MALAYSIAN YOUTH'S PREFERENCES TOWARDS THE USE OF SOCIAL NETWORK MARKETING

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DECLARATION

We hereby declare that:

(1) This undergraduate research project is the end result of our own work and that due acknowledgement has been given in the references to ALL sources of information be they printed, electronic, or personal.

(2) No portion of this research project has been submitted in support of any application for any other degree or qualification of this or any other university, or other institutes of learning.

(3) Equal contribution has been made by each group member in completing the research project.

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DEDICATION

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Secondly, we would also like to dedicate this successful research to Mr. Hen Kai Wah for his guidance on how to conduct a research project. This research also dedicated to our family and friends whom have given us their support morally and mentally in this research.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

IT	Information Technology
MSN	Microsoft Network
PEU/PEOU	Perceived Ease of Use
PREF	Preferences Towards the use of Social Network Marketing
PU	Perceived Usefulness
SNS	Social Networking Sites
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
TAM	Technology Acceptance Model
WWW	World Wide Web

PREFACE

The use of social networks is becoming more popular with the advancement of technology and introduction of several web-based social networks such as Facebook, Twitter, MySpace, etc. Furthermore, companies today are seeking new means of marketing their goods and services to customers in order to attract, increase and maintain their market share in the industry. With all sorts of marketing models and theories being introduced by authors and researchers, marketing has become increasingly significant for marketers to devise a well-planned marketing plan in order to impress stakeholders for a refurbished or entirely new goods and services that should be introduced to the market.

The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) has been widely accepted and used by researchers to test the user's reception towards a particular system. Thus, this study being conducted uses the TAM to identify the acceptance or in this context the preference towards the use of social networks to conduct marketing activities. The study narrows down to the Malaysian youths as there have not been many studies conducted to test the acceptance towards social network marketing. Consequently, this brought to the motivation to conduct this study as it would significantly benefit entrepreneurs and businesses on how to better satisfy the youth market segment.

ABSTRACT

Recently, social networks are attracting the academic and industry researcher's attention due to its affordance, reach and usefulness. Thus, the main purpose of this study is to identify what motivates the youth in using social networks to obtain marketing information on goods and services. Furthermore, the study also highlighted reasons why youth prefer social networks over the traditional medium.

This study will use the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) to identify the Malaysian youth's preferences towards social network marketing. For this study, it looks closely into the relationship between 3 variables which are perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use and preference towards social network marketing. In order to test the relationship between variables, a sample of 200 has been selected by distributing self-administered questionnaires to 4 private universities.

The literature on internet, social network and TAM has been critically reviewed on the significance of researchers to conduct studies almost similar to this. Furthermore, with the growing population of youths aged between 15 to 24 years old, it would be significant to conduct this study on Malaysian youths as they would be the a potential market segment for businesses in Malaysia. This study would also be beneficial as Malaysian entrepreneurs may use these findings to better market and introduce their goods and services to the youth market segment as most of the studies have been done overseas and not in Malaysia.

CHAPTER 1: RESEARCH OVERVIEW

1.0 Introduction

This chapter will mainly explain the main purpose of conducting the study. It includes the description of research background, problem statement, research objectives, research questions and the hypotheses.

1.1 Research Background

The introduction and revolution of internet over the past decade has led to many changes in the environment such as lifestyle, demographics or even method of seeking information. According to Ratchford, Talukdar and Lee (2007), the internet has created a new avenue for customers to search and gain access to information on durable or non-durable goods, technological gadgets, automobiles and more virtually. They also stated the importance for marketers and companies to understand how the internet affects the other sources of information. The popularity of internet has led to the introduction of World Wide Web (WWW) browser that transforms plain text into a more user-friendly graphical environment that offers a multimedia of texts, pictures and sounds (Leelayouthayotin, 2004).

Yuan (2006) found that more people are spending time online with the increased availability and usage of internet, thus leading to higher usage of internet advertising. This widely occurs in social networking sites where advertisements are located at the sides of the webpage. Ramsey (2004) also found that there was an increase in online advertising cost in 2003 which were mainly found in search engines such as Yahoo, MSN or Bing. Dertouzos (1997) found that the internet has led to the creation of "digital information highway" and "information marketplace" as it provides more economic motivations than the traditional media. Golan (2010) stated that in 1997, internet had a bursting popularity of buying and selling goods or services online and by 2007, the use of internet has been incorporated into the customer's daily life especially the youths.

According to Boyd and Ellison (2008), social network is defined as "web-based services that allow individuals to (1) construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, (2) articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection with and (3) view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within a system". Over the past few years, many researchers have conducted studies on social networks to identify outcomes, advantages and disadvantages on its use be it in the government or public sector. Mislove, Marcon, Gummadi, Druschel and Bhattacharjee (2007) found that there are still many areas to look into the social network due to its distributed nature. Nevertheless, one of the most significant advantages it brings to marketers is the higher frequency and reach to the youth.

According to Lipsman, Mudd, Rich and Bruich (2012), the emergence of social networks have led to the changes in youth's lifestyle into digital living and the way youth obtain and share marketing information. They also stated some of the reasons why youth likes the social network marketing concept is due to the new and unique way of sharing information with friends by "liking" a brand, taking pictures and upload it while freely giving comments on the experience of the products used. It acts as another form to assist marketers in spreading marketing information to the target customers as the youths mostly share these information amongst themselves.

