



Internet Browsing Trends among Malaysians during Movement Control Order (MCO) Period

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Abstract –The Industrial Revolution Era 4.0 witnesses the indispensable role of Internet in consumers' life. Many daily activities can be solved through the internet such as bill payment, ticket booking, accessibility to a variety of information and a host of other matters. The implementation of the Movement Control Order (MCO) as a result of the Covid-19 outbreak has led to the increase in internet traffic flows across the country by 23.5 per cent in the first week of MCO. The usage increased by 8.6 percent in the second week of the MCO. This study attempts to investigate the perception of Malaysian internet users on the level of internet accessibility, criteria that they consider in choosing websites to visit during MCO and differences in level of satisfaction with internet accessibility between male and female. A total number of 348 adults from 14 states in Malaysia provided valid responses to an online questionnaire. The findings show that the respondents' perception on Internet accessibility is only at moderate level and there is no significant difference in the perception between male and female respondents. The findings also show that most of the respondents consider security and confidentiality, constant update of information and user-friendliness as the important criteria they use when browsing websites.

Index Terms – MCO, Internet, Consumers, Internet Browsing.

1. INTRODUCTION

The increasingly hectic lifestyle during this Industrial Revolution 4.0 era has made Internet as an important requirement of the society. In today's daily life, many users engage with the Internet as a medium to deal not only in the context of work and education but also for business and commercial dealings. Online business and commercial systems have been a popular choice by the public because they are low in risks and less time consuming [1][2].

The implementation of Movement Control Order (MCO) due to Covid-19 outbreak has also led to an increase in online activity including buying and selling of goods [3][4]. As a consequence of the implementation, most traders start expanding their marketing strategy by selling their goods

online. Moreover, the online medium has also made consumers feel more comfortable to make purchases because it enables them to access different services easily and efficiently [5]. However, it is imperative for the traders to provide accessible web services to the majority of the people including those with certain disabilities (permanent or temporary) in order to provide equal access and opportunities for everybody.

A study by an Australian-based data collection company, KASPR DataHaus showed that Malaysia recorded a 9% increase in Internet usage from 18 to 20 March as compared to from February 12 to 14, 2020 [6]. According to a Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission (MCMC)'s report, the entire country's internet traffic flow increased by 23.5% in the first week of MCO, and 8.6% in the second week. This increase has led to the congestion of the Internet traffic and causing a decrease in the download speed. Meanwhile, a report entitled 'Mobile Experience during the COVID-19 pandemic: 4G Download Speed' issued by Open signal showed that Malaysia's 4G upload speed ranged from 13.4 Megabit (Mbps) in early February to 8.8 Mbps last week (23 March to 29 March) [7]. Therefore, this study attempts to identify the perception of the respondents on the level of internet accessibility, criteria chosen by the respondents' when surfing websites during MCO and finally the differences between men and women in the level of satisfaction with internet accessibility.

2. RELATED WORK

Database accessibility is important to allow users reach and access data and information and make any online business a breeze. Database reliability is important for any web-based system or online application that requires database accessibility. Good internet accessibility will affect users interest to continue internet usage in any online business transaction. In developed countries, online purchases over the



Internet have long been practiced and the trend is increasingly developing in Malaysia. Through online purchase, buyers can see the items they want to buy, make comparisons in terms of price, quality and brand before deciding to buy.

Statistics shows that more internet users in Malaysia are buyers instead of sellers with the size of online transaction market in Malaysia increased from Ringgit Malaysia 5 billion in 2014 as compared to only RM 1.8 billion in 2010 [8]. The 2013/2014 economic report stated that the number of internet users in Malaysia increased to 25 million people in 2015 as compared to 18 million people in 2012 [8].

Meanwhile, data from a study conducted by Malaysian Communication and Multimedia Commission (MCMC) showed that there were about 28.7 million internet users in Malaysian or equivalent to 81.2% of the population as compared to 80.1% in 2017. According to the MCMC, the year 2018 showed the most number of users using the internet for text communication purposes (96.5%), followed by visiting social networking database (85.6%), obtaining information (85.5%) and various other activities while only 53.3% used it for online shopping or booking activities. The main activities among internet users in 2017 were social networking (86.3%, getting information about goods and services (80.4%) and downloading movie, video, games or music (81.2%) [9].

