

## Supporting mental health during the pandemic: the elements of mattering in expressive writing

Jia Yi Khor<sup>1</sup>, Shakti Velan Raja Kumar<sup>1</sup>, Wen Yu Cai<sup>1</sup>, Chen Sung Wong<sup>1</sup>,  
Kususanto Ditto Prihadi<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Department of Psychology, Faculty of Behavioral Science, HELP University, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

<sup>2</sup>Department of Psychology, Faculty of Social Science and Liberal Arts, UCSI University, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

---

### Article Info

#### Article history:

Received Jul 2, 2021

Revised Nov 10, 2021

Accepted Nov 23, 2021

---

#### Keywords:

Attention

Ego extension

Importance

Mattering

Mental health

Pandemic

---

### ABSTRACT

Previous studies indicated that the sense of mattering played significant protective role for mental health amidst the pandemic. This current study aims to explore whether elements of mattering in people's mind are expressed through expressive writing during the hardships such as pandemic situation. Ten young adults who were not diagnosed with any mental health issue were recruited in to take part in an online experiment over a period of four weeks, where they were instructed to expressively write their weekly positive experiences. Thematic analysis suggested that the content of their writings were consistent to the constructs of interpersonal mattering, such as attention, importance and ego extension, as well as the absence of individuality and noted absence. These findings indicated that elements of mattering were embedded in the positive thoughts of our participants, and were expressed through their writings. Further studies are suggested in order to investigate the effectiveness of expressive writing to improve the sense of mattering to prevent mental health issues during the pandemic.

*This is an open access article under the [CC BY-SA](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/) license.*



---

### Corresponding Author:

Jia Yi Khor

Department of Psychology, Faculty of Behavioral Science, HELP University

Bukit Damansara, 50490 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Email: [jiayikh9@gmail.com](mailto:jiayikh9@gmail.com)

---

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Since the movement control order (MCO) was enforced in Malaysia to suppress the effect of the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic, social distancing in the form of full and/or partial lockdown has been enforced as a crucial public health intervention [1]. The implication, however, has altered the usual pattern of social dynamics due to the limitation of direct social interaction [2], [3], that led to the increased levels of anxiety and stress [4], as well as general wellbeing and mental health [5], [6].

Studies in the Malaysian context of pandemic era have reported that the sense of mattering played significant roles in protecting individuals from having further mental health damages by improving satisfaction with life [7], happiness [8], healthy social comparison [9], and the efficacy of working from home during the lockdown [10], as well as reducing work stress [10], and suicide ideation [11]. As a construct, mattering was coined by Rosenberg and McCullough [12] and has been generally defined as "the subjective perception that others depend on us, are interested in us, are concerned with our fate". They also mentioned that the sense of mattering consisted of six major elements namely attention, importance, dependence, ego extension, noted absence, appreciation, and individuation. Mattering was reported to determine how we evaluate ourselves and how we understand our place in the world [13]. Studies before the pandemic era have reported its imperative roles in promoting mental health and psychological well-being

[14]–[16], a greater sense of mattering is associated with greater perception of happiness, greater purpose in life [17], less emotional distress [18], fewer depressive symptoms, and better overall mental health [19].

Most of the aforementioned studies in the previous paragraph were done quantitatively through self-report survey with large sample size. Therefore, there was no report regarding how the individuals had developed their sense of mattering during the social isolation amidst the pandemic, and what idea they have had in their mind when they unconsciously develop the sense that they matter. Therefore, through this qualitative study, we attempted to explore the thoughts of the young adults by involving them in expressive writing experiment in order to capture the fractions of mattering in their minds that might be expressed through their writings. Apart from that, a study has reported that the implementation of expressive writing significantly predicted the decrease of depression symptoms among young adults during the pandemic in Malaysia, especially when they were asked to write positive experiences [20]. Thus, because depression symptoms are related to the sense that one believes they do not matter to others [11], we would also like to explore whether the content of the written expressions of our participants could be related to the depression symptoms reduction.

