

## Social media disorder and self-compassion among university students in Malaysia

### **ABSTRACT**

The younger generation in Malaysia is now more exposed to technology and use of the internet, especially social media such as Facebook and Instagram. However, excessive use of social media may lead to an unhealthy pattern of frequent use that can result in an addiction. This can then lead to disregard for self-love, self-appreciation, or self-care. Self-compassion includes the ability to notice the experience of suffering, the ability to empathize or "suffer with" the individual's self, and the ability to offer kindness and understanding to oneself. Previous studies have shown that high levels of self-compassion in individuals can be beneficial as a way of coping or buffering negative and harmful threats received through social media. However, there is insufficient study regarding whether excessive and unhealthy use of social media can result in a decreased level of self-compassion in an individual. This research aimed to identify the presence of Social Media Disorder and the levels of self-compassion among youths, specifically university students in Malaysia. Further, this study also attempted to identify any significant correlation between Social Media Disorder (SMD) and the level of self-compassion. A total of 142 Malaysian university students consisting of 72 female students and 70 male students within the age range of 18 to 26 years old participated in this study. They completed the Social Media Disorder (SMD) Scale and the Self-Compassion Scale (SCS). Results show that only 18% of the participants obtained results indicating the presence of a Social Media Disorder. As for the level of self-compassion, 78% were found to have moderate levels of Self-Compassion. A significant but weak positive correlation was identified between Social Media Disorder and Self-Compassion. Despite concerns regarding the use of social media, the findings of this study suggest that social media use among university students may not necessarily be at a level that it is concerning. However, the presence of correlation between the two variables, suggests that further exploration in this area may be needed.