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Understanding Privacy Paradox in Social Media among Adolescents from Religious Perspectives

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Abstract--- *Social norms and individual characters of Malaysians are mainly shaped by religious elements. Depending on how religion is being perceived by an individual, it shapes one's attitudes toward social media and hence affecting how one discloses personal information in social media. Using moderated mediation approach, this study examines the roles of perceived benefits and privacy risks in using social media as predictors of the information disclosure behaviors mediated by religious orientations and ethnicity as a moderator that influences the strength of the implied indirect effect. A survey study was conducted involving 471 students from nine secondary schools in southern region of Malaysia. The result shows that certain types of information disclosure behaviors in social media that were significantly mediated by religious orientations, could be predicted by the proposed benefits and privacy risks perceived from using the media such that the predictions varied across ethnic groups. The implications of religion and ethnicity on users' attitudes and behaviors in social media are discussed.*

Keywords--- *Privacy Paradox, Social Media, Adolescents, Religious Orientations, Multiple Mediation.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Concerns on privacy invasion do not impede the desires to disclose more personal information in social media. This contradictory forces in privacy-related decision making implies that concerns on privacy are at odds with the actual disclosure behaviors; also known as "privacy paradox"(1,2).The explanation to what causes such paradoxical behaviors between managing privacy and disclosing personal information especially in social media remain ambiguous. Past studies have been conducted to investigate influences of various factors on privacy paradox. The factors include demographic aspects such as cultural values (3), age differences (3–5), gender(5,6); contextual aspects such as peer influence (7), and psychological aspects such as trust(8–10). Currently, the results were less consistent across studies, hence the gap in explaining "privacy paradox" remain unresolved.

Scholars have argued on various factors that may contribute to explaining privacy paradox (1,2). Based on seminal works of Culnan and Armstrong (11) on privacy calculus theory (PCT), the assessments between perceived benefits and perceived privacy risks were among factors investigated by previous scholars. This theory argues that the decision to release personal information in a particular information systems (IS) involve a cognitive trade-off by weighing the anticipated risks of disclosing the information against the potential benefits to be gained from that disclosure (12).

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Young Malaysians, being the second largest home Internet users in Malaysia, are using social media mainly for social networking and expressing themselves (13) despite the rising concerns on safety and privacy invasion(14). They are technologically proficient, and may adapt their online behaviors and expectations depending on communication channel, context and audiences; and might exhibit different ways in disclosing personal information in the media.

Malaysia, situated in South East of Asia continent, is a heterogeneous country constituting of three major ethnic groups: Malay, Chinese and Indian(15). While living under similar economic, education and legal systems, each ethnic group has distinct religion, language and cultural heritage (16,17). The Malays are predominantly Muslim, the Chinese mostly Buddhist, and the Indians are mainly Hindus. Although Malaysia is a "Malay dominated plural society" and Islam has been declared as an official religion in the Constitution, the freedom of practicing other religions is granted to everyone(18). In the Eastern part of the globe, religion plays a dominant key in shaping the social norms, economic and legal systems of many countries(19–22).Unlike previous research that investigate how the use of technology shapes religious behaviors (23), this study assumes that the choices in disclosing personal information in social media among young Malaysians can be predicted by the evaluation of risks relative to benefits of the disclosure that are grounded in the way they approach and perceive religions.This paper begins by reviewing the roles of religions in Malaysia from communication privacy management (CPM) theoretical lens (24). The methodology used to conduct this study is discussed followed by results and discussions.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Rule-based management system is the central tenet in communication privacy management (CPM) theory where it shows the patterns of actions people use to regulate and coordinate revealing and concealing of personal information in communicative interactions (24). According to the theory, culture generates privacy rules for access and protection of private information. Altman (25)argues that although privacy is generic to all cultures, each culture has a degree to which privacy is important and develop different ways to regulate that privacy. In other words; culture guides, justifies and explains attitudes, norms, opinions and actions towards privacy (26,27).