A report from online payment agencies, PayPal which cooperated with Nielsen researchers also revealed that in 2010, only about 1.1 million Malaysians were willing to shop online with an average value of RM 2, 461 per consumer [10]. Moreover, there were more Internet users in Malaysia who were buyers than sellers with the size of online transactions market in Malaysia reached RM5 billion before 2014 as compared to RM 1.8 billion at 2010. Meanwhile, a studies conducted on 11.11 Singles' Day in 2017 found that Malaysians recorded an average online booking purchase of about 6000 bookings per hour with an average spending of around RM100.60 per customer [11].

The goals of internet users are not only focused on online buying and selling activities. Some of the users use the Internet for sharing of information, obtaining information or for social networking and some of them also use the internet for education and business purposes. According to an MCMC study in 2018, there are 17 types of activities undertaken by users while surfing the internet and only 2 of them involve online buying and selling activities or specifically selling goods/services (16.9%) and shopping (53.3%) Meanwhile, 54.2% users also uses the Internet for online banking and financial activities [9]. In the context of education, the factors that encourage learners to use the internet to learn is due to the availability of infrastructure provided by universities that facilitates students to access information [12].

According to a *Laporan Penyiasatan Penggunaan dan Capaian ICT* (2013), there are three main reasons why Internet users do not buy or make orders or services online. First, they are not interested (69.5%). Next, they are more interested in buying from ordinary physical stores (49.1%) and finally lack of knowledge or proficiency to do online transaction (41.8%) [13]. A study by Chang Cheung et al., (2005) found that, individuals who do not choose to purchase online are demotivated by their preference to buy using the conventional method of buying things at physical shops [14]. In addition, users' experience factor is also considered in the online purchasing decision making [15].

Ability to access the Internet plays an important role in carrying out various matters online. According to Burrige, (2006), the accessibility of web allows individuals to see, understand directly and interact with the web are the factors that encourage users to use e-commerce or buy and sell online [16]. In addition, the confidence factor on the safety aspect of personal data that is shared especially if it involves financial transactions. This factor encourages users to use e-commerce more frequently [17]. Therefore, online traders need to focus on website design, customer service and website safety which are the criteria emphasized by the consumers in selecting websites for business transactions [18].

The concept of advertising on the Internet is more interactive and offers more function as they are more advanced with high technology as compared to advertising through traditional media [19]. Advertising is one of the main approaches for companies to manage the increasing demands by raising the awareness of their products [20]. As such, advertising on the Internet is indeed capable of becoming an important medium to attract and retain users [21].

A survey conducted by MCMC found that, the percentage of Internet users in 2016 was 76.9%. Approximately, there were 24.5 million Internet users, an increased from 24.1 million in 2015. The non-Internet users stood at 23.1%, just short of a quarter of the entire population. Based on the numbers, there were 10 reasons for users not using internet in 2014 and 2016 which were lack of confidence or skills, lack of interest, insufficient time, old age, high cost, unavailability of internet access, lack of proper device, concern that content is harmful, concern with privacy, viruses and security concerns and others [9].

3. METHODOLOGY

This study was conducted using quantitative approach. An online questionnaire was distributed to respondents. A total of 348 Malaysians around Malaysia including Sabah and Sarawak were involved in this survey. The survey was conducted to identify the perception of the respondents on level of internet accessibility, criteria that they use when



browsing websites during MCO and differences between men and women on the level of satisfaction with internet accessibility. The research instrument utilized four Likert scale which are: 1=Strongly Not Agree, 2=Not Agree, 3=Agree and 4=Strongly Agree. Development of the items was done by referring to previous quantitative and qualitative research. The level of respondents' perception on internet accessibility was divided into three levels which are low, medium and high level as shown at Table 1. There are three sections in the questionnaire as described in Table 2. All the items were analyzed descriptively using SPSS version 24.

Score Mean	Level of Perception
1.00 – 2.33	Low
2.34 – 3.66	Medium
3.67 – 5.00	High

Table 1 Level of respondent perception

Section	Description	Number of item
A	Demography	4
B	Internet accessibility	14
C	Factor influenced website selection	14

Table 2 Item in the Questionnaire

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The entire proposed modelling and architecture of the current research paper should be presented in this section. This section gives the original contribution of the authors. This section should be written in Times New Roman font with size 10. Accepted manuscripts should be written by following this template. Once the manuscript is accepted authors should transfer the copyright form to the journal editorial office. Authors should write their manuscripts without any mistakes especially spelling and grammar.

