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# HARMLESS CYBERSTALKING, CASE OF ONLINEDATERS

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#### ABSTRACT

With the growth in using social media and online dating sites from the effect of the pandemic in 2021, this research focuses on how cyberstalking occurs as a result of using online dating sites. While cyberstalking is perceived as a crime, this research intended to discuss a 'harmless' cyberstalking, which means seeking information about the other person from their social media sites or even using the google search engine without the acknowledgement of the other party. There were 347 (n=264) participants that were requested to fill up a survey, which this study revealed that people cyberstalk as one of the strategies to reduce uncertainty about their matches. The reasons behind why people choose to use uncertainty reduction strategies are as the cause of concerns (warranty, personal security and misrepresentations) cause, looking for homophily and also goals from using online dating sites. The results has shown that people do cyberstalk harmlessly from the cause of the concerns behind warranty, personal security and misrepresentation of the other party, also as a cause of looking for homophily in matches, and there is no correlation behind the goals of using online-dating apps with uncertainty-reduction strategy.

**Keywords:** Computer Mediated Communication (CMC), Cyberstalking, Social Media, Online-dating, Uncertainty Reduction

#### 1. INTRODUCTION

A survey by businessofapps.com found that the number of users of online dating sites has increased to 323,9 million people in the last 2021. Since the pandemic began, people began to go to online dating applications for romance seeking or fun. With this, dating is starting to go online, but people are also spending more time on social media for various causes, such as sharing because of loneliness. Then the people connect as global citizens [1-3].

Nevertheless, unlike social media, where people usually connect with those they already know in real life, online dating apps connect two strangers that usually have no link nor previous contact with each other before for a romantical relationship. Thus, because there has been no physical contact previously and they have only met each other using their online persona, this might form a more significant uncertainty [4-5]. Nor only this arise as a concern, social media also rises a concern for peopleas the users have threats on cyberstalking and cyberbullying [6]. Whereas in engaging in a serious relationship or with people who want to look for the next step, it is essential to understand and know that we are accepted by others [7], as in social penetration theory. Previous research regarding users of Grindr also shows that people tend to ease their uncertainty only if they are looking for something serious in the relationship using the online dating platforms [4]. Online misrepresentations have been a concern for many people that goes to look for relationships online, as people tend to present themselves in the very best way to match others, whereas there are so many competitors when looking for dates online [7-9] Not only misrepresentations but another thing that might worry people when looking for dates online. Then, the person they might match with is a criminal or someone with bad intentions, such as rape, kidnapping, or the most common crime is financial fraud [11-13].

With many dating applications arising and competing with each other (Tinder, Bumble, OkCupid, and others) in Indonesia, each has its uniqueness to present to the users to catch their attention. However, most have an option where the users can include their social media account in their bio, which then can be accessed or seen by other users. Thus, this may seem like permitting other users to stalk (cyberstalk) the

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intended users	online	with	the	given	available	datingapplications, e	explicitly researching the users
information.						of Grindr. This res	earch also uses the previous

To further continue with these two being atarising, many previous researchers have discussed the effects of using Online Dating applications on behavior and mental health [14-17]. Also, many researchers are interested in overall cyberstalking and its effects on people's awareness [18-21]. However, the previous study has a slight concern regarding cyberstalking on social media by people that have met each other through online dating apps using the Uncertainty Reduction Theory (URT) or Uncertainty Management Theory (UMT).