## 2. RESEARCH METHOD

### 2.1. Participants

Ten young adults (two males, eight females) between 20–28 years old were recruited through online research advertisements. The participants were screened to confirm if they fulfilled the criterias for the study, which is not being diagnosed with mental health problems, such as depression, anxiety or under any form of psychotherapy. For the completion of the writing task at the end of each week, they were compensated by eWallet credit worth of five Malaysian Ringgit.

### 2.2. Procedure

Participants were engaged in expressive writing twice a week for four consecutive weeks, specifically one writing on Tuesdays and another writing on Fridays. The participants were given 48 hours to complete the weekly writings and to submit them through the online Google Form which was set up for each session. The following instruction was given to the participants: “For the following writing sessions, we would like you to think of the most wonderful experience or experiences in your life, happiest moments, ecstatic moments, moments of rapture, perhaps from being in love, or from listening to music, or suddenly “being hit” by a book or painting or from some great creative moment. Choose one such experience or moment. Try to imagine yourself at that moment, including all the feelings and emotions associated with the experience. Now write about the experience in as much detail as possible trying to include the feelings, thoughts, and emotions that were present at the time. Please try your best to re-experience the emotions involved.”

### 2.3. Analysis

Thematic analysis method was utilized to identify the themes that are prevalent in their appearances. This included the use of open coding to open up and understand the meaning of the writing, which was then followed by axial coding which was done to reveal similarities and codes in the writing of our participants. Tables such as sampled in Table 1 were used to organize each of the mattering dimensions that was expressed in the participants written texts.

Table 1. Sample of thematic analysis organization

Participants	Week	Writing excerpts	Mattering dimension
7	1A	I met two to three best friends; I felt being needed when social. I felt happy as I was being notice by others.	Attention
13	4A	Today my mum made sushi and cake! We've been having greasy food for the past week. My mum rolled a teeny scoop of rice into seaweed wrap, along with stick-like cucumber and carrot, a roll of omelette and one lil pork slice. Ha! I love it. Although I felt like some wild rabbit gnawing on the long stick of cucumber and carrot, it felt light and I felt refreshed after the meal. I am truly happy and grateful to have such strong and healthy family relationships throughout all these years.	Importance
10	1A	The most wonderful experience in my life would be gathering with my parents and relatives. I feel peaceful and joyful when chit chatting	Ego extention

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this section, we discuss the results of our thematic analysis, where elements of mattering were interpreted from the written expressions of our participants. Nevertheless, the prevalent themes that we have captured only consisted of three mattering elements namely attention, importance and ego extension. The following subsections are sequenced based on each theme and deeper discussions are written under each theme. No grammatical correction was applied to the excerpts to maintain the verbatim authenticity.

#### 3.1. Attention

Attention is defined as feelings that individuals are being paid attention to by others [12]. From the findings, we found that most participants expressed their feelings of increased positivity when they got attention from their friends, family members, and even strangers. Below is an example of a participant getting attention from a particular friend of the participant.

*“She was the only one nice to me and talked to me when everyone was ignoring me.” (P2, W2A)*

*“I met two to three best friends; I felt being needed when social. I felt happy as I was being noticed by others.” (P7, W1A)*

*“It wasn’t exactly the spotlight and the attention that amped up my ecstaticness on stage, but rather, it was the energy that I received from the audience, the response from them, as they laughed and fully immersed into the story itself that really brought an almost euphoric feeling when acting.” (P8, W1A)*

*“What I can remember the happy moment is I spent my time together with my sister. I like the way we interact, as she always catches up what I’m trying to say.” (P7, W4B)*

The sample excerpts above indicated that the participants felt positive when they have been noticed by their seniors even when they were ignored by others. The positive feelings that came with the attention from friends were consistent with the work of Schmidt [21], where friends are considered as one of the most important characters that are able to matter to an individual. Friends were not the only source of attention, participant eight had expressed that they felt positive by getting attention from their audience during performance, in line with the work of Zeeb and Joffe [22] that strangers could be the source of the sense of mattering. The theory of societal mattering [23] explained that general society, represented by the unfamiliar individuals around us might play crucial role in developing our mattering when we perceived their social feedback positively.

