may possess some form of drawbacks, the study by Azounwu and Ogechi (2010) demonstrated that students can establish online communities to organise projects, engage in group discussions regarding course content, or utilise social

networking sites (SNS) to maintain communication with absent students requiring updates on academic information.

Research among social media users affirms that young people view social media as a valuable resource for obtaining information to promote positive mental health and enhance their understanding of mental illness (Naslund et al., 2019; O'Reilly et al., 2019). Findings from Jiang and Ngien (2020) also proved that increased frequency of Instagram usage correlated with elevated levels of social comparison among Singaporeans. Social media use and social support for those with mental illness are relatively correlated and people who have experienced mental distress often utilize social media, which can help them get support from their shared network (Mohan et al., 2023).

Mental Help-Seeking Behavior

Additionally, help-seeking is increasingly viewed as a social activity in which individuals rely on one another for support (Aris & Othman, 2022). It is further added that only when there is an active reciprocal process between the help-provider and the help-recipient can the goal of controlling mental health issues be achieved. Mental Help-Seeking Attitude (MHSA) is defined as getting assistance for any mental health issue through evaluation, accurate diagnosis, and professional management and intervention (Nur Nadhirah Mesran et al., 2023).

In response to a problem or distressing experience, help-seeking is the behavior of actively seeking out assistance from others through communication with others in order to obtain general support, including understanding, advice, information, and treatment (Samsudin & Abdul Latif, 2023). It is further added that this assistance can be obtained from qualified individuals who have a recognized role and the necessary training to offer assistance and guidance, such as mental health specialists including psychologists, counselors, psychiatrists, and therapists.

According to Woodford et al. (2021) young adults have low rates of formal help-seeking behavior for mental health issues. Based on a study done by Arifin et al. (2022), the findings show that most respondents continue to have a negative attitude toward seeing a counselor and receiving therapy services.Not just that, engagement with smartphone apps for mental health is still quite low, especially among young people who do not have access to professional support services, despite the fact that many of them express a preference for digital mental health help over in-person support (Garrido et al., 2022).

Additionally, lack of consistent and organized social support might also act as obstacles to getting professional assistance and people may avoid getting help due to the fear of being called "crazy," (Ma et al., 2023) through social media platforms . however, Mohamad and Mubin (2023) have found that the usage of the social media had positively impacted the help-seeking attitudes among the young population as it tends to enhance the mental health awareness

Goodwin and Behan (2023) supported the statement by stating that there was some evidence to support the idea that different media, such as videos and internet resources, can have a good impact on people seeking mental health care because it was found that the print media

was less effective than other media, although it did have a small impact on behaviors related to seeking help. According to a study, public perceptions of threat, knowledge, and stereotypes are influenced by social media contact and trust and these are elements that are impacting the help-seeking behavior (Guo & Cai, 2022).

Self-Esteem
Self-esteem is the degree of value an individual assigns to themselves (Henriksen et al., 2017). It is further stated that the capacity to cultivate a positive self-attitude and sustain it in challenging situations, especially when subjected to external judgement, is associated with self- esteem. Self-esteem is typically defined as positive or negative attitudes towards oneself (Rosenberg, 1960).

Additionally, according to Henriksen et al. (2017), mental health and self-esteem are also closely related. As a significant psychological component, self-esteem is seen to be a constant characteristic of people that can show up both positively and negatively, impacting their attitude and intents to seek help (Tan, 2024). Duan et al. suggest that by raising college students' levels of self-esteem, it might enhance their professional psychological help-seeking attitude. It is further stated that the comparatively low mental health status of college students is directly linked to their propensity to seek professional psychological assistance.

The relationship between self-esteem and social media activity reveals that low self-esteem correlates with high social media engagement, while high self-esteem correlates with low social media engagement on the Facebook platform, indicating a negative relationship (Dutot, 2020).