The author has only found two previous research. The first (knowingly) about cyberstalking or information seeking online as the effect of playing online dating platforms is the journal by Gibbs, Ellison & Lai (2011). This research focuses on three variables that might affect the uncertainty reduction strategy, thus leading to the amount of self- disclosure or the action of information seeking. The independent variables are concerns about personal security, misrepresentation from their online dating profile, and worries about the recognition from people they know. Next is selfefficacy, and lastly is internet experience. They also put the controls for the amount of self-disclosure (dependent variable), which are the likelihood to trust online and gender. Using quantitative measures by online survey, the research resulted in all the hypotheses to be found correct or valid, that people's concerns and self- efficacy affect the tendency for people to search other's information online. However, people's internet experience was not proven to affect people doing information seeking. Different with the research by Gibbs, Ellison & Lai (2011), the currentresearch does not include internet experience as it has been proven to not be proven to have any effect on people seeking information about the other party. But instead, this research add another element on the uncertainty reduction elements, which is "seriousness in looking for a relationship", and also add another question of instead of homophily in the sense of looking for someone with the same background of race, ethnicity, organization, but it's more on the homophily of likeness as in interest inlife, such as hobby, and other daily activities.

The following research is by Corriero & Tong (2016) about managing uncertainty in mobile

of Grindr. This research also uses the previous research as a background study. However, they changed the uncertainty reduction theory to uncertainty management theory, a more renewed theory about uncertainties in people. This research focuses on two primary independent variables: the goals of using Grindr (sexual goals, relational goals) and concerns that affect people's desires for uncertainty, resulting in information-seeking behavior. A mixed-method used both interviews and surveys in this previous research has shown that people with sexual goals are positively related to the desire for interpersonal uncertainty, thus not information. seeking more Interpersonal uncertainty is negatively related to informationseeking behaviour (confirmed in the first research by Gibbs et al.). The next research is byCorriero & Tong (2016), about managing uncertainty in mobile dating applications, specifically researching in the users of Grindr. This research also uses the previous research as a background study, but they change the uncertainty reduction theory to uncertainty management theory, which is a more renewed theory about uncertainties in people. This research focuses on 2 main independent variable, which are; the goals of using Grindr (sexual goals, relational goals), and concerns affects people desires for uncertainty, which then result in information seeking behaviour. Using mixed method (interview and survey), the result has shown that people with sexual goals is positively related to the desire of interpersonal uncertainty, thus not seeking more information. Interpersonal uncertainty is negatively related to information seeking behaviour (which is also confirmed in the first research by Gibbs et al..) and user's concern of use have negative relation for interpersonal uncertainty was only partially approved.

With many scammers and people using other's identity as their online persona, people feel the needto re-check if their online profile in the dating site is true. Thus lastly, this research would like to see if people do cyberstalking in order to reduce uncertainty about the other people, and if this is proven, this means that people think that just the other party's profile and picture is still not an enough element for people to believe and this might be a suggestion for ODS to up their game, to be more trusted. As there are many scammers around in Online Dating Sites.

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ISSN: 1992-8645 www.jatit.org People tend to reduce their uncertainty by using asuperficial relationship to a more intimate one by information seeking. Previous research [5] has also mentioned that people might use the information on the other user's personal social media to look for things in common to seek homophily [19]. However, they put this as a privacy concern because it can leadto cybercrime. However, in this research, the author will use this variable as a reason why people seek information seeking, know more about the other person, and seek homophily. Also, from the research by Corriero & Tong (2016), the author has decided to put people with relational goals from using onlinedating apps will create a tendency for information seeking as a

Cyberstalking also includes seeking personal information of the other person using online measures such as googling or looking into their social media accounts. While this is a crime in many countries, in Indonesia, it is not labelled as a crime to seek or look into people's social media accounts without giving damages [20]; thus, the author label it'harmless' cyberstalking.

variable to consider.

With the following explanations above, this study is intended to answer the research questions below:

RO1: Do people cyberstalk their dates for uncertainty reduction (Warranting, Personal security, Seriousness in looking for relationship) reasons?

RQ2: Do people cyberstalk the other user because they look for mutual likeness?

RQ3: Does the goal of looking for a serious relationship affect users' tendency to cyberstalk others?

RQ4: Do people cyberstalk as a strategy for uncertainty reduction?