4.1. Respondents' Demography

This study involved 348 consumers from all over Malaysia. 177 (50.9%) respondents of them are male and the rest 171 (49.1%) are female. Majority of the respondents 261 are Malays (75%) respondents. Each ethnic category, 'Others' and Chinese has 39 respondents (11.2%) and this is followed by Indian with 9 (2.6%) respondents. Teenagers, aged between 15 – 24 years old are the most number of respondents involved in online purchasing which comprises

256 (73.6%) respondents, followed by adults aged between 25 to 34 years old (n=38, 10.9%) and only a small number (n=20, 5.7%) belong to the age category 45 to 59 years old. Majority of the respondents (n=258) are students who are active users of the internet, followed by consumers in government sector (n=48) and private sector (n=29). As for the occupancy category, most of the respondents (n=241) are students who do not have any personal income. Meanwhile, the rest of them enjoy salary between RM 1000 to RM 9000 (n= 104) and only three of the respondents have salary from RM 9000 and above. This demographic data indicate that male students and teenagers are the majority users of the internet as compared to women. The female respondents probably only search websites for academic purpose and getting information as possibly they do not have any own income to do online shopping unless if they use the scholarship money given to them. The details of the data are shown at Table 3

	Frequency (F)	Percentage (100%)
Gender		
Male	177	50.9
Female	171	49.1
Total	348	100.0
Ethnic		
Malay	261	75.0
Chinese	39	11.2
Indian	9	2.6
Others	39	11.2
Total	348	100.0
Age		
15 – 24 years	256	73.6
25 – 34 years	38	10.9
35 – 44 years	34	9.8
45 – 59 years	20	5.7
Total	348	100.0
Occupancy		
Student	258	74.1



House wife	4	1.1
Entrepreneur	3	0.9
Private Sector	29	8.3
Government Sector	48	13.8
Not working	6	1.7
Total	348	100.0

Table 3 Respondents' Demographic Information

4.2. The Perception of Respondents on Level of Internet Accessibility

Table 4 shows the respondents' perception on internet accessibility is at medium level. It can be assumed that the respondents are not really feel satisfied with the current internet accessibility provided. More than half (57.5%) of the respondents have a good knowledge on matters related to the Internet and information technology. Only a small number (2.6%) has no knowledge at all about the Internet and technology and it can be assumed that this group consists of housewives or nonworking individuals. In addition, the frequency of using the internet at anywhere can also motivate advanced respondents to use and internet-related applications. This is because the majority (52%) of the respondents tend to use the internet at anywhere, meaning these respondents will be accessing the internet whenever they have the opportunity to do so. It shows that most of the respondents (52%) are more comfortable with using their own data when surfing the Internet rather than depending on using free Wi-Fi. This situation can be caused by the level of privacy preferred by the respondents whenever it is necessary to use password to get the free Wi-Fi service. Due to this, the analysis shows that most of the respondents prefer to use their own desktop (56%), laptops (56%) and mobile phones (39.4). However, using laptops and desktops are more preferable than mobile phones.

The respondents' perception on internet accessibility level is at medium level as it does not even reach half (38.5%). Overall, the respondents are satisfied with the speed of internet accessibility during MCO and only less than half of them (38.8%) also said to have encountered problems while using internet line during the MCO period. This is proven when 135 of the 348 respondents did not agree with the item *'I have never experienced any problems while using Internet*

line during the MCO' even 162 of the entire respondents also agreed with the item that reads *'I've never experienced internet online problems'*. Due to this circumstances, 283 respondents or 81.3% have stopped internet subscription because 65.5% of them are not satisfied with the internet charge rate offered.

During the MCO period, most of the activities are conducted online including meetings, workshop, lectures, and also buying and selling of goods and services. Due to this, the telecommunication companies have also played their role by providing 1GB free data to all Internet users. However, the respondents ensure that their bill payment have been paid according to schedule. This is because almost 74.7% did not agree with the item *'During MCO, my internet bill is outstanding due to maximum usage'*.