In 2002, Friendster was launched to allow "friends-of-friends" to build romantic relationships instead of with strangers and used to have 8.2 million users worldwide (Cohen, 2003). Boyd et al. (2008) stated that MySpace was introduced in 2003 and were widely used by bands to stay in touch with their fans while the users were mainly teenagers. According to Ellison, Steinfield and Lampe (2007), Facebook was founded by Mark Zuckerberg in 2004 that has 500 million users worldwide. They also found that, 74% of the users were youths aged from 18 to 24 years old. Twitter has been on a debating issue on whether it is a social network or a microblogging site. In addition, Twitter was introduced in 2006 by Jack Dorsey that allows users to write text-post of up to 140 characters and in 2011 had over 300 million users globally (Gladwell, 2002).

Today, the youth are obtaining more allowance than in the past which also means that they have higher purchasing power in the marketplace. This is one of the reasons why marketers and researchers have been conducting countless studies on the youth's changing behaviour in the marketplace in order to gain their loyalty to a brand. Youth are consumers that are aged between 15 to 24 years old (Lewis and Bingham, 1991; Rugimbana, 2007). Based on the Population Distribution and Basic Demographic Characteristics 2010 collected by Population and Housing Census of Malaysia, there is approximately 5.115 million youths in Malaysia. There are almost 80% of the Malaysian youth that surf the internet to search for information (USC ASCDF, 2008). Furthermore, many of these youths use the internet daily at an average of about 10 hours a week as of 2007 (Soh, Chew and Ridhwan, 2007).

1.2   Problem Statement

Today, social networks are widely used around the world, be it for business or entertainment purpose. Boyd et al. (2008) stated that youth likes social networks due to the variety of technical features that are uncomplicated to use as it incorporates the fun element into it. Thus, this is why marketers should use the social network in order to attract the youth target market as they are the generation that prefers technologies that are convenient and fun. Miller, Fabian and Lin (2009) noted that social networks are important as it facilitates an "asynchronous, immediate, interactive, low cost communication" between customers and the marketer. According to Palmer and Lewis (2009), many businesses today are adopting the social network marketing as many youth prefer it over the traditional tools by providing them with marketing information that is desired. Furthermore, Wilson (2008) stated that current studies on social networks are significant as it is one of the fastest methods to transfer and obtain information.

The purpose of this study is to explain the reasons why the Malaysian youths prefer the marketing to be conducted via social network based on the technology acceptance model (TAM). North (2010) found that 59 American professionals find social networks to be justifiable to use while at work. According to Leidner, Koch and Gonzalez (2010), investment or insurance companies in Texas uses social network to hire employees and found it very useful. Selamat, Jaffar and Ong (2009) conducted a study to test the acceptance of IT usage by bankers in Klang Valley, Malaysia. Another study was conducted in Malaysia by applying TAM on the acceptance of electronic medical record by hospitals (Mohd and Syed Mohamad, 2005).

Currently, there is no study in Malaysia regarding youth's acceptance on the use of social network to obtain the marketing information as most of it are done on employees. Thus, it is significant to conduct this study to identify reasons why the methods to obtaining marketing information have shifted from the traditional tools to social networks.

1.3   Research Objectives

The specific objectives of the study are to:

1. To determine the Malaysian youth's level of online exposure
2. To determine the extent Malaysian youth prefer social network over traditional media
3. To determine reasons why Malaysian youth prefer to obtain information via social network
4. To determine the social network sites that Malaysian youths mostly frequent for marketing information

1.4   Research Questions

The study conducted will attempt to answer these questions:

1. How Malaysian youth's online behaviour has led to the change in obtaining information?
2. Why Malaysian youth prefer marketing to be conducted online rather than traditional tools?
3. What are the social networks the Malaysian youths mostly frequent for marketing information?

1.5   Hypotheses of the Study

H_1 : *Perceived Ease of Use has a positive and significant effect on Perceived Usefulness*

H_2 : *Perceived Usefulness has a positive and significant effect on the preference towards the use of social network marketing*

H_3 : *Perceived Ease of Use has a positive and significant effect on the preference towards the use of social network marketing*

H_4 : *There is a positive relationship between Perceived Ease of Use, Perceived Usefulness and preference towards the use of social network marketing*

1.6   Significance of the Study

This research is carried out to provide higher awareness to marketers on the importance of the social network marketing concept. With the significant shift in today's environment into a virtual or digital lifestyle, marketers need to know how to adapt to these changes in order for the business to have continuous sales and profit. The research will specifically look into the youth market segment's preferences towards the use of social networks in obtaining marketing information. E-commerce transactions are not something new especially among the youth that makes most of their purchases online.

The public and government sector would both benefit from this research in order to better understand the purchase decision making behaviour of youths in Malaysia. Over the past decades, there has not been a study conducted on this topic that would allow Malaysian marketers to look into new avenues in reaching the youth segment. As stated, the youth segment is also one of the most significant target markets to companies in order to earn above average returns. At the end of this research, we hope to find many advantages for marketers and also youth customers that can be achieved with the use of social network marketing.

1.7   Chapter Layout

The dissertation's outline will be based on the following:

Chapter 2

This chapter critically reviews the social network literature of past researchers by identifying issues and reasons of why it is significant to conduct this study. It will act as a foundation to the development of the conceptual framework along with the hypotheses.

Chapter 3

This chapter describes the various methods used to gather secondary data throughout the study. It includes what instruments and theories were used to collect and analyse the data.