Theoretical Framework Social Learning Theory
The social learning theory states that individuals acquire specific behaviours and attitudes through observation and interaction with those in their surroundings (Bandura, 1999). As social media continues to serve as a main channel for information seeking, young adults may observe and learn and adopt new beliefs, thus enhancing help seeking behaviour. For example, as individuals witness and learn that seeking professional support for mental health-related issues is commonplace and yields positive outcomes, they are more inclined to adopt such behaviours themselves.
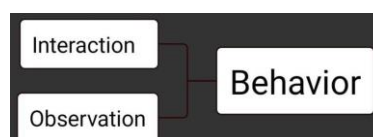

Figure 1 Social Learning Theory Framework

Person Centred Theory
Compared to other theories, person-centred theory (PCT) is thought to be the most optimistic and strength-oriented approach to human nature and development because it is client-centred and involves a humanistic approach related to the different ways people consciously perceive themselves (PsychologyWriting.com, 2025). This study will show how social

acceptance through social media platforms could affect the self-actualisation of students and cause them to seek help.
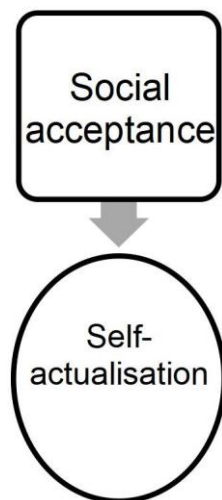

Figure 2 Person-Centred Theory

Conceptual Framework
In this study, there are three variables used which are social media usage, help-seeking behavior and self-esteem. Based on Figure 1, the framework shows the relationship between social media usage and help-seeking behavior as well as self-esteem as the moderator of the relationship.