The trend of internet usage among Malaysians have shown an increase starting from 2013. This shows that internet surfing is a normal practice among Malaysian consumers. It is not surprising then that this study shows more than half (65.5%) of the respondents disagreed with the item *'I only start using the internet when the was MCO implemented'*, and more than half (64.4%) did not agree with the item *'I began to learn to use the internet when the MCO period was implemented'*. Indirectly, the data show that users have started surfing the internet long before MCO implementation.

	Item	N (%)				Mean
		1	2	3	4	
1	I am knowledgeable about anything related to information technology.	9 2.6	49 14.1	200 57.5	90 25.5	3.07
2	I tend to surf internet at anywhere.	9 2.6	20 5.7	181 52.0	138 39.7	3.29
3	I use my own data to browse the internet.	2 0.6	57 16.4	144 41.4	145 41.7	3.24
4	I am satisfied with the speed of internet accessibility during MCO	43 12.4	106 30.5	134 38.5	65 18.7	2.64



	period.					
5	I have never experienced any problems while using Internet line within the MCO period.	54 15.5	135 38.8	105 30.2	54 15.5	2.46
6	During MCO period, my internet bill is outstanding due to maximum usage.	144 41.4	116 33.3	69 19.8	19 5.5	1.89
7	I only started using the internet when the MCO was implemented.	228 65.5	73 21	34 9.8	13 3.7	1.52
8	I began to learn to use the internet when the MCO was implemented	224 64.4	82 23.6	36 10.3	6 1.7	1.49
9	I am satisfied with the internet data charges	94 27	134 38.5	99 28.4	21 6.0	2.14
10	I have never experienced internet accessibility problems	12 3.4	64 18.4	162 46.6	110 31.6	3.06
11	I have stopped my internet subscription before.	5 1.4	60 17.2	183 52.6	100 28.7	3.09
12	Unlike other family members or other people, I use my own desktop	6 1.7	42 12.1	195 56	105 30.2	3.15

	computer to surf the Internet.					
13	Unlike other family members or other people, I use my own laptop to surf the Internet.	8 2.3	37 10.6	195 56	108 31	3.16
14	Unlike other family members or other people, I use my own smartphone to surf the Internet.	33 9.5	135 38.8	137 39.4	43 12.4	2.55

Table 4 The Perception of Respondents on Level of Internet Accessibility

4.3. Criteria Considered when Browsing Websites during MCO

The study shows that the tendency among the respondents in choosing a website to surf is at medium level with a mean value of 2.57. Most of the respondents (71.3%) choose websites that have attractive designs. Similar findings were recorded by Lee and Lin (2005) who stated that to promote online purchases among users, traders need to make sure their websites are designed simple and convenient for users to perform purchasing process [22]. In addition, in this research almost half (37.9%) of the respondents stated that they are more likely to choose websites that do not have pop-up advertisements and more than half of the respondents (64.4%) choose website that always update their product information.

It also shows that most (63.5%) of the respondents are more comfortable if the websites provide a variety of language options. This will make it easy for them to choose any preferred language especially on specific terms that they do not understand if the terms are only stated in one language. In the context of creating trust among users to continue browsing a website, 48% of the respondents stated that they would browse websites which display successful testimonials by



other users. In addition to being used as a referral source, the respondents believe that the testimonies from others can serve as guidance for them to browse related websites in case they encounter any problems while browsing the Internet.

There are several criteria that are considered by the respondents when browsing websites and the most important one is safety aspect and trust. This is proven when almost (89.1%) of the respondents said they will select websites that display safety advertisements and (42.2%) said they will browse websites which present a convincing company profile. However, there are also some (29.3%) of the respondents who do not consider company's profile as an important factor for browsing websites as long as the websites they surf are easy to understand (69.3%). The fear of virus threat is also a criteria considered by the respondents as more than half (55.8%) of the respondents do not choose to surf websites that are often receive virus attacks.

