



**CULTURAL APPROPRIATENESS, TRUST AND SELF-
PRESENTATION OF MALAY SPEAKING USERS OF
FACEBOOK**

BY

ROMLAH BINTI RAMLI

**A dissertation submitted in fulfilment of the requirement for
the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Communication**

**Kulliyyah of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Human
Sciences
International Islamic University Malaysia**

MAY 2014

ABSTRACT

Western studies have found that social networks influence users' trust aspects of the users' self-presentation. However, there are other factors that have been highlighted in this study as mediating factors that influence the presentation of self. Facebook has been chosen to be the platform of this study. This quantitative study involved 378 respondents who were Facebook users in three Malaysian public universities; Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM), Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) and Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM). The main objectives of this study are to investigate the relationship between users' trust and users' self-presentation in social networking platform, to indentify the relationship between the mediator and the presentation of his / herself and to identify the factors mediating the relationship between trust and self-presentation. The study found that there is a significant relationship between the trust and self-presentation. The study found that there is a significant relationship between the trust and self-presentation of social networking users and there is a significant correlation between the cultural appropriateness; *budi bahasa* and the presentation of self. For intermediate factor test, the results of this study also provide evidence of partial mediation effect of the cultural appropriateness; *budi bahasa* on the relationship between the trust and self-presentation of social network users

خلاصة البحث

كشفت البحوث الغربية أن شبكات التواصل الاجتماعية تؤثر على ثقة المستخدمين من ناحية تقديمهم لذاتهم وشخصيتهم. على الرغم من ذلك هناك عدة عوامل أخرى تم الإشارة إليها في هذه الدراسة يمكن أن تؤثر على تقديم الذات. تم اختيار الفيس بوك ليكون القاعدة الأساسية في هذه الدراسة. هذه الدراسة الكمية شملت 378 عينة ممن يستخدمون الفيس بوك في ثلاث جامعات حكومية وهي: جامعة العلوم الماليزية، جامعة فترا ماليزيا، جامعة أوتارا الماليزية. وكان الغرض الرئيسي لهذه الدراسة هو تقصي العلاقة بين ثقة المستخدمين وتقديم الذات في قاعدة شبكات التواصل الاجتماعية لتحديد العلاقة بين الوسيط وتقديم الذات بالنسبة للمستخدم أو المستخدمة والتعرف على العوامل التي تتوسط العلاقة بين الثقة وتقديم الذات. وجدت الدراسة أن هناك علاقة واضحة بين الثقة وتقديم الذات عند مستخدمي شبكات التواصل الاجتماعية وهناك علاقة متبادلة بين ثقافة التأدب؛ أو الخلق الحسن (*budibahasa*) وتقديم الذات. كانت النتيجة في اختبار العامل الوسيط في هذه الدراسة تثبت أيضاً أن المؤثر الوسيط وهو ثقافة التأدب كان له عامل تأثير جزئي في العلاقة بين الثقة وتقديم الذات لدى مستخدمي شبكات التواصل الاجتماعية.

APPROVAL PAGE

The dissertation of Romlah Ramli has been approved by the following:

Che Mahzan Ahmad
Supervisor

Syed Arabi Syed Abdullah Idid
Internal Examiner

Musa Abu Hassan
External Examiner

Mohamad Sahari Nordin
Chairman

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation is the result of my own investigations, except where otherwise stated. I also declare that it has not been previously or concurrently submitted as a whole for any other degrees at IIUM or other institutions.

Romlah Ramli

Signature

Date

INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY MALAYSIA

**DECLARATION OF COPYRIGHT AND
AFFIRMATION OF FAIR USE UNPUBLISHED
RESEARCH**

Copyright © 2014 by International Islamic University Malaysia. All rights reserved.

**CULTURAL APPROPRIATENESS, TRUST AND SELF-PRESENTATION
OF MALAY SPEAKING USERS OF FACEBOOK**

I hereby affirm that The International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM) holds all rights in the copyright of this work and henceforth any reproduction or use in any form or by means whatsoever is prohibited without the written consent of IIUM. No part of this unpublished research may be produced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise without prior written permission of the copyright holder.