Chapter 4

This chapter presents the results of the analysis conducted to explain how the hypotheses are accepted and prove the significance of the study. It is basically a conclusion of the sample in examining the variable's relationship.

Chapter 5

This chapter would be discussing on the conclusion, limitations and recommendations of the study according to the data collected and analysed.

1.8   Conclusion

With the rapid development of internet, social networks have been widely used on computers and mobile devices where youths can constantly stay updated about their surroundings. Social networks have become a medium for youths to obtain information and thus marketers are looking into conducting its activities via social networks in order to attract a larger market share. In order to have a thorough understanding why youths prefer the use of social networks instead of the traditional tools in obtaining marketing information, the study would identify what influences their preferences.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter critically reviews the social network literature of past researchers by identifying issues and reasons of why it is significant to conduct this study. It will act as a foundation to the development of the conceptual framework along with the hypotheses.

2.1 Review of the Literature

2.1.1 Internet

According to Maddox and Gong (2005), the market penetration rate of internet in Asia has increased significantly. In the twenty first century, internet is a well-known term among the society and is believed that many people today know what internet is and how it plays an important role in their daily life. According to Eager (1994), the internet consists of over two and a half million host computers and has a rapid rate of over two million new users each month.

Hasslinger, Hodzic and Opazo (2007) stated internet acts as a mass medium offering consumers purchasing characteristics that other medium do not. According to Leelayouthayotin (2004), the internet provides an opportunity for companies to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of marketing activities, conduct researches, build long-term relationships, and offer a channel to conduct promotional activities for customers. Overall, the internet provides a variety of information which leads to the increasing number of customers surfing the internet which can be used for work or entertainment purposes.

According to Warrington, Abgrab and Caldwell (2000); Waldo (2000), the internet has an advantage transmitting information via a two-way communication flow that is quick and inexpensive as compared to other traditional media that only relies on one-way communication. Furthermore, internet users incur lesser time to obtain information than the traditional media. According to Tewksbury (2003), the internet allows users to have more control over the types of information they want to select as compared to the traditional media.

According to Vesterby and Chabert (2001), the internet makes it easier for marketers to place information about their products and services to reach potential and existing customers. Thus, the convenience of internet has increased the number of usage among the society especially the youths. Brown (1990) found that convenience is defined as consumer's time and effort to purchase the products and services rather than the characteristic or attribute of the products. Consequently, access to the internet allows customers to save time and cost to gain more information regarding the potential products that will be purchase.

2.1.2 Social Network

Social networks are defined as websites that allow people to create a system of connections with other individuals (Kay, 2007). According to Hocking (2009), social networks focus on building communities online sharing interests and activities. Social networks are web-based and have a variety of ways to interact, such as e-mail and instant messaging. Social network has revolutionized communication and information sharing with one another and has now become part of people's daily life. With the introduction of Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, MySpace, etc social networks have become a significant tools for marketers to conduct businesses as many consumers around the world use social networks, says Thomas Crampton, Asia Pacific Director of 360 Digital Influence, an internet marketing communications arm of Ogilvy Public Relations (Tan, 2010).

A large percentage of the social network users consist of younger generations such as teenagers, high school and college students, and young professionals in their 20s. Not forgetting the remainders are those older that have the same reason of using social networks for the same reasons (Anderson, 2008). This has showed that more and more people are using social networks, especially the youth. Therefore, many marketers are looking into the use of social networking sites by using it as a new method of communication. Social networks allow marketers to have higher reach and frequency to the youth market segment who are spending less time using traditional medias and more time online. Other than that, "Social media essentially offers mortgage companies the opportunity to communicate directly with consumers and actually influence the sale," said Thomas Harpointner, chief executive of AIS Media (Finkelstein, 2010). Thus, marketers should adopt the social network to conduct the marketing activities to attract the youth segment.

According to Matorin (2007), advertising expenses have reached about $150 billion, with television accounting for approximately 40% of the total spending while the remainder goes to advertisements done online due to the evolution of websites. He also found that the younger generations today not only surf the social networks via computers but also through smartphones where marketers recognize the peer-to-peer information sharing. This leads to higher importance for marketers to consider the use of social networks in providing marketing information.

2.2 Review of Relevant Theoretical Models

2.2.1 Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)

The use of social networks and internet is related to the theory of technology acceptance model (TAM). According to Yi, Jackson, Park and Probst (2006), TAM is the most widely accepted and applied theory that explains the adoption of a technology or a system. Davis (1989) is researcher who conceptualized the Technology Acceptance Model that is used to test the level of acceptance of technology at workplaces. The model is derived from the Theory of Reasoned Action (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975) that explains how an individual's belief and attitude towards behavior influences their intention to adopt a something as shown in Figure 2.2.1. Timothy (2008) found that the TAM (Davis, 1989; Davis and Venkatesh, 1996) was developed to specifically predict who will most likely accept the usage of a new technology in the workplace. In today's modern century, technological systems or gadgets are highly critical in companies or even households. In order to achieve the main purpose of this study, we would be looking at how the youth's beliefs will influence their preferences towards the adoption of social network marketing.