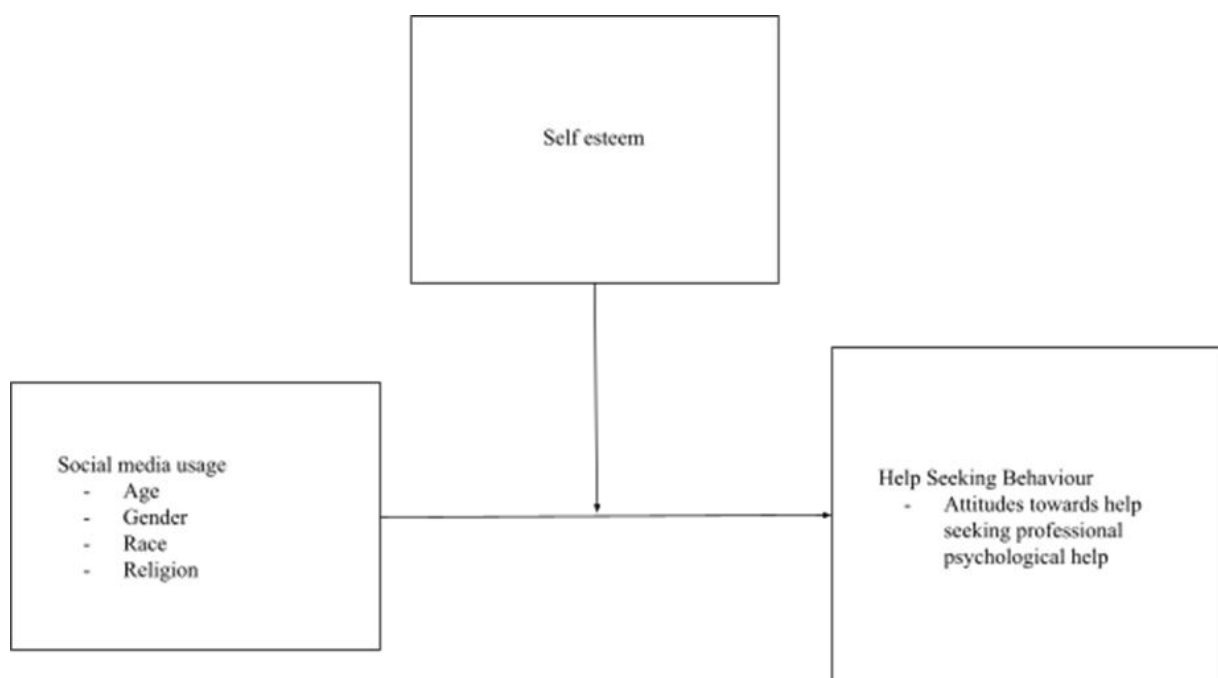

Figure 3 Conceptual Framework

Methodology Research Design
This study employed a quantitative, descriptive and correlational study. A quantitative design was employed because data collection from participants was conducted through surveys. A

correlational design was used because this study is non-experimental and able to describe and measure the strength and relationship between variables (Creswell, 2018). Hence, this methodology is a suitable approach to investigate the relationship between social media usage, self-esteem, and help-seeking behaviours.

Sampling Design
The study adopted a simple random sampling technique which is suitable for collecting data from a large sample drawn from a large population. Its simplicity and ability to provide an unbiased representation of the entire population, making it a fundamental and widely used technique in research.

The population of the Faculty of Educational Studies is 2,730 students. One significant population for the research of help-seeking is university students because mental health issues are highly prevalent among them (Kearns et al., 2015). Hence, this population was used. Since a finite number of the population is already known, Cochran's Formula (1977) is used to determine the sample size. The formula is as follow,

$$= 1 + \;\; 0 \;\; 0$$

where,

$$2 \;\; - \frac{2}{\overline{\quad}} \;\; =$$

For the study, we will estimate p = 0.5, q = 0.5. For *z*-value, a 95% confidence (*e* = 0.05) is decided. A 95% confidence level gives us a z-value of 1.96. Hence,

$$= 1 + \quad = 336.66$$

Hence, a total number of 337 subjects were expected to be recruited in this study according to the inclusion and exclusion criteria. Nevertheless, this study managed to gather 383 respondents, which was more than expected.

Research Location
The site of research for this study, at one of the university located in state of Selangor, Malaysia. The main campus was chosen for research as it is accessible and convenient and also reflects the objectives of this study.

Instrument
Demographic Questionnaires
The demographic questionnaire is a basic questionnaire that contains inquiries on the demographic data of the participants, such as their gender, age, current educational field or level of study (course and study years) and socio-economic background.

Self-Esteem
To measure self-esteem, the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES) was utilised, consisting of 10 questions where respondents can rate their agreement on a 4-point scale (1 meaning

strongly disagree, and 4 meaning strongly agree) (Rosenberg, 1965). The scale's reliability, as indicated by the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient, was α = 0.837.

Usage of Social Media
In this study, the Social Networking Usage Questionnaire was used to measure social media usage. This questionnaires were adapted from a study done by Gupta and Bashir, 2018). According to Gupta and Bashir (2018), in today's unstable and evolving contexts, the questionnaire created may assist in improving the measurement of university students' use of social networking. This subscale consists of 19 items which were used to measure social media usage on a 5-point scale (1 = Always, 2 =Often, 3=Sometimes, 4=Rarely, 5=Never).

Attitudes toward Seeking Professional Psychological Help
This study utilized ATSPPH-SF (Fischer and Farina, 1995), which was used to examine the help-seeking attitude. This questionnaire consisted of 10 items and was measured using a 4-point Likert scale (1= Disagree, 2= Partly disagree, 3 = Partly agree, 4= Agree), with items 2, 4, 8, 9, and 10 being reverse scored.

Pilot Test
A pilot study was carried out before conducting an actual study. This is crucial to ensure no issues occur during the actual study, such as time or money-consuming (Lowe, 2019). Hence, this pilot study was done among 35 UPM students. After the data collection, reliability tests were done to examine the instruments used in this study.