In addition, respondents also choose websites that are easily accessible. This is proven when 66.1% respondents disagreed with the item '*I often deal with websites that are difficult to access*'. At the same time, 54.9% of respondents did not agree with the item '*While I am browsing the website, I am often bothered by other parties' advertisements that could interest me*'. This indicates that the respondent choose websites that have a good level of safety, user-friendly of and allow hem to finish their business transactions smoothly. As mentioned by Chatterjee and Ghosal (2014) in their study, user-friendly websites with exciting graphical displays and together with the use of various menu options can help customers to search for desired products or services [23]. As for the smooth aspect of websites, majority (79.9%) of the respondents agree with the item '*When having problems while browsing websites selling goods, I will refer to the Help or FAQ on the site*'. Details of the descriptions of the criteria that influence respondents to choose websites are shown at Table 5.

	Item	N (%)				Mean
		1	2	3	4	
1	Buying and selling websites on the Internet that have an attractive design.	3 0.9	27 7.8	248 71.3	70 20.1	3.11
2	Websites that do not display external party advertisements.	51 14.7	128 36.8	132 37.9	37 10.6	2.45
3	Websites that	2	36	224	86	3.13

	always update product information.	0.6	10.3	64.4	24.7	
4	Websites that provide various language options.	1 0.3	28 8.0	221 63.5	98 28.2	3.20
5	I prefer browsing websites that display successful testimonials by other consumers.	6 1.7	45 12.9	167 48.0	130 37.4	3.21
6	During online purchase, I often see pictures on sale which are actually different from the actual product	25 7.2	152 43.7	150 43.1	21 6.0	2.48
7	I often encounter problems while surfing websites which are hard to understand	60 17.2	167 48	99 28.4	22 6.3	2.24
8	Websites that display safety advertisements.	2 0.6	37 10.3	223 64.4	86 24.7	3.43
9	Websites that display convincing company profile	54 15.5	102 29.3	147 42.2	45 12.9	2.53
10	Websites that are easily understood.	1 0.6	31 8.9	241 69.3	74 21.3	3.11
11	I often deal with websites	53 15.2	230 66.1	61 17.5	4 1.1	3.00



	that are difficult to be accessed.					
12	When I am browsing websites, I am often bothered with other parties' advertisements that could interest me.	82 23.6	191 54.9	67 19.3	8 2.3	2.00
13	Websites that are frequently attacked by virus	32 9.2	162 46.6	134 38.5	20 5.7	2.41
14	When dealing with problems while browsing websites selling goods, I will refer to the Help or FAQ on the sites.	17 4.9	53 15.2	211 60.6	67 19.3	2.86

Table 5 Criteria used when browsing websites

As presented in Table 6, there are no differences on the level of satisfaction with internet accessibility between men and women. It was found out that t value ($t=.919$) and significant value ($sig=0.61$) were larger than 0.05 (>0.05). It can be concluded that there is no significant difference on the level of satisfaction with internet accessibility between male and female. Relatively, this study concludes that both male and female have the same level of satisfaction with internet accessibility and what is more important is they can access the internet at anytime and anywhere.

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
A1	Male	177	2.6069	.48839	.03671
	Female	171	2.5631	.39587	.03027
	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances	t-test for Equality of Means			

	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference
Equal variances assumed	3.537	.061	.919	346	.359	.04387	.04775
Equal variances not assumed			.922	335.93	.357	.04387	.04758

Table 6 Level of satisfaction with internet accessibility between male and female

5. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the perception of Malaysians on the accessibility of internet is at medium level before and during the implementation of the MCO. This situation might be caused by the fact that most the respondents have basic knowledge and information about the things related to the internet and information technology. Moreover, the implementation of MCO has caused office work, teaching and learning and business transactions to be done online using the internet and consequently this has led to congested data streams. This study also shows that the implementation of MCO does not affect consumers' usage of the internet as almost all of them are involved in internet-based long before the implementation MCO and it continues even during the pandemic outbreak. There is no significant difference between the perceptions of male and female on the internet accessibility but most users are concerned with some criteria of the selection of websites that they browse. The users emphasize on safety and confidentiality aspects, information that is always updated and user-friendliness as important criteria when browsing websites during MCO period.

It should be noted for service providers that it is important for them to ensure that the level of Internet accessibility is capable to meet the capacity of Malaysian residents. In line with the 'New Order' era declared by the Prime Minister, the concept of distance learning, online meeting and buying and selling system of goods have been widely implemented. It is hoped that the implications of this research will contribute to improve the quality of internet accessibility that will consequently benefit consumers.

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