Affirmed by Romlah Ramli

.....
Signature

.....
Date

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِیْمِ

اللّٰهُمَّ اَعِنِّيْ عَلٰى ذِكْرِكَ وَشُكْرِكَ وَحُسْنِ عِبَادَتِكَ

All praise be to Allah for His blessing and guidance throughout my journey in completing this thesis. This thesis could not be written to its fullest without Assoc. Prof. Dr. Che Mahzan Ahmad, who served as my supervisor, as well as one who challenged and encouraged me throughout my time spent studying under him. His constant fruitful advice to me helped develop my critical thinking in my investigation of the studied issue. He would have never accepted anything less than my best efforts, and for that, my sincere appreciation and many thanks to him. Special appreciation is also extended to my beloved mother, Hajah Hatiah Taib, who never stops loving and supporting me and who was my biggest source of strength in completing my thesis. Not to forget, my other source of encouragement, my father, Allahyarham Haji Ramli Ahmad, and his love for me that will always be remembered. May the Almighty Allah rest his soul in eternal peace. I wish to express my deepest gratitude to God for His greatest gift to me, my daughter, Hawa Iris Marissa Ahmad Fairuz who had been patient with her mother's hard work towards this thesis' completion. My many thanks also go to my sister, Rogayah Ramli and my brother, Norazman Abu Bakar who had been loving 'parents' and babysitters to my daughter while I was away. Also, thanks so much to my lecturers and the staff at Department of Communication, International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM), Department of Communication, Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM), my friends in IIUM and UUM, Nan Zakiah Megat Ibrahim, Prof. Che Su Mustaffa, Joyce Cheah Lyn-Sze, Dr. Mohd Sobhi Ishak, Hamdan Ramlee and the respondents from UUM, Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM), Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM), and finally those who are too many to name here, who had helped me a little or much with this thesis. Without their continued efforts and support, I would have not been able to bring my work to a successful completion.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract	ii
Abstract in Arabic	iii
Approval Page	iv
Declaration Page	v
Copyright Page	vi
Acknowledgements	vii
Table of Contents	viii
List of Tables	xiii
List of Figure	xvi
CHAPTER ONE : INTRODUCTION	1
Background	1
Problem Statement	3
Research Questions.....	7
Research Objectives.....	8
Significance of Study	9
Scope of Study	10
Chapter Summary of Dissertation	10
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW.....	12
Introduction	12
Section I: Theoretical and Conceptual Frameworks.....	12
Self-Presentation.....	13
Performance	13
Stage	14
Setting.....	16
Appearances	16
Mannerism	16
Trust.....	19
Cultural Appropriateness	26
<i>Budi Bahasa</i> as Cultural Appropriateness	27

Section II: Review of Previous Study on Related Concepts and Theories	32
Studies Related to Cultural Appropriateness (<i>Budi Bahasa</i>) and Self-Presentation	32
Studies Related to Trust, Cultural Appropriateness (<i>Budi Bahasa</i>) and Self-Presentation	35
Section III: Research Hypotheses	38
Section IV: Conceptualized and Operationalized Definitions	40
Self-presentation	40
Trust	41
Cultural Appropriateness	42
Section V: Research Framework	43
Chapter Summary	44

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY.....	45
Introduction	45
Research Method	45
Research Design.....	46
Data Collection.....	47
Data Collection Strategy	47
Data Collection Method	48
Data Collection Instrument	48
Pre-testing of Instrument	51
Instrument Reliability	52
Instrument Validity	55
Sampling Process	55
The Population.....	56
The Sampling Frame and Sampling Design	57
The Sample Size	58
Method of Data Analysis	59
Descriptive Analysis	59
Relationship Hypothesis Testing	60
T-Test and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)	61
Multivariate Analysis; Multiple Regression and Path Analysis	61
Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) and Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)	61

