



Guest Lecture-2021/2
Faculty Research Committee
Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences
Open University of Sri Lanka

Media dependency, interpersonal communication channels and panic during the **COVID-19** Movement Control Order

Digital media, conventional media and interpersonal communication as mediums of information on COVID-19 might play a role in spreading panic among the population. The paper aims to determine the extent of panic caused by information about COVID-19 obtained from media and interpersonal communication among Malaysians. The paper also traces the dependency of people on online media while confined to their homes during the Movement Control Order (MCO). The study employed a quantitative approach. An online survey using Google doc was used to collect data from 253 respondents across Malaysia. The findings reveal that most of the respondents' source of panic was exposure to reports from online media (Internet and social media). The themes that emerged for online activities during MCO include buying and selling online, reading and searching for information online, teaching and learning online, working from home, spending time with family, house and compound cleaning, and gardening. Essentially, it is ironic that the online media which contributes to the general public panic is also a vital source of information on COVID-19 and a means of carrying on life routines in a lockdown.



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Biography

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ali Salman is a senior lecturer and researcher at the Department of Humanities, Faculty of Language Studies and Human Development, Universiti Malaysia Kelantan. Dr. Ali has conducted substantial research relating to New Media, Digital Inclusion and New media and Democracy. He has extensively published his work in SCOPUS and ISI journals throughout his academic career. Ali is currently the Chief Editor for Journal Insaniah and is also serving as an editorial board member and associate editor for various academic journals including Journal of Communication Education (JCE), Journal of Asia Pacific Communication (JAPC) and has served as a Chief Editor for eBangi journal for five years.

16th August 2021
11: AM via Zoom



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