#### 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.1 **Social Penetration Theory**

Social penetration theory believes that to build a relationship, information exchange is needed, and it describes the process of bonding that moves relationships from the most superficial to more intimate [21]. It is believed that people move from revealing information about themselves, as in the beginning, people do not know the other person at all. A famous metaphor for this theory is using the onion model. It has been said that people have many'layers,' and upon knowing the other person, being closer to the person, means that we are peeling through these layers and reaching the innermost layer, which shows we are most intimate with that person already. In this context, the core personal information example includes secrets or most private information about the person. The public image that a person tries to show to others is usually the outer layer most visible to other people. Through interpersonal interactions or exchanging information, thus we can get into their inner core [22-23]. To continue with this theory, people first begin to know each other, primarily through online dating applications. The online channel has only available profile we can see is their profile, which contains only some selected pictures and a brief biodata or words they chose to show. This performance may result in people feeling the need to search for more information about the other person, peeling the 'layers' of the other users.

#### 2.2 **Uncertainty Reduction Theory**

The Uncertainty Reduction Theory (URT) was first made by Charles Berger and Richard Calabrese in 1975. This theory focuses on how human communication is used to gain knowledge about the other person whom we feel uncertain. The primary assumption by Charles Berger and RichardCalabrese was that when we meet someone new, weare filled with uncertainties about the other person as we have no information yet about the other person. So, uncertainty reduction is made to increase knowledge about what kind of the other person is and thus can create a forecast on how future interaction might turn out. One of the ways of uncertainty reduction is by seeking information. This communication way is one of the axioms in uncertainty reduction theory.

Some researchers have started to discuss how people reduce uncertainty using the internet and found out that with the advancement of technology over time. People start to reduce uncertainty not only in interpersonal face to face interaction but also by using the tools available online to search for information previously about the other person [4-5, 19, 24]. As with communication online, feedbacks are often slower than seeing it face to



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face. People will reply not in real-time, which the	en dating profiles to attract more people [30]. This
makes information exchange slower. Th	habit might cause misrepresentations, or peoplefeel
tendency might lead people to seek information	on 'lied to' from their profiles. Another aspect is
from other users online to reduce uncertain	ty personal security, as there are many frauds and
quicker.	people that might lie or even a criminal on the

# 2.3 Cyber-stalking

Stalking has been happening for a long time ago, andthere have already been numerous laws as it has been seen as a crime in today's era. While we are all moving to the online world, people have started to post their daily life and activities online on their social media. While intended to connect with those we know, having an online profile can also result in information exposure to unintended audiences [25]. Cyberstalking is the activity of stalking that uses technology such as social media [29]. Some researchers agree that cyberstalking is harassing the other person using online methods [26]. However, cyberstalking also means the action of stalking (following or spying) an online discreetly [27].

Having our personal information online not only benefits in maintaining communications, but this also means that there is a new platform for people to start stalking [21], or in other words, to cyberstalk. According to Dardis & Gidycz (2017) research, most stalkers do not see the activity they did as harmful or annoying to the victims, as cyberstalking is not regarded as a severe issue either [26]. Another research also claims that cyberstalkingby someone they know is more seen as acceptable than those done by strangers [29].

# 3. HYPOTHESES

# 3.1 Concerns on Using Online Dating Applications

People tend to 'like' or want to date more to someone that looks more attractive [5, 7, 30]. People expect other users to be more honest and modest when making their profiles on online dating applications [32-33]. Research by Spitzberg (2002) claims that the more people expose their life online, the more they are at threat of experiencing unwanted actions from those media they use. Thus, people tend to lookfor others' social media accounts to warrant or check their profile pictures. Everybody wants their profile matches up or 'catfished.' Most research has shown that people tend to 'exaggerate' themselves in their online dating profiles to attract more people [30]. This habit might cause misrepresentations, or peoplefeel 'lied to' from their profiles. Another aspect is personal security, as there are many frauds and people that might lie or even a criminal on the websites, as the cases of criminalities rise [11-12, 26]. Meanwhile, for personal security reasons, people might look for their matches online to see if there is any digital footprint of their crimes, knowing

how easy it is now to spot a criminal using webbased applications.