The values infused in Malaysia culture are mainly influenced by religions (21). Past studies have shown that religious characteristics and religious participation among adolescents in Malaysia, especially among Muslims, are mainly shaped by families and school environments (28,29). Meanwhile, it is not known to what extent Indians and Chinese adolescents perceived the roles of religions in daily lives, since previous studies only indicate religion was viewed as important only among the Malays (30). Religiosity can be measured in terms of two orientations: external and intrinsic (31). Both orientations describe how individuals approach and perceive the roles of religion. External orientation refers to individuals who perceive religion as a tool where participations in religious activities and doctrines are about gaining personal or group benefits, or to achieve specific purposes. On the other hand, individuals with intrinsic orientations model their actions and personal values according to religious doctrines and teaching; they view religion as an end in and of itself. Hence, this study argues that religious orientations of an individual inherently informed what information to disclose and how to protect it depending on what benefits to be gained or what risks to be avoided from that disclosure.

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On the other hand, the technological advancement of the Internet, in particular social media, has challenged the perceived roles of religions especially among young generations. The media provides many platforms for people around the world with diverse mix of culture and religion to communicate and transact(32,33)causing cultural homogenization in its online environment(34). One of the implications of such cultural homogenization in social media is that Western liberal democratic values contrary to traditional norms of religious societies such as individualism, materialism, secularism and hedonism may be well-accepted and appreciated by young Malaysians (35–40), hence shifting the way they approach and perceive religions.

Using the mediation model as a basis, the present study additionally considered the degree to which this mediation process differs among the three major ethnic groups in Malaysia. This moderation is based on Malaysia's cultural models developed by Abdullah and Lim(41)and (30). Based on the models, this study aims to explore possible answers for the following question: How the magnitude of the mediation of religious orientations on the likelihood prediction of information disclosure behaviors due to perceived benefits and risks is moderated by ethnic groups? Hence, previous research on "privacy paradox" is extended by examining the roles of perceived benefits and privacy risks in using social media as predictors of the information disclosure behaviors, via religious orientations, and ethnicity as a moderator the influences the strength of the implied indirect effect. Thus, it is interesting to consider whether both processes can be successfully integrated into a single model for analyses in order to further investigate the important roles of privacy calculus as causal factors as well as the influences of religious orientations and ethnic differences in understanding privacy paradox. Therefore, the present study aims to explore the conditional indirect effect of the ethnicity of an individual on the mediation process.

III. RESEARCH METHOD

31. Measurements

Measurement items used to measure perceived benefits, perceived privacy risks, information disclosure behaviors and religious orientation were adapted from existing literatures. Two dimensions of perceived benefits construct: relationship management (RM), self-expression (SE)and entertainment (ENT) are adapted from Ho and Li(42),Long and Zhang (43), Wijesundara(44) and Ibrahim and Masrom (45). Perceived privacy violations (PV) and trust in service providers (TSP) are the two dimensions for perceived privacy risks. The measurement items for both dimensions were adapted from Krasnova and Veltri(46). The items for both constructs were measured using five-point Likert scales with anchors from "do not agree at all" to "strongly agree". Two dimensions of the dependent construct, information disclosure behaviors in social network sites, are acquisitive (AID) and protective (PID). Acquisitive dimension refers to the user's willingness to disclose authentic information about oneself while protective dimension measures behaviors that aim to protect disclosed information as well as one's privacy. The measurement items for both dimensions were adapted from multiple literature(2,47–51). The dependent items are measured using dichotomous values with options either "yes" or "no".On moderating construct for religious motivation, the measurements items were adapted from the original version of Religious Orientation Scale (ROS)(52). Following ROS, all measurement items were measured using five-point Likert scales with anchors from "do not agree at all" to "strongly agree".

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The second moderating construct, ethnic group, was included in demographic section. The construct includes options for three major ethnic groups in Malaysia: Malay, Chinese and Indian. All measurement items were translated into Bahasa Malaysia (BM) – the national language of Malaysia.