In the context of our study, fewer participants recalled the positive experiences of getting attention from their family members. Only one participant (P7) reported getting attention from a family member, and it was written in the last submission (second writing submission of the 4th week). This fact might show inconsistency with the statement that family members still played an important role in providing attention towards an individual, which aligned with the study by Flett *et al.* [24]. We suggested that being locked down with family for months might have reduced the perceived values of the attention received due to the familiarity bias [25] and lack of novelty of the source of attention. Related to the theory of mattering [12], this finding implied that the attention gotten from more novel source might have higher significance, it is suggested that future studies take this into account.

#### 3.2. Importance

Importance refers to the feeling of being significant to someone who cares about us [26]. In the context of our study, when asked to write about the most wonderful experiences, the participants tend to write about the moments they were taken care of by others, receiving gifts, and felt that they were a very important member in their birthday celebration events. The sample excerpts are listed:

*“Without any preparation, my friend Natalie just drove her car and fetches me to KL. I was really happy at that moment because I feel the excitement and happiness.” (P7, W4A)*

*“Today my mum made sushi and cake! We’ve been having greasy food for the past week. My mum rolled a teeny scoop of rice into seaweed wrap, along with stick-like cucumber and carrot, a roll of omelette and one lil pork slice. Ha! I love it. Although I felt like some wild rabbit gnawing on the long stick of cucumber and carrot, it felt light and I felt refreshed after the meal. I am truly happy and grateful to have such strong and healthy family relationships throughout all these years.” (P13, W4A)*

*“The happiest moment happened when I got to celebrate my birthday with my all of my family members, especially my brother. He was back to hometown to celebrate my birthday that day. It was so rare that we were able to meet at the same time, because we all have different things to do.” (P12, W3A)*

*"I met new friends and soon became friends with them. Excited and happy to meet new friends from different states. As I was a newbie, they invited me out to have dinner together and I got to experience sitting in the MRT for the first time. I am like a small kid going out for an adventure."* (P2, W3B)

These findings are in line with a previous study in which greater support from friends and family members was associated with a greater perception of interpersonal mattering [27]. It also suggests that the entirety of social interactions in individuals' daily lives contribute to their appraisal of general feelings of mattering, which is consistent with a previous study conducted in PE teachers [28]. Positive interpersonal experiences such as family reunions, trips with friends, or birthday celebrations, will promote individuals' sense of mattering, whereas negative experiences will reduce their sense of mattering [28]. This would help to clarify why some individuals perceived higher general perceptions of mattering in previous studies [28], [29].

### 3.3. Ego extension

Ego extension refers to the belief that others around us share the same emotion and attitude with us [26]. The sample excerpts are listed:

*"The most wonderful experience in my life would be gather with my parents and relatives. I feel peaceful and joyful when chit chatting."* (P10, W1A)

*"I am blessed that we have each other in our heart and we always connected even we are so far apart. I am truly happy and grateful to have such strong and healthy family relationships throughout all these years."* (P12, W4B)

*"I have friends to share my thoughts, felt I was being loved by my families, my mom had spent thousands on me for diet and allowed me to learn piano and will buy things for me. I feel that I was being loved in that time give me a motivation to diet and learning. I was enjoyed my life at that time."* (P7, W1A)

*"I got to celebrate my birthday with my all of my family members, especially my brother. He came back to hometown to celebrate my birthday that day. I appreciate his appearance for spending time with me because he was always busy for his work. I feel blessed to have them as part of my family."* (P12, W3A)

First of all, it was not so easy to identify the presence of ego extension within the excerpts of our participants, because they did not directly express that they believed that others shared the same sentiment at the moment. Therefore, the sample excerpts we included above expressed the sense of belonging to someone else or to a group, which led to further belief that they shared momentary sentiment within a community [30]. This sense of community, and the sense of belongingness is what brings about the feeling of mattering in those who have the feeling of belonging [31]. Nevertheless, isolating the theme of ego-extension from the other elements of mattering is not always possible, because the text was written with mixed thoughts and emotions by our participants, which limited the chance to see the ego-extension expressed distinctively [32].