Table 1
Reliability Statistic for Pilot Study

Item	Reliability Statistics	
	Cronbach's ALPHA	N of Items
SELF-ESTEEM	**.718**	**6**
Usage of Social Media	*.915*	*19*
ATTITUDES TOWARD SEEKING PROFESSIONAL Psychological Help	.656	5

Data Collection Procedure
The questionnaire was delivered via an online survey form (Google Forms) to collect the necessary responses. The data collection process continued until the required participant quota is met.

Statistical Analysis
Data obtained was analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software V25.0 with significance level of $p<0.05$. Descriptive statistical analysis was used for research objective one and research objective two; for research objective three, this study utilized Pearson correlation analysis, and for research objective four, this study used linear regression. According to Statistics Solutions (2013), to assess moderation effect, linear

regression can be used. Pearson Correlation was chosen because it enables researchers to gather valuable insights from data, allowing them to spot patterns, make better decisions, and reveal connections between the variables (FasterCapital.com, 2024). To determine the relationship between the variables, this correlation was based on Guilford's Rules of Thumbs (Abdul Aziz et al., 2022). Below is the interpretation.

Table 2
Correlation coefficients

Correlation Coefficient	Interpretation
1.0	"Perfect relationship"
0.80 – 0.99	"Very strong relationship"
0.70 – 0.80	"Strong relationship"
0.40 – 0.69	"Moderate relationship"
0.20 – 0.39	"Weak relationship"
0.10 – 0.19	"Very weak relationship"
0.01 – 0.09	"Almost no relationship"

Findings
Table 3 outlines the descriptive statistics of the respondent profile. In summary, the results showed that the majority of responders (n = 232) were aged between 25 to 29 years old. Merely 20.6% were aged 30 to 34 years (n = 79) and 18.8% were aged between 20 to 24 years old. In this study, females constituted 72.8% (n = 279) of the respondents, and males included just 27.2% (n = 104) of the overall population.

In this study, 31.9% (n = 122) were second year students, 26.4% (n = 101) were first year students, 24.0% (n=92) were third year students, 11.7% (n=45) students were fourth year and 6.0% (n=23) were those who are more than fourth year in university. Data for the graduate level was reclassified into two categories: undergraduate and postgraduate programs. Individuals from undergraduate constituted 72.3% (n=277) and those who were postgraduate were 27.7% (n=106) respectively.

Table 3
Respondent Profile

	Categories	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Age	20-24	72	18.8
	25-29	232	60.6
	30-34	79	20.6
Gender	Female	279	72.8
	Male	104	27.2
Year of	Year 1	101	26.4
	Year 2	122	31.9
Study	Year 3	92	24.0
	Year 4	45	11.7
	Year 4 >	23	6.0
Level of	Undergraduate	277	72.3
Study	Post-graduate	106	27.7

Normality Test
Below are the results for the normality test. Table 4
Normality Test

Tests of Normality

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov[a]			Shapiro-		
	Wilk Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Self_esteem	.255	383	.000	.746	383	.000
social_media	.122	383	.000	.957	383	.000
attitude	.149	383	.000	.931	383	.000

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test indicated a substantial deviation from normal distribution, D(383) = .000, p = .005. When sample sizes are adequately large (> 30 or 40), deviations from the normality assumption rarely provide substantial problems (Ghasemi & Zahediasl, 2012). They additionally asserted that a study can still utilize parametric approaches even if the data does not conform to a normal distribution.

Descriptive Analysis

What is the level of social media usage among university students?

Table 5

Level of Social Media Usage

	Frequency	Percentage
Low	180	47.0
Moderate	**181**	**47.3**
High	22	5.7
Total	383	100.0

Based on Table 5, shows that most of the respondents are in the moderate level of social media usage which is 47.3 % (n= 181). However, the respondents merely differ with one number only when it is compared to the moderate level because it shows that 47.0% (n=180) respondents are in the low level of social media usage. Only 5.7 % (n=22) respondents have a high level of social media usage.

What is the level of help-seeking attitude among university students?