32. Data Collection

The questionnaire was distributed to the secondary schools in Southern region of Malaysia: five in Bandaraya Melaka and five in Johor Bahru. Sixty questionnaires were hand-delivered to the counsellor of each school. The objectives of the study were explained to the counsellors and they were given opportunities to get clarification on any measurement items. In total, 543 questionnaires were returned back to the researcher. After filtering for accuracy, missing data and outliers; a total of 471 questionnaires were used for analysis. Table 1 shows the demographic information of the participants. Cross-tabulation analysis between religion and ethnic group as shown in Table 2 indicates that all Malays are Muslim, majority Chinese are Buddhists, and Hindu is the main religion among Indians.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The analysis then moved to estimating the moderated mediation model, which formed the central question of the present research (see Figure 2). The moderated moderation analysis and the indirect conditional effect was tested based on conditional process approach (53)using PROCESS macro program (Version 2.16, Model 7) for IBM SPSS Software Version 24 developed by Hayes(54). Logistic regression analysis was used to test for indirect effect and conditional indirect effects since dependent variable and two moderating variables were categorical. Perceived benefits and privacy risks were regressed on religious orientations, which in turn was logistically regressed on information disclosure behaviors, while the slope of the former regression was predicted by the ethnic groups. Table 3 - 6 summarize the conditional indirect effects of ethnic groups on the predictions of perceived benefits and privacy risks on information disclosure behaviors via religious orientations using bias-corrected bootstrapping technique. By default, PROCESS automatically shows conditional indirect effects for each ethnic group which eliminates the need for group comparison analysis. The significant results as per highlighted, indicated by the range between *bootLLCI* and *bootULCI* values that do not cross zero, revealed that ethnic groups seem to moderate the impact of perceived benefits and privacy risks on religious orientations.

Table 1: Demographic Information

Categories	Percentage (%)
Gender	
Male	50.5
Female	49.5
Ethnic Group	
Malay	87.7
Chinese	7.9
Indian	4.4
Religions	
Islam	87.7
Buddha	6.2
Hindu	4.0
Christian	1.9
States	
Melaka	50.3
Johor	49.7

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Table 2: Cross-Tabulation between Religion and Ethnic Group

		Religion			
		Islam	**Buddha**	**Hindu**	**Christian**
Ethnic	**Malay**	411	0	0	0
	Chinese	2	29	0	2
	Indian	0	0	19	7

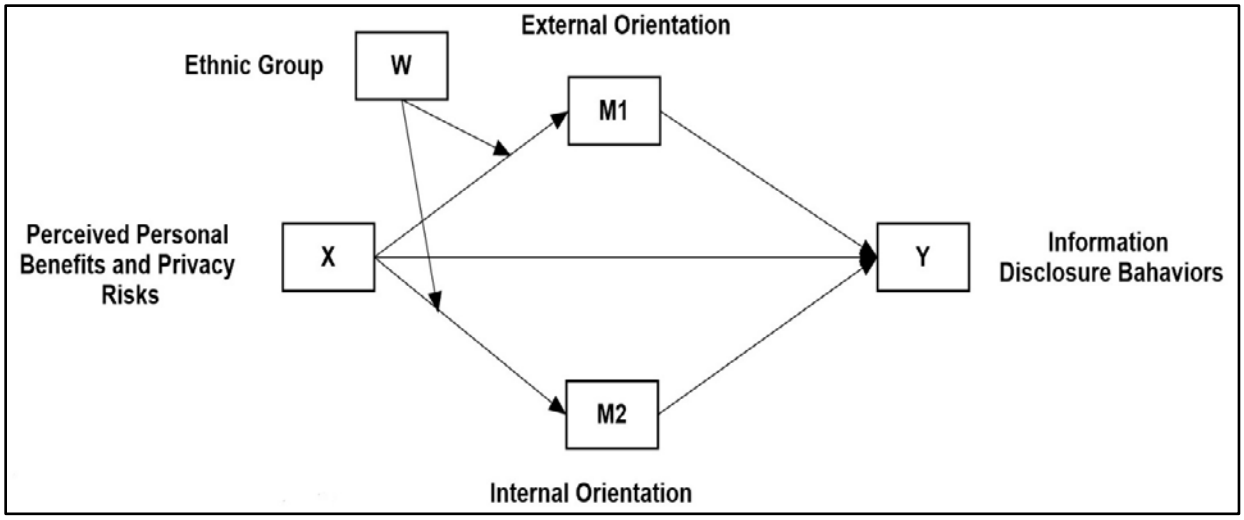

Figure 1: Conceptual diagrams of the two conditional process models

This overall results suggest that Malaysian adolescents disclosed personal information differently depending what benefits and privacy risks they perceived of social media in part because of the way they approached their religions which varied across ethnic groups.