Figure 2.2.1: Technology Acceptance Model
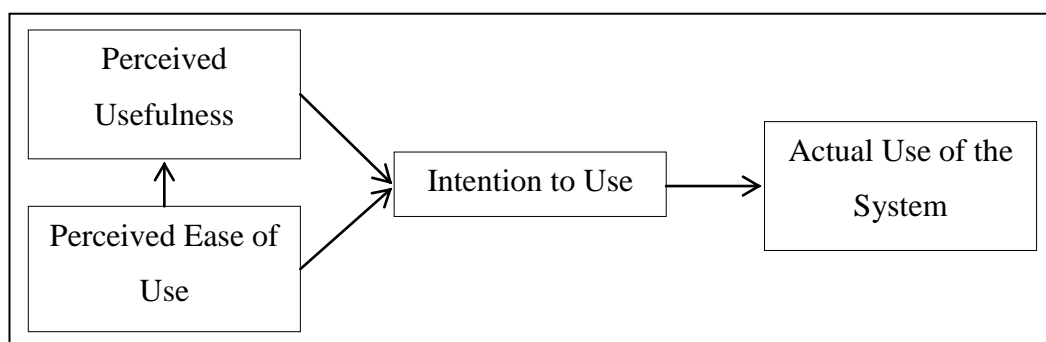
Source: Adapted from Venkatesh and Davis (1996)

By testing the acceptance level, the top management would know the success rate of implementing and using the system in the company that will prevent a reduction in employee morale. The same goes for this study where companies need to know the customer's acceptance level on the use of social network in seeking marketing information. We want to be able to identify the success rate of companies relying more on social networks in reaching out to the youths when carrying out marketing promotional activities. According to Malhotra (1999), TAM has provided a significant theoretical contribution towards the understanding and explanation of information system usage and the acceptance behaviors.

Davis, Bagozzi and Warshaw (1992) noted that individuals would only accept a technology when there are intrinsic or extrinsic motivations. Deci (1975) stated that an intrinsic motivation is where an individual would only take action if it is enjoyable and interesting. While Davis et al. (1992) stated that the extrinsic motivation exists if the individual will be able to achieve their valued outcomes. This applies to the study whereby youths would use social networks if they are able to enjoy and obtain valuable benefits. This would influence their preferences towards the adoption of social network marketing and ultimately result in higher sales for companies as customers feel closer and easier to obtain product or service information.

There are two variables under the TAM which are perceived ease of use (PEU) and perceived usefulness (PU). According to Davis, Bagozzi and Warshaw (1989), the roles of perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness have been validated as critical determinants in TAM. There have been countless studies done on TAM to test acceptance level towards the use of technology. Park (2010) has used this model to test on the acceptance of electronic systems in South Korea hospitals. He found the result of the study indicated that TAM factors such as ease of use, usefulness, security, reliability and perceived benefits influenced the hospitals' decision to adopt the technology.

2.2.2 Perceived Usefulness (PU)

Davis et al. (1989) found that perceived usefulness is defined as "the extent to which using a particular system will help them to perform well". Yang and Yoo (2004) also found that perceived usefulness is related to the user's belief on the system's ability to improve performance. The use of social network marketing is to ensure that the youths are able to gain value from obtaining marketing information from such medium. In a workplace for instance, top management constantly adopt new systems that will only increase employee's productivity and performance. Venkatesh, Morris, and Ackerman (2000) provide evidence that the most important determinant of an employee's attitude towards the adoption of a new technology is one's perception of usefulness about the technology (perceived usefulness), typically explaining 30% to 35% of the variance observed in behavioral intent.

According to Davis (1993), perceived usefulness is defined that individual that using the technology will enhance or improve their performance. By marketing using social networking, users can obtain the information they want easily and in a complete form. In the other way, Mathwick, Rigdonn and Malhotra (2001) defined perceived usefulness as the extent to which a person deems a particular system to boost his or her job performance. Social networking can provide much information to the consumer and thus can also speed up their time in searching the information so that they will not waste much of their time searching information from the web.

Munoz (2008) stated one of the reasons individual uses innovation is because they believe it will help achieve their goals. The innovation refers to the use of social networks in our context. Customers will continuously use the social network either to obtain the products and services information or to purchase online if the marketing via social network allows them to gain as much knowledge as possible without having to physically go to the store.

Brudel and Preisendorfer (1998) suggest that large personal social network allows businesses to be more successful by providing its customers access to more reliable and exclusive information. By having access to marketing via social networks, marketers are able to reach out to more customers. Customers are able to retrieve the needed product information from social networks virtually which provides them with convenience and thus increasing their preferences on the intention to purchase online. According to Li and Bernhoff (2008), they argued that changes in online behavior have created a social trend in which people are using technologies to get the things they need from peers by "sharing" it in social networking sites, rather than from traditional avenues such as corporations.

2.2.3 Perceived Ease of Use (PEU)

Yang et al. (2004) found that perceived ease of use is defined as the degree of difficulty or ease to learn on how to use and then incorporate a new technology into daily routines. Based on our studies, it is significant for companies to conduct online marketing to provide easy access for customers. When carrying out marketing activities to reach and attract the youth market segment, it is significant to use a medium that they all are able to relate to and is easy to gain access to. If the marketing conducted is complex and lack understandability, youths then would seek other avenues in obtaining such information.

According to Gbadeyan (2010), social networking sites are very simple as it does not require graphical or web design knowledge to create a blog, post a forum, add facts to friend's profile, check out photos or share a YouTube video. Without wasting much time, customers can easily obtain relevant information from social networks. In addition, businesses can also benefit from this as to reducing the cost of advertising especially to the youth market.