Structural Equation Modeling (SEM)	63
Chapter Summary	66
CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS.....	67
Introduction	67
Section I: Exploratory Data Analysis (EDA).....	67
Test of Normality	67
Report on Mean and Standard Deviation of Variables and Dimensions.	68
Report on Skewness and Kurtosis of Variables	69
Report on Kolmogrov-Smirnov	71
Linearity	73
Report on Normal Q-Q plot	73
Homoscedasticity	75
Section II: Report on Instrument Validity	77
Factor Analysis Report	78
Section III: The Sample' Analysis of the Study	83
Descriptive Summary of Survey Respondents	83
Section IV: The Analysis of Respondents' Facebook Profiles	85
Frequency Analysis of Facebook Activities	87
Section V: The Descriptive Analysis on Variables' Item	88
Descriptive Analysis on the Trust Item	89
Descriptive Analysis on the Cultural Appropriateness Item	92
Descriptive Analysis on Self-Presentation Items	95
Section VI: Report on Hypotheses Testing	98
Independent Samples t-Test Analysis	98
H1: There is a difference between Males and Females in Trust	98
H2: There is a difference between Males and Females in Cultural Appropriateness	99
H3: There is a difference between Males and Females in Self- Presentation	99
H4: There is a difference between Malays and Non-Malays in Trust	100
H5: There is a difference between Malays and Non-Malays in Cultural Appropriateness.....	101

H6: There is a difference between Malays and Non-Malays in Self-Presentation	102
One-way Analysis of Variance (One-way ANOVA)	102
H7: There is a difference in Academic Performances and Trust.....	103
H8: There is a difference in Academic Performances and Cultural Appropriateness	103
H9: There is a difference between Academic Performances and Self-Presentation.....	104
H10: There is a difference between Facebook usage variation and Trust	104
H11: There is a difference between Facebook usage variation and Cultural Appropriateness.....	106
H12: There is a difference between Facebook usage variation and Self-Presentation	107
Summary of the Hypothesis Testing on the Difference	108
Bivariate Correlation	109
H13: There is a relationship between Trust (Emotional Judgement, Risk Taking, and Privacy Concern) and Self-Presentation	110
H13: (a) There is a relationship between Emotional Judgement and Self-Presentation	111
H13: (b) There is a relationship between Risk Taking and Self-Presentation.....	111
H13: (c) There is a relationship between Privacy Concern and Self-Presentation	111
H14: There is a relationship between Trust and Cultural Appropriateness	112
H15: There is a relationship between Cultural Appropriateness and Self-Presentation	112
Summary of Hypotheses Testing on Relationship	113
Multivariate Analysis	113
H16: Cultural Appropriateness will mediate the relationship between Trust and Self-presentation	114
Path Analysis	120
Structural Equation Model	124
Exogenous Constructs Measurement Model for Self-presentation, Trust and Cultural Appropriateness	125
Direct Effect	129
Indirect Effect	130

Chapter Summary	131
CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	132
Introduction	132
Section I: Summary of the Study	132
The differences in demographic factors; gender, race and academic performance in Trust	135
The differences in demographic factors; gender, race and academic performance in Cultural Appropriateness	136
The difference in demographic factors; gender, race and academic performance in Self-presentation	137
The difference between Facebook usage variations and Trust	138
The difference between Facebook usage variations and Cultural Appropriateness	138
The difference between Facebook usage variations and users' Self-Presentation	139
Relationship between Trust and Self-Presentation	140
Relationship between Cultural Appropriateness and Self-presentation	144
<i>Budi Bahasa</i>	145
Mediation effect of CA on the relationship between Trust and Self-Presentation.....	147
Section II: Implications.....	148
Section III: Suggestions and Recommendations for Future Research ...	151
Comparison study on different sample population	151
Enhancing the Cultural Appropriateness; <i>Budi Bahasa</i> items in extensive future surveys	152
Cultural Appropriateness related to image and civility in nation building	152
Cultural Appropriateness and Self-Presentation in different fields..	153
Section IV: Conclusion of the Study	154
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	156
APPENDIX I: QUESTIONNAIRE	176
APPENDIX II: FACTOR LOADING VALUE BELOW .5 FOR TRUST, CULTURAL APPROPRIATENESS AND SELF-PRESENTATION ITEM ..	187