H1. Concerns on Using Online Dating Applications (Warranting, Personal Security, Misrepresentations) positively affects Uncertainty Reduction Strategy.

# 3.2 Uncertainty Reduction Strategy to look forHomophily

People search for homophily or similarities, which can lead to an increased feeling of trust in the other user [30]. Though this study explores more about the feeling of homophily based on their profile picture, we can assume that people also search for similarities or sameness in their partner before having a desire to date the other person. People look for homophily based on physical appearances, such as race and gender. Now, most online dating apps also give options for people to fill regarding their horoscope signs, hobbies, and interests.

People tend to look for homophily when they are more risk averse. They tend to feel more secure when they are with people with sameness, which helps reduce uncertainties, as they come from the same background or have the same activities [35-36]. While it takes some time to ask people, and there is a gap between asking and answering, people tend to look for information online about the other match to seek homophily. Not only to seek that, but people also might look for sameness to find more topics to talk about, thus, continuing their communication.

H2. search for homophily positively affects Uncertainty Reduction Strategy.

3.3 Goals in using Online Dating Applications

There are many reasons why people use online

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dating applications. Most have goals of looking t	for want to reduce uncertainty, with their different
relationships, but it is also uncommon that peop	ble reasons and goals. Thus, this research does not
might use it for other purposes, such as looking	for exclude this relationship with people 'harmlessly'
friends or even casual sexual meetings [4]. It do	bes cyberstalking to reduce uncertainty about their
not also close that some might look for a place	to matches.
cheat [13]. Despite all the purposes, the main go	bal
is to seek a relationship. In the theory of soc	ind The The State Delay of the State of the

H4: Uncertainty Reduction Strategy positively affects the tendency to Cyberstalk.

Thus, for the hypotheses above that have been discussed, the figure for the research design is as follows:



Figure 1: Research Design

# 4. METHODS

# 4.1 Design

This study used a web-based survey application from a sample of online dating participants. Using a quantitative method, the participants of this study were screened from the millions of online dating applications users (who agreed to take part in this survey previously) who must answer a survey/ questionnaire shared. The initial screening was only in the demographic part, where they answered the question if they had ever used an online dating app previously and for more than one week. Data collection was spanned one week in March 2022, and the web survey was hosted using Google Forms, a free survey-hosting website.

The respondents must only complete the survey once to ensure the correctness and validity of this research. The author has shared the survey with mutual people and used social networking sites suchas the TikTok comment section and Instagram to reach samples from a broader range of populations from different backgrounds. The author has alsocontacted people currently found on

dating applications. Most have goals of looking for relationships, but it is also uncommon that people might use it for other purposes, such as looking for friends or even casual sexual meetings [4]. It does not also close that some might look for a place to cheat [13]. Despite all the purposes, the main goal is to seek a relationship. In the theory of social penetration, people will gain information and want toknow more about the other person when they are willing to build a relationship [23]. This thought applies not only to severe relationships but also to friendships. Following the research of Corriero and Tong (2016), people tend to look for additional

information or manage uncertainty when they intendto build a relationship and dig deeper.

Furthermore, some people have a purpose not to meet their matches online, as they do not even intend to have other relationships with their matches. However, they are on online dating apps for ego- boost, to see what they are worth in the eyes of society, and not because they are seeking relationships [16]. Hence, this research has hypothesized that when people are searching for a relationship on online dating sites or have intentions of seeking some friends, this will positively affect their strategy for uncertainty reduction.

H3: Goals to search for a serious relationship in Online dating sites positively affects Uncertainty Reduction Strategy.