Zaidieh (2012) noted that social networking sites have become the main means of communication between the students and teachers where it involves informal learning, support for collaboration, feedback on thoughts and collaboration independent of space and time as they are constantly interacting with one another. The same applies in our study where social networks act as a medium between marketers and customers to interact flexibly and clearly. According to Cheong (2002), social networks are easy and quick in terms of access, review, update, and edit information anytime and anywhere. Thus, social network tools can be easily learned by everyone with its user-friendliness features.

2.2.4 Perceived Ease of Use – Perceived Usefulness Relationship

According to Davis et al. (1992), there is a direct relationship between perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness in influencing an individual's preference towards adopting a system. However, many researchers base their study back to the foundation of TAM which is the Theory of Reasoned Action and thus included other variables such as attitude and behavioral intent towards accepting a system. Nevertheless, we are focusing on Davis' (1989) TAM in identifying the youth's preference towards social network marketing. Consequently, Agarwal and Prasad (1999); Liu and Wei (2003); Venkatesh (2000) are some of the researchers that provided empirical evidence that there is significant positive relationship.

2.2.5 Perceived Usefulness – Preference towards Social Network Marketing Relationship

In the TAM, the perceived usefulness and intention to use a system is directly related. In accordance to the study, the intention to use is comparable to the preference on the use. According to Davis et al. (1989), the Theory of Reasoned Action is the foundation in explaining the relationship between these two variables. Munoz (2008) stated that individuals would prefer using a technology if it allows them to achieve their goal. As for our study, youths would prefer the use of social networks if they are able to gain valuable marketing information that is related to their current interest. If the youth are able to satisfy their beliefs and find it useful, they would accept and continue on the use of social network marketing.

There have been many studies conducted to prove that there is a positive relationship between perceived usefulness and intention to adopt the system (preference for our study). Agarwal and Karahanna (2000) proved the significant relationship between the two variables as once the individual is able to find advantages from using the system, it is guaranteed that they will continue to use it in future. Many other researchers have provided theoretical descriptions, along with empirical evidence (Davis et al., 1989; Bhattacherjee and Premkumar, 2004; Taylor and Todd, 1995; Shamdasani, Mukherjee and Malhotra, 2008).

2.2.6 Perceived Ease of Use – Preference towards Social Network Marketing Relationship

According to Venkatesh and Morris (2000), perceived ease of use influences an individual's preference towards a system when there are other external variables involved. Davis (1989) however stated that it involves an indirect relationship. Furthermore, Karahanna and Straub (1999) have conducted a study and confirmed the indirect relationship. Ramayah (2006) found that there is a positive impact towards the preference to use a system.

According to Palmer and Lewis (2009), a social network has information readily available for their users. This shows that the youth need not exert much effort in order to find the marketing information needed about a product or service, thus resulting in the preference towards social network marketing. Chung (2005) stated that as long as it is easy for the youths to use the technology, there will be stronger preference or intention to adopt the system.

2.3 Conceptual Framework

According Davis et al. (1989) "it is concluded that a person's attitude has very little influence on technology acceptance." Thus, this study removed the attitude attribute out of the TAM. Davis et al. (1996) also found that through their main findings, the variables perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness have a direct effect on the intention to use; therefore removing the attitude construct from the model as shown in Figure 2.2.1.

Figure 2.3.1: Conceptual Framework
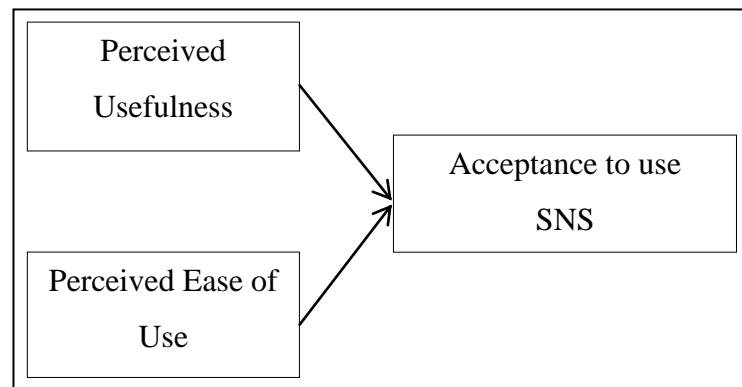
Source: Shittu, Kamal, Nik Suriyani and Tunku (2013)

Shittu et al. (2013) introduced the Acceptance of Social Network model as shown in Figure 2.3.1 to indentify the factors to would influence students in accepting the use of social networks. Therefore, this model will be adapted to this study where the perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use influences individual's preference towards the use of social network marketing.

Thus, this study will be combining the TAM and Acceptance of Social Network model to identify the preferences towards the use of social network marketing. Figure 2.4.1 shows the research framework developed according to the literature reviewed. With TAM as the foundation of the literature, we will be looking into the relationship by testing the variables such as online experience, motivation to purchase and online exposure.