LIST OF TABLES

<u>Table No.</u>		<u>Page No.</u>
2.1	General Norms and Values of Malaysian Cultural Appropriateness	30
2.2	Study's Dimensions on Trust related to Self/Identity Presentation	35
3.1	Cronbach Alpha Value for Trust, Cultural Appropriateness and Self-presentation	53
3.2	Cronbach Alpha Value for Dimension of Variables' study	54
3.3	Malaysian Public Higher Education Institutions in regional categories and the total student enrolment	57
3.4	Interpretation of the r value	60
3.5	Differences Between Exploratory and Confirmatory Factor Analysis	63
3.6	Measurement Criteria for Model Goodness of Fit	66
4.1	Report on Means and Standard Deviations	69
4.2	Report on Skewness and Kurtosis of Variables	70
4.3	Kolmogorov-Smirnov Result for Trust Variable	72
4.4	Kolmogorov-Smirnov Result for Cultural Appropriateness Variable	72
4.5	Kolmogorov-Smirnov Result for Self-Presentation Variable	73
4.6	KMO and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity Test Result	78
4.7	Factor Transformation Matrix	79
4.8	Factor Analysis report on Rotated Component Matrix	80
4.9	Descriptive Report of Demographic Items	84
4.10	Facebook User Profiles	85
4.11	Facebook Profile Updating Frequencies	87
4.12	Mean for Variation of Facebook activities	87
4.13	Descriptive analysis on Trust Items	89
4.14	Descriptive analysis on Cultural Appropriateness Items	92

4.15	Descriptive analysis on Self-Presentation Items	95
4.16	Report on t-test of Trust on Gender	99
4.17	Report on t-test of Cultural Appropriateness on Gender	99
4.18	Report on t-test of Self-Presentation on Gender	100
4.19	Report on t-test of Trust on Races	101
4.20	Report on t-test of Cultural Appropriateness on Races	101
4.21	Report on t-Test of Self-Presentation on Races	102
4.22	Report on One-Way ANOVA on Academic Performance on Trust	103
4.23	Report on One-Way ANOVA on Academic Performance on Cultural Appropriateness	104
4.24	Report on One-Way ANOVA on Academic Performance and Self-Presentation	104
4.25	Report on One-Way ANOVA on Facebook usage Variation and Trust	105
4.26	Report on Post-Hoc Multiple Comparisons of Facebook Usage Frequencies on Trust	105
4.27	Report on One-Way ANOVA on Facebook usage Variation and Cultural Appropriateness	106
4.28	Report on Post-Hoc Multiple Comparisons of Facebook Usage Frequencies on Cultural Appropriateness	107
4.29	Report on One-Way ANOVA on Facebook Usage Frequency on Self-Presentation	107
4.30	Report on Multiple Comparisons on Facebook Usage Frequencies on Self-Presentation	108
4.31	Summary of the Hypothesis Tests on Differences	109
4.32	Detailed Report of Correlation Analysis on Variables and Dimensions	112
4.33	Summary of the Hypotheses Testing on Relationship	113
4.34	Regression Results of Self-Presentation on Trust	116
4.35	Regression Results of Cultural Appropriateness on Trust	117
4.36	Regression Results of Self-presentation on Cultural Appropriateness	117
4.37	Report on Multiple Regressions of Trust and Cultural Appropriateness on Self Presentation	118

4.38	Report on Multiple Regressions of Trust and Cultural Appropriateness on Self Presentation	120
4.39	Measurement Criteria of Goodness-of-Fit	124
4.40	Regression Weights: (Group number 1 - Default model)	126
4.41	Index Goodness-of-Fit (GOF) for exogenous variables (Independent)	128
4.42	Standardized Direct Effects (Group number 1 - Default model)	130
4.43	Standardized Indirect Effects (Group number 1 - Default model)	131