The next pattern that our participants mentioned is that they tend to put higher value on ego-extension towards someone with special value, who made them feel important and that they were invested in the wellbeing of said person, unconditionally. This is somehow in line with the previous report stating that individuals developed higher levels of mattering if they had higher levels of civic engagement, and felt that they mattered by people in their community [33]. While their study was conducted among adolescents, we can see the similar pattern in our young adult participants, where their sense of belonging made them believe that their momentary sentiment was shared by others around them.

### 3.4. Summary of findings

The themes we managed to gather from our participants written text over four weeks had indicated that when they were requested to express their positive feelings, they would likely to include certain elements of mattering, namely attention, importance and ego extension. While previous studies have established the protective roles of mattering towards mental health [9], [10], [13], increasing mattering through expressive writing seems possible due to the re-enaction of the mattering-inducing moments in the minds of the writers can be studied further. Expressive writing itself has been reported to reduce depression symptoms in Malaysian pandemic [20]. Therefore, the mattering-related content of the positive expressive writing could have been the main reason behind the reduced depression symptoms among the participants.

### 3.5. Limitation

This study is not without limitation. First of all, the number of participants we have is considered small to represent larger population of young adults. Therefore, it is highly suggested for the future research to conduct similar studies with more representative sample size. Another limitation is that the solely qualitative method that we employed might provide us with depth quality of the data on what each participant had in their minds during the writing time; nevertheless, a further quantitative confirmation is required to establish the connection between having a mattering-contextualized writing and the increment of mattering levels among the participants. The third limitation comes with the pandemic environment itself; the way Malaysian government responded to the pandemic is different from the way government of others country did. For example, the lockdown protocols and social movement limitation are practiced differently in every nation [34], [35], and therefore the social dynamics during pandemic might be altered towards different direction in different nations [36], [37]. Therefore, it is unlikely that the results we obtained in Malaysia can be totally applied in other population.

## 4. CONCLUSION

Our finding that mattering elements are embedded in the writing of the positive experiences had led us to further and deeper questions worth studied. While we are more than excited to conduct further research in the same environment, it is highly hoped that we will not stay under the implication of the pandemic any further. Hopefully, it will be a better insight for us that what we have delivered in this paper can eventually be used to maintain and protect people's mental health even after the pandemic is over.

In the light that many have reported mattering as a significant predictor of many other psychological and mental health constructs, such as suicidal behavior, depression, anxiety, and social inferiority, we hope that our finding on how mattering might be improved by expressive writing method can be studied further to create a breakthrough in the development of modules to protect individuals from any mental health issues during the hardship. In other words, we expect that our findings can promote extra care and attention on those who are susceptible to mental health risk, especially when it comes down to mattering problems.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

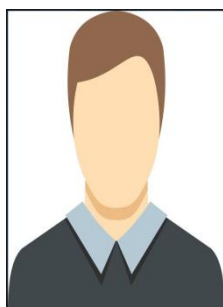
This study is funded by internal research grant (IRGS#21-01-001) from Research Management Center of HELP University.