It appears that trust on service providers positively influenced external orientation that predicted the sharing of sensitive information across all ethnic groups. Meanwhile, the prediction for sharing daily activities was significantly influenced by the negative relation between self-expression and internal orientation for all ethnic groups as well.

On the other hand, adolescents from all ethnic groups with higher internal orientation demonstrated positive influence of perceived privacy violations and trust on service providers on predicting the tendency to block friends in social media.

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Table 3: Conditional Indirect Effects for Sharing Sensitive Information

Moderation Interaction	Disclosure Behaviours	Conditional Indirect Effect				
		Ethnic Group	Effect	Boot SE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
SE	EO	Malay	.013	.008	.001	.034
		Chinese	.012	.007	.001	.031
		Indian	.010	.007	.000	.029
	IO	Malay	-.022	.013	-.050	.000
		Chinese	-.021	.012	-.048	.000
		Indian	-.019	.011	-.029	-.001
	Chi-Square (df = 3) = 13.066, p = .005, CoxSnell R^2 = .028, McFadden = .024					
RM	EO	Malay	.003	.006	-.005	.019
		Chinese	.005	.006	-.002	.021
		Indian	.010	.007	.001	.030
	IO	Malay	-.020	-.051	-.051	.007
		Chinese	-.020	-.052	-.052	.007
		Indian	-.020	-.058	-.058	.006
	Chi-Square (df = 3) = 8.028 , p = .045, CoxSnell R^2 = .018, McFadden = .015					
PV	EO	Malay	-.006	.004	-.016	-.001
		Chinese	-.003	.003	-.011	.001
		Indian	.005	.004	-.001	.016
	IO	Malay	-.003	.003	-.012	.002
		Chinese	-.004	.005	-.015	.003
		Indian	-.008	.008	-.027	.006
	Chi-Square (df = 3) = 7.849, p = .050, CoxSnell R^2 = .017, McFadden = .014					
TSP	EO	Malay	.009	.007	.001	.027
		Chinese	.001	.007	.001	.029
		Indian	.016	.009	.002	.041
	IO	Malay	-.012	.009	-.033	.004
		Chinese	-.013	.010	-.037	.004
		Indian	-.016	.013	-.050	.004
	Chi-Square (df = 3) = 8.466, p = .037, CoxSnell R^2 = .019, McFadden = .015					

Table 4: Conditional Indirect Effects on Sharing Daily Activities

Moderation Interaction	Disclosure Behaviours	Conditional Indirect Effect				
		Ethnic Group	Effect	Boot SE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
SE	External Orientation	Malay	.009	.007	-.002	.025
		Chinese	.009	.007	-.002	.023
		Indian	.007	.006	-.001	.022
	Internal Orientation	Malay	-.022	.012	-.051	-.002
		Chinese	-.021	.012	-.048	-.002
		Indian	-.019	.011	-.046	-.002
	Chi-Square (df = 3) = 30.773, p = .000, CoxSnell R^2 = .066, McFadden = .049					
RM	External Orientation	Malay	.003	.005	-.005	.016
		Chinese	.004	.005	-.002	.017
		Indian	.009	.006	.001	.025
	Internal Orientation	Malay	-.012	.013	-.040	.012
		Chinese	-.012	.013	-.040	.012
		Indian	-.012	.014	-.044	.012
	Chi-Square (df = 3) = 9.290, p = .026, CoxSnell R^2 = .020, McFadden = .015					
TSP	External Orientation	Malay	.007	.006	.000	.023
		Chinese	.009	.006	.001	.024
		Indian	.013	.008	.001	.034
	Internal Orientation	Malay	-.007	.008	-.025	.007
		Chinese	-.007	.008	-.027	.008
		Indian	-.009	.011	-.08	.009
	Chi-Square (df = 3) = 10.780, p = .013, CoxSnell R^2 = .024, McFadden = .017					