LIST OF FIGURES

<u>Figure No.</u>		<u>Page No.</u>
2.1	Trust, Risk and Behavior Independently	23
2.2	The Relationship of Trust concerning Risk Effect on Behavior	24
2.3	Risk as Moderating Effect between the Trust and Behavior	25
2.4	Malaysia Cultural Appropriateness and the dimension of Budi Bahasa in Malaysia	32
2.5	The Relationship of Trust and Self-Presentation	37
2.6	The Relationship of Self-Presentation, Trust and Cultural Appropriateness	38
2.7	The Relationship of Self-Presentation, Trust and Cultural Appropriateness	43
3.1	Cutoff criteria for several fit indexes	64
4.1	Normal Distribution on Trust Variable	70
4.2	Normal Distribution on Cultural Appropriateness Variable	71
4.3	Normal Distribution on Self-Presentation Variable	71
4.4	Normal Q-Q Plot of Trust	73
4.5	Normal Q-Q Plot of Cultural Appropriateness	74
4.6	Normal Q-Q Plot of Self-Presentation	74
4.7	Detrended Normal Q-Q Plot on Trust	76
4.8	Detrended Q-Q Plot on Cultural Appropriateness	76
4.9	Detrended Q-Q Plot on Self-Presentation	77
4.10	Diagram of Correlation on Trust, Cultural Appropriateness and Self Presentation	117
4.11	Correlation values on Trust, Cultural Appropriateness and Self-Presentation	119
4.12	Path Diagram of the relationship between Trust and Self Presentation mediated by Cultural Appropriateness by Medgraph-I (Jose, 2008)	122

4.13	Structural Equation Model for Self-Presentation, Cultural Appropriateness and Trust	128
------	---	-----

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND

Facebook (FB) stands out among all other social networking platforms in the Malaysian cyberspace (Checkfacebook.com, 2010). In Malaysia, 'Facebook-ing' is wildly popular among students in higher learning institutions (Muhammad Kamarul Kabilan, Norlida Ahmad, & Mohamad Jafre Zainol Abidin, 2010). This popularity is congruent with Livingstone's (2008) observation that young people are active users of social networks. Facebook-ing is basically about socializing and building relationships with "friends" via FB. This communicative action works within a system of mutuality as users can make a choice to share or not to share items with "friends". Similarly, users can choose either to be truthful or to masquerade presenting false identities to others in the virtual community. FB's built-up features, such as the Wall and Notes, in many ways, help and allow users to realise actions of preferences and choices. The technology, in this regard, encourages but does not force users to take action beyond their wants (Acquisti & Gross, 2006). Simply said, FB users mediate and actualize their self-presentation (SP) while socializing with their friends. Here, SP is about the ways in which humans either tell others or present themselves to the public.

Theoretically, SP is intimately linked with self-disclosure (Joinson, Paine, Reips, & Buchanan, 2006), but to disclose or not to disclose is an act of conscious deliberation. In the context of cultural environments, SP ideally involves users' cultural warrants. Blake (1998) described cultural warrants as beliefs, laws, and customs that allow people within a given culture to justify their communicative

actions and behaviours. If members go against these warrants in a cultural community, they are considered as engaging in inappropriate behaviours. In other words, cultural warrants are standards of accepted behaviour or actions of the cultural community or society.

In Malaysia, cultural appropriateness, among others, is related with *budi bahasa* (Asma & Pedersen, 2003, p. 167). According to Lim (2003), *budi* encompasses mind-emotion-moral-goodness-practices. Specifically for Malays, the essence of *budi* can be seen in the concept of *budi pekerti* (ways of speaking, behaviour, politeness, and ethics), *akal budi* (mind, tact, and sagacity), and *baik budi* (good behaviour and good deeds). A person with the above three concepts usually is a man of *budi bahasa* (good manners in thought and action). *Adab* is the ingrained part of *budi*. In general, *adab* is an appropriate action taken with the correct knowledge imbued with Islamic principles. For this work, *adab* is restricted to right, proper, and acceptable moral actions. A critical point to note is that one cannot understand the Malay culture without knowing *budi* (Storz, 1999). Indeed, *budi* is the foundation of life-values among Malaysians (Nik Maheran & Yasmin, 2008). Pragmatically, *budi* is one element of communicative civility in Malaysia, as clearly illustrated by Goddard (1997). It is also a fact that *budi* is an element of governmentality in Malaysia. The spirit of *budi* is clearly visible in the fifth principle of the national ideology; *Rukunegara – Kesopanan dan Kesusilaan* (Good Behaviour and Morality). The second chapter of Code for Communication and Multimedia Content Forum of Malaysia (2004) stipulates that