# 3.4 Cyberstalking to Reduce Uncertainty

As information security has 3 important aspects, such as C.I.A, or Confidentiality, Integrity and Availability [31], it is important if we know that cyberstalking is a trespassing of people's confidentiality. Following previous explanations, in this research, what we categorize as cyberstalking is he action of further looking for the personal information of people's matches that they have foundonline, without the acknowledgment of the other person, which in other research, they call informationseeking [4-5]. While both are different, Gibbs et al. (2011) look into the positive correlations between information seeking resulting from uncertainty reduction strategy. Also, Corriero and Tong (2016) look into the positive correlation of uncertainty reduction management with information seeking. However, both claim that people search for further information when they

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online dating applications such as Tinder, Bumble,	their profile picture	(X1.1)' with the mean:
and OkCupid to answer the survey.	3.583, median: 4, ST	D: 1.145, second question

### 4.2 Participants

The author decided to use purposive sampling for this research, as there is no definite number on how many Indonesian users have experience in using online dating apps. All respondents for this have used online dating applications for more than one month to ensure that they have fully grasped the usage and have ever matched with someone previously. There were 264 valid responses out of 350 surveys answered, raging

age from 18 (Minimum age to use online dating sites)up to more than 33 years old, with the highest number of respondents, 50.8% being from the age of 18-22, 37.1% are 23-27, and 9% were from 28-32 category, the rest of 3% are 33 and above. The rest was not included in the results as they had never downloaded any online dating applications ever. There are 159 Females, 105 males answering. 90.9%

were heterosexual, 5.7% Lesbian/gay/bi and 3.4% pansexual. For the question about how long they have been using online dating sites, 68.2% of the respondents answered one week-1 year, 20.5% answered 1 to 2 years, and 11.4% answered three years or more. 17% of the respondents are looking for a serious relationship, 32.2% have a goal to look for friends, and 50.8% answered: "just for fun."

# 4.3 Procedure

Participants who agree to do the survey will be given a link to google forms (a free survey application where there will be 22 questions. The constructs included five demographic questions 17 indicators for this research, with five variables, X1 being concerned about using social media, X2 being searching for homophily from matches, and X3 being Goals on using social media. Also, examine X4 was the indicator for uncertainty reduction strategy, and Y1 was the indicator for cyberstalking or information seeking.

Concerns (X1, a= 0.871, CR= 0.903) has 6 questions that indicates warranty, personal security and misrepresentation. All the questions are on a Likert scale (1-5) points where 1 to 5 ranks the degree of concern, 1 being very not concern and 5 being very concern. The first and second questions are 'my match is very different from their profile picture (X1.1)' with the mean: 3.583, median: 4, STD: 1.145, second question being 'my match lies about his age or job (X1.2)' with the mean: 3.583, median: 4, STD: 1.271, and the third question is 'my match lies about his relationship status (X1.3)' with mean: 3.572, median: 4, STD: 1.207, which indicates misrepresentation. The fourth and fifth questions are 'my match stole someone else's identity for his/her profile (X1.4)' with the mean: 3.723, median: 4, STD: 1.405, and 'my match is a criminal or ex-criminal (X1.5)' with the mean: 3.621, median: 4, STD: 1.472, which indicates personal security and lastly is 'my match exaggerate about their qualities (X1.6) with the mean: 3.527, median: 4, STD: 1.187 that talks about warranty.

Homophily (X2, a= 0.761, CR= 0.893) has two indicators. Both questions are presented using a

Likert scale (1-5) with points where 1 to 5 rank the degree of agreeableness, 1 being very disagreed and5 very agreeing. The first question is 'I tend to be able to carry a conversation with someone that has the same background/ interest (X2.1)' with the mean: 3.610, median: 4, STD: 1.071, and the second question is 'I tend to look for mutual likeness/ friends on their social media account (X2.2)' with the mean: 3.818, median: 4, STD: 1.032.

Goals (X3, a= 0.871, CR= 0.937) for using the online dating applications were categorized into 3, which were asked in the demographic section: looking for a serious relationship, looking for friends, and just for fun. The author also includes two questions on the Likert scale (1-5) points where 1 to 5 rank the degree of agreeableness, 1 being very disagreed and 5 very agreeing. The first question is 'Thope I can meet someone I match on an online dating site (X3.1)' with the mean: 3.375, median: 4, STD:

1.425. The next question is 'I hope I can get a friend on an online dating site (X3.2) with the mean: 3.246,median: 3, STD: 1.429.