Table 6

Level of Social Media Usage

	Frequency	Percentage
Low	180	47.0
Moderate	**181**	**47.3**
High	22	5.7
Total	383	100.0

As seen in Table 6, the findings showed that most of the respondents, which are 62.4% (n=239), are in the moderate level of help-seeking behavior. This result showed that more than half of the samples were moderately showing help-seeking behavior level. Meanwhile for low level and high level, they only differed with one respondent for low level, there are 18.5 % (n=71) respondents and for high level, there are 19.1% (n=73) respectively.

Inferential Analysis

Is there a significant relationship between usage of social media and help seeking behaviour?

H_A 1: There are significant associations between usage of social media and help-seeking behaviour among Malaysian university students.

Table 7

Pearson Correlation Analysis

	Correlations	
	social_media	attitude
Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	1	-.113[*]
		.027
N	383	383

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The relationship between the usage of social media and help-seeking behavior among Malaysian university students was investigated using a Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient. Based on Table 7 shows that there was a significant relationship between the two variables, $r(383) = -0.113$, $p < 0.05$. Hence, the Alternate Hypothesis was accepted. In conclusion, there is a significant but very weak relationship between usage of social media and help-seeking behavior among Malaysian university students.

Does self-esteem moderate the relationship between social media usage and help-seeking behaviours?

H_A 2: There are significant moderating effects of self-esteem on the relationship between social media and help-seeking behaviour among Malaysian university students.

Table 8
Model Summary

Model Summary[d]						
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square Estimate	Std. Error of the	Change Statistics	
					R Square Change	F Change
3	.532[c]	.283	.278	2.42114	.099	52.378

c. Predictors: (Constant), social_media, Self_esteem

Table 9
ANOVA

ANOVA[a]						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
3	Regression	878.882	3	292.961	49.977	.000[d]
	Residual	2221.661	379	5.862		
	Total	3100.543	382			

Table 10
Coefficient

Coefficients[a]						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error			
3	(Constant)	37.847	2.606		14.524	.000
	social_media	-.406	.056	-1.834	-7.273	.000
	Self-esteem	.030	004	2.387	7.237	.000

A simple linear regression analysis was conducted to evaluate the extent to which self-esteem could moderate the relationship between usage of social media and help-seeking behavior among Malaysian university students.

A significant regression found ($F([3],[382])$ = [49.977], p = [0.000 < 0.05]). The R^2 was [.283], indicating self-esteem moderated approximately [28.3] % of the variance in the relationship between usage of social media and help-seeking behavior among Malaysian university students.

The regression equation was:
The relationship between usage of social media and help-seeking behavior among Malaysian university students = [37.847] + [.030] ([self-esteem]).
Hence, the Alternate Hypothesis was accepted. To conclude, there are significant and weak moderating effects of self-esteem on the relationship between usage of social media and help- seeking behavior among Malaysian university students.

Discussion

Level of Social Media Usage
Based on the findings, most Malaysian university students have moderate levels of social media usage. This differs from what Garrido et al. (2022) found because their study had stated that the usage of smartphone applications for mental health remains notably low, particularly among youth, despite many indicating a preference for digital mental health assistance over face-to- face support. Both studies have indicated two different findings which both proved that the usage of social media is not the higher level among the university students. Nevertheless, it can be seen that the usage of social media has slowly increased throughout the year, and it will probably increase in a few more years. This situation could both give advantages and disadvantages for those students who are seeking help through informal strategy.

Level of Help-Seeking Attitude
Meanwhile, for help-seeking behavior, it is found that most Malaysian university students have a moderate level of help-seeking attitude. This study contradicts what Woodford et al. (2021) have found, which indicates that young adults have low rates of formal help-seeking behavior for mental health concerns. Despite these two studies finding different results, it shows that the level of help-seeking attitude is not high. This result also indicates that the students have slowly shown their concern for themselves as they have become more open in seeking help through the informal platform from the social media platforms. This could be a great sign that university students are becoming more aware of their state and start looking for help on their own.