[the multimedia] content shall not be offensive, morally improper, and against current standards of accepted behaviour. This includes nudity, sex, bad language, offensive language, crude references, hate speech, and violence. Obscene Content gives rise to a feeling of disgust by reason of its lewd portrayal and is essentially

offensive to one's prevailing notion of decency and modesty. There is a possibility of such content having negative influence and corrupting the mind of those easily influenced (pp. 13-19).

Contextually, *budi* works well where physical "bodies" are clearly visible. However, in cyberspace where bodies are "invisible", taking *budi* as a doing of CA is an interesting area of research. With the knowledge that Facebook-ing is one of the best examples of "machine-as-the-extension-of-man" (McLuhan, 1964) in cyberspace, investigating SP among Malay speaking users is about crystallizing new knowledge.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

The new platform of communication technology, such as the Facebook, has brought about self-presentation research phenomenon in various research angles. The researcher is concerned about the morality of self-presentation and dignity of the users while online using cyberspace technology. Erving Goffman analyzes the process in ordinary interactions by exploring an individual's identity, group relations, environmental impact, and those related to interactions which use imagery to illustrate the importance of the theatre of human action in relation to a social presentation. However, does the ordinary interaction appear while the stage of presentation hides the real fact of the individual in the cyberspace, for example, the Facebook?

Furthermore, even Goffman sees that the presentation involves "dramaturgical approach" and "performance," at the front, back, and off stage involvement, giving the performer, in his assumption, the trust to do so while they know or even not know who their audiences are? With the assumption of Goffman's, the users eliminate the role or their identity in the society while they are in the backstage where the audience is absent. Do the Malaysian users, especially the largest group of users in Malaysia;

the undergraduate students, play with their identity related to trust and cultural appropriateness?

The current FB users are taking easy in presenting themselves in Facebook (Hargittai, 2007) and neglecting the Cultural Appropriateness and the element of Trust. They should be aware of their Cultural Appropriateness and Trust in presenting themselves to the cyberspace relationship. However, with the foundation of civilization of polite society in Malaysia, are they affected by the level of self-presentation of individual or among the different groups of users' background in Malaysia?

Thus, a study of the relationship between trust, cultural appropriateness, and self-presentation can be explored, even if there are a number of studies on self-presentation. However, none of these studies have investigated the relationship between trust and cultural appropriateness of self-presentation among FB users using structural equation modelling.

Significant discussion of this can be relied upon previous studies that look at the existence of the relationship between Trust and Self-Presentation. Therefore, the study clearly puts cultural appropriateness variables; *Budi Bahasa* as a new variable between the other two variables. Weick (1995) suggested that the presentation of self relies very much on one's own sense-making and trust of the other. However, how much trust is to be given towards friends is an issue with virtual relational communication (Seong, 2010). To what extent should the FB users present/misrepresent themselves to 'friends'? Do users need to present their "real" selves or pretend to be someone else in the presentation of self? Are users consciously concerned with the component of trust in a virtual communicative action, especially in disclosing their privacies? Does cultural appropriateness play a central role in that act of keeping and

giving privacies to others? Do trust and self-presentation have a significant relationship? What is the amount of intensity that could culminate in the trust level? Do other variables like *adab* and cultural appropriateness mediate trust and self-presentation? Does *tak apa* or “do not care less” philosophy thrive among the users upon presenting themselves to “friends”?