Uncertainty Reduction Strategy (X4, a= 0.654, CR= 0.811) has three indicators, which are allalso on the Likert scale (1-5 points) which ranks the degree of agreeableness, 1 being very disagree and 5 being very agreeable, the first question is 'I tend to look for as much as possible about my match (X4.1)' with the mean: 3.602, median: 4, STD: 1.233, secondquestions is 'I have to be very sure of

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my match before meeting them (X4.2)' wi mean: 3.996, median: 4, STD: 1.085, and the question is 'I tend to follow/ look up their media if given in their profile (X4.3)' wi mean: 3.602, median: 4,STD: 1.233.	the third social the	the author will see the rejection he hypothesis using the T-Value, nated relationship. In this method, r not of a hypothesis is measured

Cyberstalk (Y1, a= 0.652, CR= 0.792) in the questionnaire has four indicators, which are on the Likert scale (1-5 points), which ranks the degreeof agreeableness, 1 being very disagreed and 5 very agreeing, the first question is 'I tend to check the social media of my match without them knowing(Y1.1)' with a mean: 4.216, median: 5, STD: 1.046, the second is 'I tend to compare their profile on Online dating profile and their social networking profile (Y1.2)' with a mean: 3.826, median: 4, STD: 1.070, the third is 'I tend to google my matches' name without their acknowledgment (Y1.3)' with a mean: 3.318, median: 4, STD: 1.370 and lastly is 'checking their personal information on social media is not harmful/ annoying' with a mean: 3.939, median: 4, STD: 0.935.

### 5. FINDINGS

There are 3 important questions that we want to answer, if people cyberstalk as a result to reduce uncertainty on their match, with the reason of concerns (warranty, personal security and misrepresentation), looking for homophily or because they have a goal in looking for something serious in online dating apps.

Variables	Item	Outer Loadings	AVE	
	X1.1	0.704		
Concerns in	X1.2	0.794		
using Online	X1.3	0.729	0.608	
dating	X1.4	0.854		
applications	X1.5	0.801		
	X1.6	0.784		
	X2.1	0.886		
Homophily among users	X2.2	0.910	0.807	
Goals for using	X3.1	0.914	÷.	
Dating Applications	X3.2	0.963	0.882	
Uncertainty	X4.1	0.837		
Reduction	X4.2	0.682	0.590	
Strategy	X4.3	0.778		
	Y1.1	0.788		
Carboratelling	Y1.2	0.691	0.490	
Cyberstalking	Y1.3	0.647		
	Y1.4	0.665		

Table 1. Outer Laodings and AVE

For this research, the author will see the rejection or acceptance of the hypothesis using the T-Value, showing the estimated relationship. In this method, the significance or not of a hypothesis is measured using two t-tailed values, which will be given a parameter using the t-table. For this research, which has 264 respondents, the t-table value is 1.969, which we will round to 1.97, so if the hypothesis hasat-value >1.97, then the Ha is accepted, and Ho is rejected. The author uses the program from something serious in online dating apps

 Table 2. Discriminant Validity and AVE (Average Variance Extracted)

AVE	√AVE	Vari able	X1	X2	X3	X4	Y1
0.608	0.780	X1	0.780		•		
0.807	0.898	X2	0.230	0.898			
0.882	0.939	X3	0.216	0.122	0.939		
0.590	0.768	X4	0.297	0.359	0.159	0.768	
0.490	0.700	Y1	0.314	0.368	0.180	0.768	0.700

From the results of AVE and the outer loadings that were calculated using SmartPLS 3, the results are all above 0.5, which can be considered acceptable [37]. However, cyberstalking was 0.49, which is close to 0.5, despite this. All CR is above 0.6 and can still be seen as acceptable [38]. All outer loadings are also above 0.6, which is accepted as valid. The complete information on the validity and reliability can be seen in Table 2 and 3.