Figure 2.4.1: Research Framework
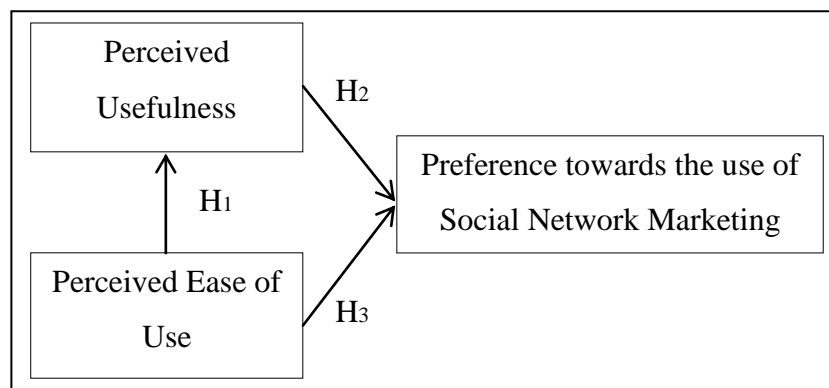
Source: Developed for the research

2.4   Hypotheses Development

Based on the literature reviewed, we have developed the following hypotheses:

H_1 : *Perceived Ease of Use has a positive and significant effect on Perceived Usefulness*

H_2 : *Perceived Usefulness has a positive and significant effect on the preference towards the use of social network marketing*

H_3 : *Perceived Ease of Use has a positive and significant effect on the preference towards the use of social network marketing*

H_4 : *There is a positive relationship between Perceived Ease of Use, Perceived Usefulness and preference towards the use of social network marketing*

2.5   Conclusion

This chapter critically reviewed the literature of the internet, social network and TAM that will be relevant to our study. It explained the importance of internet and social network today for youths and what past researchers have found and recorded to prove the significance. The theoretical model is the most significant as TAM was used to come up with a conceptual framework that would be suited for this study which is the youth's preference towards social network marketing. From the conceptual framework, 3 hypotheses were derived which tested the relationships of each variable that will ultimately answer the research questions and objectives. In order to do so, the study would determine how and what are the types of data that will be collected in order to make inferences of the hypotheses. Thus, leading to chapter 3 to develop the data collection.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter describes the various methods used to gather secondary data throughout the study. It includes what instruments and theories were used to collect and analyse the data.

3.1 Research Design

According to Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2009), research design is a general plan of how researchers will go about answering the research questions comprised of the objectives and how one plan to collect relevant data to answer it. For this study, quantitative research was conducted using the mono-method which involves one data collection and data analysis method each. Zikmund (2003) stated that a quantitative research is a method used to calculate the frequency or response occurrences. The main reason for conducting this study is to identify how high is the level of youth's preferences towards social network marketing with the increased time they spend online surfing the internet.

Thus, the purpose of this research is to conduct a descriptive study to examine how true the research questions asked are regarding youth's preferences. Robson (2002) noted that a descriptive study describes a population's characteristics by testing on several relevant variables. The research would be testing on several variables as well to determine if the youth's do prefer social network marketing given its recent popularity hike. The analysis conducted will be used to test on the hypothesis developed.

Lastly, the time horizon involved in this study is the cross-sectional study where data were collected at a particular time period (Saunders et al., 2009). It is evident as the questionnaires were distributed to targeted respondents within a week's time for each location.

3.2   Data Collection Method

In order to carry out this study, primary and secondary data was used to support past researches and current findings. The data collected helped identified the Malaysian youth's preferences towards social network marketing.

3.2.1 Primary Data

Saunders et al. (2003) defined primary data as being collected particularly for the research being carried out at the moment. The reason for selecting this data collection method is because there are no other researchers that have collected data pertaining to Malaysian youths. As explained in the problem statement, many researchers have only explained preferences and acceptance levels of the workforce but not on youths. Thus, questionnaire method was chosen to collect new data that would be relevant for this study. deVaus (2002) explained that a questionnaire is method used by asking each individual relevant to the study at hand, to respond to the same set of questions in a predetermined manner. He also added that the questionnaire can be answered either by hand or through interview.

We were able to save time as we referred to past researcher's distributed questionnaires similar to this study and adapted it to suit the study. Furthermore, it was an inexpensive method to collect data as lacked funds for higher level data collection methods.

3.2.2 Secondary Data

Secondary data are data that has been compiled and documented by another individual prior to the current needs of the researcher (Zikmund, 2003). Saunders et al. (2003) also stated that there are 3 types of secondary data to be collected, which are documentary, multiple source and survey. From the following, documentary secondary data was chosen by searching through written materials such as textbooks, journals, articles, theses and dissertations, etc that have been documented by past researchers. It is significant to use this method to support this study on TAM and social network marketing based on prior studies to prove that there is significance in the hypotheses.

The main benefit from looking through secondary data is that there are databases available to seek journals for free, thus is also inexpensive method. The only disadvantage is that unrelated journals had to be screened through which caused a waste of significant time.

3.3   Sampling Design

3.3.1 Target Population

Saunders et al. (2003) defined population of being consisted of a complete set of cases. A target population on the other hand is a complete set of cases with specific characteristics relevant to the study being conducted (Zikmund, 2003).

For this study, the target population would be youths aging from 15 to 24 years old in Malaysia. According to the Population and Housing Census of Malaysia 2010, there are about 5.115 million youths in Malaysia.

3.3.2 Sampling Frame and Sampling Location

The questionnaires were distributed to final year students from private universities in the Klang Valley. The private universities chosen to distribute the questionnaires to were Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman, Taylor's University, Sunway University and INTI International University.

3.3.3 Sampling Elements

The samples chosen were final year students who were pursuing any bachelor courses in the respective private universities. These students would either be in their Year 3 or Year 4, depending on the type of courses pursued.

3.3.4 Sampling Technique

According to Zikmund (2003), there are 2 types of sampling techniques which are probability and non-probability sampling. In order to collect the appropriate data, probability sampling was chosen as the samples selected from the population have high possibility of being chosen. Zikmund (2003) defined probability sampling where every member in the sample has a non-zero possibility of being selected. Saunders et al. (2003) stated probability sampling is commonly associated with questionnaires because one needs to make inferences from the sample about the population in order to answer the research questions and objectives. Furthermore, Henry (1990) explained that probability sampling is the best method to represent the population as long as there are more than 50 members.