With regards to cultural appropriateness, dignity should be considered while relating to self-presentation. Goffman stressed on impression management; looking if it affects or is related to the users of Facebook on the attempts that have been made to provide an "ideal" future version, more consistent with the norms, and laws of the community from the behaviour of actors behind the audience. Information related to abnormal behaviour and beliefs hid from the audience in the process of “confusing”; making salient features that allow people socially, legitimating both the individual and the social role of the framework role (Goffman, 1953).

Cyberspace users are said to face difficulties in handling and managing the technology wisely, noted Khaidzir (2010) and communicating with others is often done violently. Rudeness has become one of the biggest problems in cyberspace as a public space (Heim, 1993). Such incivility is made easier because the technology provides venues for impoliteness to be acted out. At that moment, studies on cyber civility and its relationship to Malaysian culture was under-presented. Thus, speaking or communicating in *halus* (refined), and not *kasar* (coarse) is the expectation. Culturally, a person communicating with *halus* is warranted as a person with positive *budi bahasa*. Questions related to this issue on incivility in cyberspace are as follows: Does incivility, like being rude or taking inappropriate actions, form part of self-presentation performance? Is cultural appropriateness an element of self-presentation

to impress “friends”? Do users consciously or voluntarily become rude as a way of representation in order to be accepted by “friends”?

The effects of cultural appropriateness of FB users’ self-presentation are seen as a significant discussion, especially in *Budi Bahasa* appropriateness in Malaysia. There have been many researches on the impact of cultural appropriateness in general on FB users’ presentation, however, there is none on the Malaysian Cultural Appropriateness on FB self presentation among users.

While Fontaine and Richardson (2005) pointed differences in the values of *budi bahasa* among the races in Malaysia, Nik Maheran and Yasmin (2005) disagreed with such findings. The latter observed that Malaysian Malays and Chinese shared their system values of *budi bahasa* in viewing similar social realities, namely, on the realities related to decency and morality. Is there a gap between these findings? Has the race factor really coloured the values of *budi bahasa*? Fontaine and Richardson (2005) found out the fact that Chinese respondents reported a lower mean than Malays or Indians, which does not reflect the outcome as performance is a function of culture, personality, peer pressure, self-efficacy, and environmental stimuli. Overall, there are only five cultural values out of the fifty-seven that are significantly different at 5% at the individual level. While Nik Maheran and Yasmin (2005) mentioned that the Malays and Chinese views of self is an ‘eastern one’, which differs from the “western”, in terms of how people viewed social reality is also similar in both the Malay and Chinese system of values. The Chinese and Malays both share a view that knowledge is to do with the ‘head’ and the ‘heart’. Both the Malay and Chinese share the concept of temporal similarly as they view it as subjectively and relatively. Malays and Chinese possess the same cultural values, attitude and behaviours.

In a similar vein, Fogel & Nehmad (2009), Whitty and McLaughlin (2007), and Subrahmanyam, Smahel, and Greenfield (2006) have shown that demographic factors like race, gender, and life experiences do shape the users' way of performing self-presentation in the cyberspace. Fogel and Nehmad (2009) presented that the comparisons of characteristics for the social networking websites appear between men and women. There are significances for greater values for men than women with regard to how many years one has had a profile and also the number of friends. While with regard to how many profiles of others, there is an approach to signify greater values for women than men. Does one's sex matter in the matters of trust, cultural appropriateness, and self-presentation? Is the relationship between academic performance and the intensity of using social networking, like the FB, related?

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study attempts to answer the following research questions:

- RQ1:** Does the item on Cultural Appropriateness; *budi bahasa* is valid to measure the concept of *budi bahasa* in self-presentation cyberspace study?
- RQ2:** How frequent would the FB users, namely, the students of MHEIs, were engaged in Facebook activities?
- RQ3:** Are demographic factors related to users' trust, cultural appropriateness (*budi bahasa*), and self-presentation?
- RQ4:** Is Facebook usage related to the differences in users' trust, cultural appropriateness (*budi bahasa*), and self-presentation?