## REFERENCES

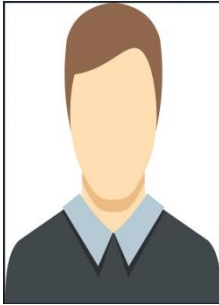
- [1] Hazlin Hassan, "Malaysia bans travel abroad, shuts schools and businesses over coronavirus spread; lockdown till March 31," *The Straits Times*. 2020, [Online]. Available: <https://www.straitstimes.com/asia/se-asia/malaysia-to-impose-lockdown-from-wednesday-to-march-31>.
- [2] A. Perveen, H. B. Hamzah, A. Othamn, and F. Ramlee, "Prevalence of anxiety, stress, depression among Malaysian adults during COVID-19 pandemic movement control order," *Indian Journal of Community Health*, vol. 32, no. 3, pp. 579–581, Sep. 2020, doi: 10.47203/IJCH.2020.v32i03.020.
- [3] H. Shanmugam, J. A. Juhari, P. Nair, S. K. Chow, and C. G. Ng, "Impacts of COVID-19 pandemic on mental health in Malaysia: A single t of hope | Shanmugam | Malaysian Journal of Psychiatry," *Malaysian Journal of Psychiatry Ejournal*, vol. 29, no. 1, pp. 78–84, 2020.
- [4] K. Usher, N. Bhullar, and D. Jackson, "Life in the pandemic: Social isolation and mental health," *Journal of Clinical Nursing*, vol. 29, no. 15–16, pp. 2756–2757, May 2020, doi: 10.1111/jocn.15290.
- [5] S. K. Brooks *et al.*, "The psychological impact of quarantine and how to reduce it: rapid review of the evidence," *The Lancet*, vol. 395, no. 10227, pp. 912–920, Mar. 2020, doi: 10.1016/S0140-6736(20)30460-8.
- [6] A. Desclaux, D. Badji, A. G. Ndione, and K. Sow, "Accepted monitoring or endured quarantine? Ebola contacts' perceptions in Senegal," *Social Science and Medicine*, vol. 178, pp. 38–45, Apr. 2017, doi: 10.1016/j.socscimed.2017.02.009.
- [7] K. D. Prihadi, E. S. Z. Lim, E. Sim, and K. Y. Chong, "Mattering and life satisfaction among the quarantined adults in Malaysia during the COVID-19 pandemic," *International Journal of Public Health Science (IJPHS)*, vol. 10, no. 1, pp. 189–193, Mar. 2021, doi: 10.11591/ijphs.v10i1.20684.
- [8] Z. W. Foo and K. D. Prihadi, "Happiness of university students in new normal Malaysia: The role of mattering, optimism, and social support," *International Journal of Evaluation and Research in Education (IJERE)*, vol. 10, no. 2, pp. 448–454, Jun. 2021, doi: 10.11591/ijere.v10i2.21138.
- [9] P. P. T. Sim and K. D. Prihadi, "Social comparison and life satisfaction in social media: The role of mattering and state self-esteem," *International Journal of Public Health Science (IJPHS)*, vol. 9, no. 3, pp. 245–254, Sep. 2020, doi: 10.11591/ijphs.v9i3.20509.
- [10] K. D. Prihadi, C. K. W. Chang, and G. Lyann, "Keeping millennials from quitting due to work stress: The roles of mattering, commitment and entrepreneurship orientation," *International Journal of Public Health Science (IJPHS)*, vol. 10, no. 2, pp. 445–450, Jun. 2021, doi: 10.11591/ijphs.v10i2.20839.
- [11] K. D. Prihadi, C. Y. S. Wong, E. Y. V Chong, and K. Y. X. Chong, "Suicidal thoughts among university students: The role of mattering, state self-esteem and depression level," *International Journal of Evaluation and Research in Education (IJERE)*, vol. 9, no. 3, pp. 494–502, Sep. 2020, doi: 10.11591/ijere.v9i3.20587.