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Table 5: Conditional Indirect Effects on Removing Friends

Moderation Interaction	**Disclosure Behaviours**	**Conditional Indirect Effect**				
		Ethnic Group	**Effect**	**Boot SE**	**BootLLCI**	**BootULCI**
ENT	External Orientation	Malay	-.008	.005	-.020	.000
		Chinese	-.009	.005	-.020	.000
		Indian	-.010	.006	-.023	-.001
	Internal Orientation	Malay	-.001	.002	-.007	.002
		Chinese	.000	.002	-.003	.004
		Indian	.002	.003	-.002	.013
	Chi-Square (df = 3) = 11.404, p = .010, CoxSnell R^2 = .025, McFadden = .023					

Table 6: Conditional Indirect Effects on Blocking Friends

Moderation Interaction	**Disclosure Behaviours**	**Conditional Indirect Effect**				
		Ethnic Group	**Effect**	**Boot SE**	**BootLLCI**	**BootULCI**
PV	External Orientation	Malay	-.004	.003	-.014	.000
		Chinese	-.002	.002	-.010	.001
		Indian	.003	.003	-.001	.014
	Internal Orientation	Malay	.007	.004	.002	.018
		Chinese	.010	.005	.003	.022
		Indian	.019	.010	.005	.042
	Chi-Square (df = 3) = 10.354, p = .016, CoxSnell R^2 = .023, McFadden = .019					
TSP	External Orientation	Malay	.005	.005	-.002	.019
		Chinese	.006	.005	-.002	.020
		Indian	.008	.008	-.003	.028
	Internal Orientation	Malay	.016	.009	.003	.038
		Chinese	.018	.009	.003	.041
		Indian	.023	.013	.003	.056
	Chi-Square (df = 3) = 11.903, p = .008, CoxSnell R^2 = .026, McFadden = .022					

The results for internally oriented Indian adolescents show that the sharing of sensitive information in social media was negatively affected by the benefits gained from expressing themselves in social media. However, the positive influence of the benefit social media provides for managing relationship could predict behaviors for internally oriented Indian adolescents to share sensitive information and for externally oriented Indian adolescents to share daily activities. The negative relations between the benefit to be entertained by social media among Indian adolescents who perceived religion as a personal tool influence whether or not they would remove friends. As for the Malay adolescents, those who perceived religion externally perceived less violation to their privacy that might influence their sharing of sensitive information in social media. The sharing of daily activities for this Malay group as well as for the externally oriented Chinese adolescents were also predicted by the positive benefit both ethnic groups experienced by expressing themselves in social media. Meanwhile, for Chinese and Indian adolescents who perceived their religion externally show positive influence of trust on service providers in predicting their tendency to share daily activities.

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This study examined the extent the effects of perceived personal benefits and privacy risks on information disclosure behaviors in social media are mediated by religion, as measured in terms of external and internal religious orientations. Here, the moderation effect of ethnicity between attitudes and religion was taken into consideration. Starting with observations on 'privacy paradox' phenomenon among adolescents (4,47,55), the extent to which and what factors causing such phenomenon remain largely unknown. Subsequently, the main results of this study show that the conditional indirect effects of religion on attitudes and behaviors vary across Malay, Chinese, and India, albeit the small effect size(56). In addition, significant conditional indirect effects of religious mediation were observed mainly for Indian ethnic group. Nevertheless, this observation must be taken with precaution since the sample of Chinese and Indian ethnic groups were indeed under represented which warrant for further cross-ethnic investigation.

V. CONCLUSION

The results of this conditional process analysis are consistent with the claim that adolescents of different ethnicities, disclosed personal information in social media differently, mediated by the way they perceived religion either externally or internally. In sum, our findings highlight that this moderated mediation model predicted that certain types of information disclosure behaviors in social media that were significantly mediated by religious orientations, could be predicted by the proposed benefits and privacy risks perceived from using the media such that the predictions varied across ethnic groups. Our study shades insight on the importance to examine the internal factors of an individual that may contribute to paradoxical behaviors in social media.

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