The first sampling technique would be the cluster sampling where the population is divided into identifiable groups prior to sampling (Henry, 1990). For the purpose of this study, the sample was clustered according to areas in Malaysia. As stated in the sampling frame, the final year students selected would be from the Klang Valley. Next, simple random sampling was chosen due to insufficient fund and time to distribute the questionnaires to all the final year students in each private university. According to Tucker and Lepkowski (2008), random sampling is where a researcher selects the sample from the population using a random number table or a computer-generated version. 50 final year students were randomly selected from each private university to maintain the equality.

3.3.5 Sampling Size

Based on the requirements of this Final Year Project, the research needed at least 100 respondents if the quantitative research is chosen. Thus, 200 respondents were selected to ensure that able to achieve more favourable results when analyzing the data.

3.4   Research Instrument

A self-administered questionnaire was developed, which was distributed through delivery and collected within a day's time from the respondents. (Refer to Appendix A) It was chosen due to the time and cost constraint to collect relevant data for this study. Once obtained the approval from the supervisor to distribute the questionnaires, a pilot testing was conducted on 40 respondents. Followed by another 200 sets of questionnaires distributed to the 4 private universities.

3.5   Constructs Measurement

Dancey and Reidy (2008) stated that there are 4 types of data to be measured for a quantitative research which are nominal, ordinal, interval and ratio data. For this study, nominal, ordinal and ratio data were collected. Morris (2003) explained that nominal data are data that can be counted based on the number of occurrences in each category of a variable. Examples of nominal data collected include gender, occupation, types of social networks, etc. Blumberg, Cooper and Schindler (2008) explained that ordinal data are to position each case based on numerical measures by using ratings or scales. Here, the 5 point likert scale was used to determine the relationship between variables. Ratio data can be calculated based on the relative difference between any 2 data values (Saunders et al., 2003). Example of ratio data collected are age, time spent online, etc.

The constructs used in this study were adapted from previous studies (Refer to Appendix B). All the constructs were measured using the 5 point likert scale.

3.6   Data Analysis

3.6.1 Descriptive Analysis

For all of the demographic sample's information, it was compiled into tables and graphs to thoroughly explain each of the characteristics. The tables include information such as the demographic characteristics, frequency and the percentage of respondents provides their answers respectively. As for the central tendencies measurement, SPSS software was used to generate a table for the mode, mean and median in order to answer the research objectives and research questions.

3.6.2 Scale Measurement

Reliability tests conducted using SPSS in order to test the validity, reliability and consistency of our data. The reliability tests were run on the items used to measure the acceptance of the hypotheses and also for the whole questionnaire as needed to know how reliable the questionnaire would be for the study.

3.6.3 Inferential Analysis

Similarly, the research used the SPSS for the inferential analyses of the hypotheses. For H_1, H_2 and H_3, Pearson Correlation was used to identify the strength of the variables relationship to one another. Saunders et al. (2009) defined Pearson Correlation as "a statistical test to assess the strength of the relationship between two numerical data variables." Thus, this would be the best instrument to test positive and significant relationship between Perceived Usefulness (PU), Perceived Ease of Use (PEU) and preference towards the use of social network marketing (PREF).

Subsequently, multiple regression analysis was used on H_4 to determine if the independent variables have any effect on the dependent variables. According Norusis (2007) defined multiple regression as an equation that uses two or more independent variables to assess the strength of relationship with the dependent variable.

3.7　Conclusion

This chapter has explained on the specific plans and procedures for the data collection. The methods and techniques chosen are all relevant to the study. The next step is to document the collected and analyzed data into graphs, examine the relationships of selected variables and determine if the hypotheses is accepted or not.

CHAPTER 4: DATA ANALYSIS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the results of the analysis conducted to explain how the hypotheses are accepted and prove the significance of the study. It is basically a conclusion of the sample in examining the variable's relationship.

4.1 Descriptive Analysis

4.1.1 Respondent Demographic Profile

Table 4.1.1: Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	88	44.0
Female	112	56.0
TOTAL	200	100.0

Figure 4.1.1: Gender

Based on Table 4.1.1 and Figure 4.1.1, the results show that 88 or 44% of the respondents were male while another 112 or 56% were female respondents.