- [12] M. Rosenberg and B. C. McCullough, "Mattering: Inferred significance and mental health among adolescents," *Research in Community & Mental Health*, vol. 2, pp. 163–182, 1981.
- [13] G. L. Flett and M. Zangeneh, "Mattering as a vital support for people during the COVID-19 pandemic: The benefits of feeling and knowing that someone cares during times of crisis," *Journal of Concurrent Disorders*, vol. 2, no. 1, pp. 106–123, 2020.
- [14] M. Demir, A. Özen, and A. Doğan, "Friendship, perceived mattering and happiness: A study of American and Turkish college students," *Journal of Social Psychology*, vol. 152, no. 5, pp. 659–664, Sep. 2012, doi: 10.1080/00224545.2011.650237.
- [15] M. Drabenstott, "A Matter of life and death: Integrating mattering into the interpersonal–psychological theory of suicide," *Suicide and Life-Threatening Behavior*, vol. 49, no. 4, pp. 1006–1018, Aug. 2019, doi: 10.1111/sltb.12504.
- [16] M. Dueñas and A. M. Gloria, "¿Pertenezco a Esta universidad? The mediating role of belonging for collective self-esteem and mattering for latin@ Undergraduates," *Journal of College Student Development*, vol. 58, no. 6, pp. 891–906, 2017, doi: 10.1353/csd.2017.0070.
- [17] H. Taniguchi, "Interpersonal mattering in friendship as a predictor of happiness in Japan: The case of tokyoites," *Journal of Happiness Studies*, vol. 16, no. 6, pp. 1475–1491, Aug. 2015, doi: 10.1007/s10902-014-9570-z.
- [18] E. M. Fazio and K. B. Nguyen, "Stress, mattering, and health," *The Wiley Blackwell Encyclopedia of Health, Illness, Behavior, and Society*. John Wiley & Sons, Ltd, pp. 2312–2317, Feb. 2014, doi: 10.1002/9781118410868.wbehibs408.
- [19] S. K. Marshall and L. Tilton-Weaver, "Adolescents' perceived mattering to parents and friends: Testing cross-lagged associations with psychosocial well-being," *International Journal of Behavioral Development*, vol. 43, no. 6, pp. 541–552, Apr. 2019, doi: 10.1177/0165025419844019.
- [20] C. S. Wong, M. J. Chua, and K. D. Prihadi, "Reducing depressive symptoms and increasing positive feelings with expressive writing," *International Journal of Public Health Science (IJPHS)*, vol. 10, no. 2, pp. 433–444, Jun. 2021, doi: 10.11591/ijphs.v10i2.20797.
- [21] C. J. Schmidt, "Examining the role of interpersonal and societal mattering in the health and wellbeing of rural adolescents," University of Michigan, 2018.
- [22] V. Zeeb and H. Joffe, "Connecting with strangers in the city: A mattering approach," *British Journal of Social Psychology*, vol. 60, no. 2, pp. 524–547, Oct. 2021, doi: 10.1111/bjso.12423.
- [23] G. Elliott, S. Kao, and A.-M. Grant, "Mattering: Empirical validation of a social-psychological concept," *Self and Identity*, vol. 3, no. 4, pp. 339–354, Oct. 2004, doi: 10.1080/13576500444000119.
- [24] G. Flett, A. Khan, and C. Su, "Mattering and psychological well-being in college and university students: review and recommendations for campus-based initiatives," *International Journal of Mental Health and Addiction*, vol. 17, no. 3, pp. 667–680, Apr. 2019, doi: 10.1007/s11469-019-00073-6.
- [25] H. I. Liao, S. L. Yeh, and S. Shimojo, "Novelty vs. Familiarity principles in preference decisions: Task-context of past experience matters," *Frontiers in Psychology*, vol. 2, no. 43, 2011, doi: 10.3389/fpsyg.2011.00043.
- [26] G. L. Flett, "The Psychology of Mattering," in *The Psychology of Mattering*, Elsevier, 2018, pp. 295–305.
- [27] E. A. Moschella and V. L. Banyard, "Short measures of interpersonal and university mattering: Evaluation of psychometric properties," *Journal of College Student Development*, vol. 62, no. 1, pp. 55–71, 2021, doi: 10.1353/csd.2021.0004.
- [28] K. A. R. Richards, K. L. Gaudreault, J. R. Starck, and A. Mays Woods, "Physical education teachers' perceptions of perceived mattering and marginalization," *Physical Education and Sport Pedagogy*, vol. 23, no. 4, pp. 445–459, Mar. 2018, doi: 10.1080/17408989.2018.1455820.
- [29] V. Costin and V. L. Vignoles, "Meaning is about mattering: Evaluating coherence, purpose, and existential mattering as precursors of meaning in life judgments," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, vol. 118, no. 4, pp. 864–884, Apr. 2020, doi: 10.1037/pspp0000225.
- [30] M. Bourgeois, "Sense of community," in *The Canadian Nurse*, vol. 111, no. 7, 2015.
- [31] N. M. Lambert, T. F. Stillman, J. A. Hicks, S. Kamble, R. F. Baumeister, and F. D. Fincham, "To belong is to matter: Sense of belonging enhances meaning in life," *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, vol. 39, no. 11, pp. 1418–1427, Aug. 2013, doi: 10.1177/0146167213499186.
- [32] E. Tovar, "A conceptual model on the impact of mattering, sense of belonging, engagement/involvement, and socio-academic integrative experiences on community college students' intent to persist," Claremont Colleges Library, 2013.
- [33] J. L. Roth and J. Brooks-Gunn, "Evaluating youth development programs: Progress and promise," *Applied Developmental Science*, vol. 20, no. 3, pp. 188–202, Dec. 2016, doi: 10.1080/10888691.2015.1113879.
- [34] D. Neumann, "Fear of Missing Out," *The International Encyclopedia of Media Psychology*. American Psychological Association (APA), pp. 1–9, 2020, doi: 10.1002/9781119011071.iemp0185.
- [35] A. Froidevaux, A. Hirschi, and M. Wang, "The role of mattering as an overlooked key challenge in retirement planning and adjustment," *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, vol. 94, pp. 57–69, Jun. 2016, doi: 10.1016/j.jvb.2016.02.016.
- [36] K. Olcoñ, Y. Kim, and L. E. Gulbas, "Sense of belonging and youth suicidal behaviors: What do communities and schools have to do with it?," *Social Work in Public Health*, vol. 32, no. 7, pp. 432–442, Jul. 2017, doi: 10.1080/19371918.2017.1344602.
- [37] N. K. Schlossberg, "Marginality and mattering: Key issues in building community," *New Directions for Student Services*, vol. 1989, no. 48, pp. 5–15, 1989, doi: 10.1002/ss.37119894803.