Table 3. t-tailed value

Hypo thesis	Var iabl e	Ori gin al Sa mpl e (o)/ β	Hig hest influ ence	Sa mp le Me an (M )	St Devi ation (ST DE V)	t- Stati stics	Concl usion
H1	X1	0.2	III	0.	0.0	3.7	Acc
	->	12		21	57	28	epte
	X4			5			d
H2	X2	0.3	II	0.	0.0	4.4	Acc
	->	01		29	67	73	epte
	X4			8			d
H3	X3	0.0	IV	0.	0.0	1.2	Reje
	->	76		08	63	21	cted
	X4			2			
H4	X4	0.7	Ι	0.	0.0	25.	Acc
	-	68		77	30	53	epte
	X5	_		0		6	d

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5.1 Concerns	on	Using	Online	Dating	different with the rese	earch by Gibbs et al., (2011),
Applications				as in that research, peo	ple arescared to meet mutual	
					friends to evode being	, course in using online dating

The value for this hypothesis is 3.728 is thet-tailed test, which scores more than 1.97, which thenclaims that Hypothesis 1, Concerning Using Online Dating Applications (Warranting, Personal Security, Misrepresentations) positively affects Uncertainty Reduction Strategy, is accepted. This hypothesis ranked 3rd in the influence of the whole research, with a mean of 0.215 and a standard deviation of

0.057. this result verifies the research done previously by [5], which concerns that using online dating apps regarding matches might create the tendency of people to use uncertainty management strategies. This research's result shows that people tend to be concerned if their match falsifies the information on their profile regarding face, age, marital status, job, and age [13, 30]. This research

0.590 0.768 X4 0.297 0.359 0.159 0.768 looking for someone in the online dating apps, they are all concerned that the person they match online is a criminal or ex-criminal [11]. Different with the research by Gibbs et al., (2011), where people tend to search information for the cause of seeking mutual friendship in order to evade meeting someone they know and thus being caught in using online dating apps, this research has shown that people tend to stalk for security purposes such as to see if the other party is a criminal or ex-criminal.

# 5.2 Homophily to Reduce Uncertainty

The value for this hypothesis is 4.473 is thet-tailed test, which scores more than 1.97, which thenclaims that Hypothesis 2, concerning the search for homophily, will positively affect the Uncertainty Reduction Strategy, is accepted. This hypothesis ranked 2nd in this research, with a mean of 0.298 and a standard deviation of 0.067. While there has yet been much research regarding this topic specifically, whereas people search for homophily for interest/ mutual friends, it has been said that people who search for homophily are those who are risk averse [35]. Another research also found that homophily in a group will reduce uncertainty [36], which supports this hypothesis of why people use uncertainty reduction strategy to look for homophily or samenessbetween the matches. Some of the homophily they are looking for is having the same interest/ mutual friends, who they agree as in to be able to talk or look for topics. This instead is different with the research by Gibbs et al., (2011), as in that research, people arescared to meet mutual friends to evade being cause in using online dating site, in this research it's shown that people do want to look for mutual friends in order to search for homophily and thus, create a topic ob e discussed.

# 5.3 Goals in using Online Dating Applications

The value for this hypothesis is 1.221 is the t-tailed test, which scores less than 1.97, which then claims that Hypothesis 3 concerning the Goals to search for relationships on Online dating sites positively affects the Uncertainty Reduction Strategy is not accepted. This hypothesis ranked 4th in this research, with a mean of 0.082 and a standard deviation of 0.063. The result from previous research regarding the goals of online dating apps, if related only to casual sex goals, is positively related to the desire for uncertainty [4]. In this research, the author retested the opposite: users will use uncertainty reduction strategies when they have a goal of looking for serious/ reallife connections, which are then proved to be unaccepted. This result has the same result as the previous research by Corriero and Tong (2016), where there is

no significance. This similarity might be caused by the indicators or questions regarding this variable that is not enough to explain people's goals in online dating apps. There are many reasons why people useonline dating apps, and they were not all well explained or categorized [16] and do not increase significantly in the results.