Relationship between Social Media Usage And Help-Seeking Attitude
According to the analysis, this study found that there is a significant but very weak relationship between the usage of social media and help-seeking behavior among Malaysian university students. This could happen since the accessibility and growing prevalence of social media applications were recognized as factors promoting the use of Health (Panda et al., 2023). Despite Panda et al. (2023) only focusing on the action of quitting smoking, this can

be similar to what this study had proposed, where the usage of social media applications through phones can help students reach out for help.

Furthermore, Naslund et al. (2019) also found that social media users, especially adolescents, regard social media as a significant tool for acquiring knowledge that fosters positive mental health and deepens their comprehension of mental illness. Despite the focus being on teenagers, this also proved that Malaysian university students do need social media applications to improve their help-seeking attitude as they can acquire more knowledge regarding their health status, which can improve their well-being.

Additionally, those who have encountered mental discomfort frequently engage with social media to obtain support from their communal network (Mohan et al., 2023), which proved that the existence of social media and its usage has a correlation with how Malaysian university students seek help for their well-being. Goodwin and Behan (2023) affirmed that evidence exists indicating that various media, including videos and online resources, positively influence individuals seeking mental health care despite having a minor impact on help-seeking behaviors. In fact, Mohamad and Mubin (2023) also discovered that social media usage favorably influences help-seeking attitudes among the youth by enhancing mental health awareness, proving the relationship between social media usage and the help-seeking attitude.

This study proved that the usage of social media does affect help-seeking behavior among university students and confirmed that they start to seek help through social media platforms. This shows that the existence of technology has had a great impact on students' healthcare in an informal way. Hence, social media should be used extensively to help those students who are really in need of help while they are at the university.

Moderating Effects of Self-Esteem
For the moderating effect, the study found that there are significant and weak moderating effects of self-esteem on the relationship between the usage of social media and help-seeking behavior among Malaysian university students. This study proved what Henriksen et al. (2017) asserted before, stating that mental health and self-esteem are intricately connected. Tan (2024) also mentioned that self-esteem can influence the attitudes and willingness of individuals to seek assistance.

Similarly, Duan et al. (2022) also found that the self-esteem among college students may improve their propensity to seek professional psychological assistance. Another study by Dutot (2020) also found that the relationship between self-esteem and social media activity reveals that low self-esteem correlates with high social media engagement, while high self-esteem correlates with low social media engagement on the Facebook platform. This result proved that self-esteem did have moderation effects on the relationship between those two variables despite showing a weak sign of effects. Although it may not significantly affect the relationship of those two variables, it still has some weak effects on it.

Conclusions
In conclusion, this study suggested that most Malaysian university students were at a moderate level for both social media usage and help-seeking behavior. In spite of that, this

study had revealed that there was a significant but very weak relationship between usage of social media and help-seeking behavior among Malaysian university students. Additionally, the results also proved that self-esteem significantly moderates the relationship between usage of social media and help-seeking behavior among Malaysian university students despite the weak moderation effects.

Nevertheless, the study's sample was only confined to students from the Faculty of Educational Studies, which may cause the findings to only represent this faculty and not represent the wider university community. Therefore, it is recommended to encompass a more heterogeneous sample spanning several faculties and universities to have a wider perception of the relationship between the usage of social media and help-seeking behavior among Malaysian university students usage of social media and help-seeking behavior among Malaysian university students.

Theoretically, this study has offered a wider insight on how social media has served as a way for the students to learn more about the help-seeking behavior without needing to consult with a professional consultant. With the usage of Social Learning Theory and Person-Centered Theory as a base of the theory development, this study helps to illustrate the effect of self-esteem on students' self-actualization in seeking the assistance through social media platforms.
Meanwhile, from the practical perspective, this research assists the educators and mental health professionals to see the pattern that has been shown by the students and help the students to overcome the issue through any potential awareness campaigns in social media platforms

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