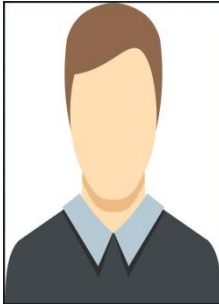
## BIOGRAPHIES OF AUTHORS






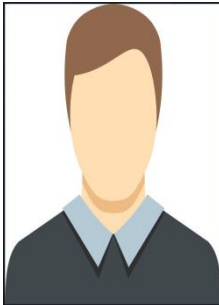
**Jia Yi Khor**     Graduated from the department of Psychology, Faculty of Behavioral Science, HELP University Malaysia, he also played some major roles in some research there, especially the one related to improving mental health through expressive writing. He is still exploring his research area and is currently assisting some research projects in the same university. He can be contacted at email: fosslaresearch@gmail.com.






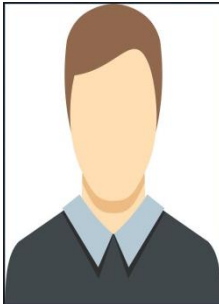
**Shakti Velan Raja Kumar**    This Malaysian national had tried to study medicine in one of the universities in Indonesia before deciding to follow his passion in psychology. Graduated from the department of Psychology, Faculty of Behavioral Science, HELP University Malaysia, he assisted few studies there, including this current study. He can be contacted at email: fosslaresearch@gmail.com.






**Wen Yu Cai**    He is currently finishing his study in psychology in the Department of Psychology, Faculty of Behavioral Science, HELP University Malaysia. His internship was conducted in research centers where he learned a lot about conducting psychological research such as this current study. He can be contacted at email: fosslaresearch@gmail.com.



**Chen Sung Wong**    A young Malaysian psychology graduate from Department of Psychology, Faculty of Behavioral Science, HELP University Malaysia, with several research in expressive writing. He is the main investigator of this study. Most of his papers were about improving mental health through various ways of expressive writing. He can be contacted at email: fosslaresearch@gmail.com.



**Kususanto Ditto Prihadi**    An Indonesian national who holds a doctorate in Educational Psychology with deep research interest in psychology of mattering and self, he co-lead this current study. Most of his papers in the last two years were related to role of mattering on mental health and people's wellbeing. He is currently the Head of Research and Postgraduate Studies in the Faculty of Social Science and Liberal Arts, UCSI University Malaysia. He can be contacted at email: fosslaresearch@gmail.com.