# 5.4 Cyberstalking to Reduce Uncertainty

The value for this hypothesis is 25.536 is the ttailed test, which scores more than 1.97, which then claims that Hypothesis 4 concerning Uncertainty Reduction Strategy positively affects the tendency to Cyberstalk, is accepted. This hypothesis ranked 1st in this research, with a mean of 0.770 and a standard deviation of 0.030. This hypothesis also verifies that the result from previous research regarding searching for information to reduce uncertainty is accepted [4-5]. This research also clarifies, as the indicators are taken mainly from the research of Gibbs et al. (2011), that people cyberstalk by looking up or searching their profile on their matches' social media, presented or not in their profile. They also google their matches' names to look for additional information about their matches. So it can be concluded that one of



ISSN: 1992-8645www.jatit.orgthe strategies in reducing uncertainty about the<br/>other person is by cyberstalking or information<br/>seeking, and this action is done without<br/>acknowledging the other person.relationship or<br/>respondents con<br/>results might be<br/>future research

Further side findings for this research, that most of the respondents answered in the point of 4 (agree) regarding looking for their matches' information without the user's consent on social media platforms or Google is not harmful or annoying to the other user. Additionally, when asked if they would search for the profile of their matches if given, women respondents gave answers with the result of a median of 4, while for men, it was 3. This result indicates that gender affects the tendency of cyberstalking. Furthermore, the median for the question if they will check their match's profile if given has a median of 4 and a mean of 3.602, which indicates that if it is given, people will 'stalk' their match on social media.

# 6. LIMITATIONS

This research does not have enough respondents to represent the total number of users in Jakarta, Indonesia, who have experienced using online datingsites for a week or more. There are currently millions of users all over Indonesia. The questions for indicators of the variable "uncertainty reduction

strategy" and "search for homophily" were also considered not enough. Future researchers may add more indicators regarding these two variables to have more valid research in the upcoming times. Additionally, to spend more time collecting respondents that would better represent the population of the research's location. Though it has been proven for H4 to be accepted, that people do information seeking in order to reduce uncertainty, the amount of significance isn't too high, this might indicate that there is a further research needed to cover if there is another individual variable that might affect uncertainty reduction methods whenpeople are using online dating apps.

Moreover, it might also be better for future researchers to look for a new hypothesis to replace H3. Goals for usage positively affect the tendency to use uncertainty reduction strategy. Look for anotherindicator that might affect people to use the uncertainty reduction strategy. Lastly, in this study, the demographic of the respondents was mainly just using online dating apps for fun or other reasons other than looking for a genuine tit.org E-ISSN: 1817-3195relationship or friendships, and most of the respondents come from the age of 18 - 23. These results might be why H3 was not accepted, so for future researchers, it might be best to limit the research respondents to those whouse the apps with severe intentions only.

# 7. CONCLUSIONS

Despite all the limitations of this research, the results and findings contribute to the literature online about uncertainty reduction strategies in the context of online dating applications. As online dating has become an ongoing trend among online users, it is essential to note that our mutual friends only view the information we share online. Others can also see the assumption that we might consider strangers, whether we have met them in face-toface

relationships or online settings only. This result highlighted an issue related to privacy in the online world and the idea of having an online identity available to be seen by others. Overall, the findings of this research have been found to reduce uncertainty. The reasons for personal security and search for homophily. People will cyberstalk 'harmlessly' or, in other words, look for additional information about the other person online. In contrast, the goals of using online dating apps do notsignificantly reduce uncertainty.

To this research, this online dating users have to increase cautiousness in sharing their personal information online, as it is easily spotted orseen by other people, and people tend to do it either in their profile or not stated in their profile. In conclusion, this matter might need further research, as there might be other reasons and indicators that can affect the tendency of users to reduce uncertainty about their other matches online. As technology keeps on evolving, which sure will affect how our online communities interact. Then, further research to understand how people reduce uncertainty or how information exchange between individuals will become increasingly important and necessary in the upcoming days.

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