Table 4.1.2: Race

Race	Frequency	Percentage
Malay	20	10.0
Indian	11	5.5
Chinese	166	83.0
Others	3	1.5
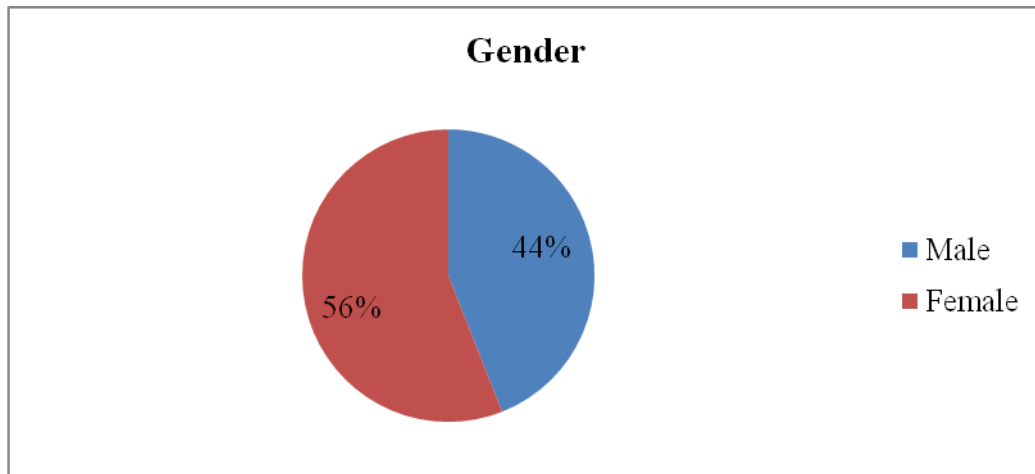
Figure 4.1.2: Race
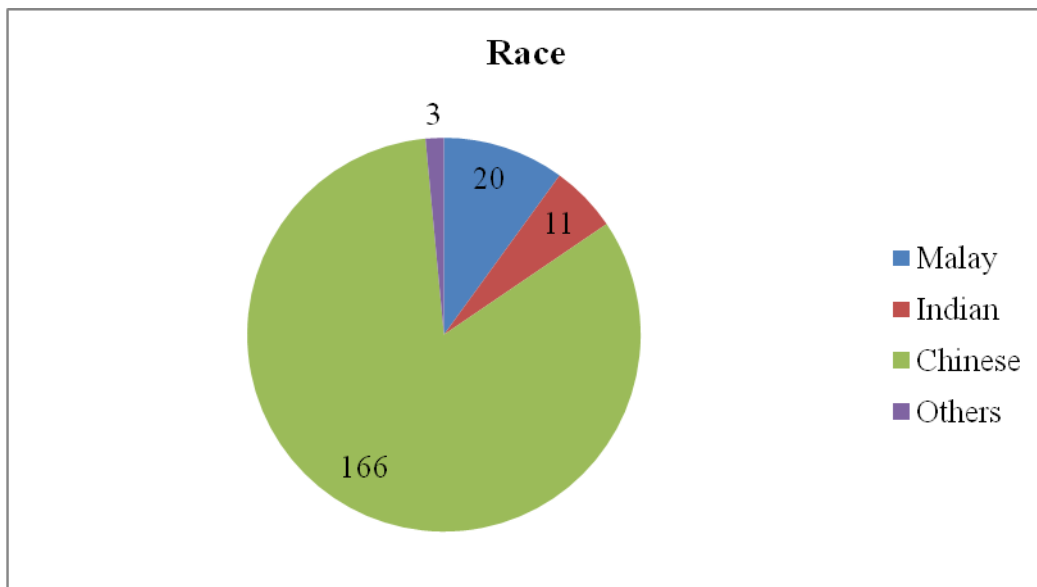
Source: Developed for the research

Based on Table 4.1.2 and Figure 4.1.2, the results show that 10% of the respondents are Malay, 5.5% were Indian, 83% were Chinese and 1.5% consist of other races.

Table 4.1.3: Employment Status

Employment Status	Frequency	Percentage
Student	154	77.0
Employed	38	19.0
Unemployed	8	4.0

Figure 4.1.3: Employment Status
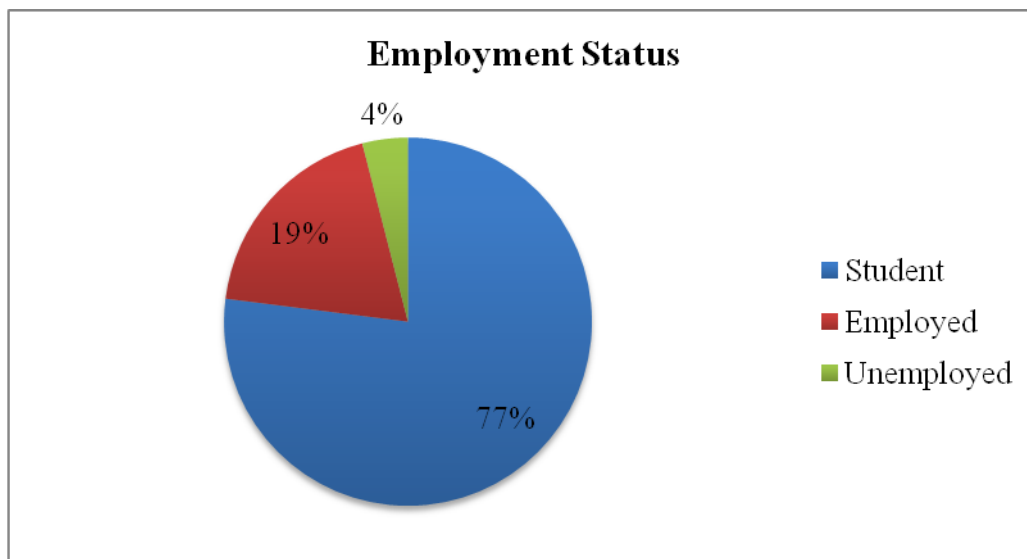
Source: Developed for the research

According to the Table 4.1.3 and Figure 4.1.3 above, out of the 200 respondents, 77% were students, 19% were employed while 8% were unemployed.

Table 4.1.4: Monthly Income

Monthly Income	Frequency	Percentage
Below RM100	47	23.5
RM101 - RM400	71	35.5
RM401 - RM700	40	20.0
Above RM700	42	21.0

Figure 4.1.4: Monthly Income
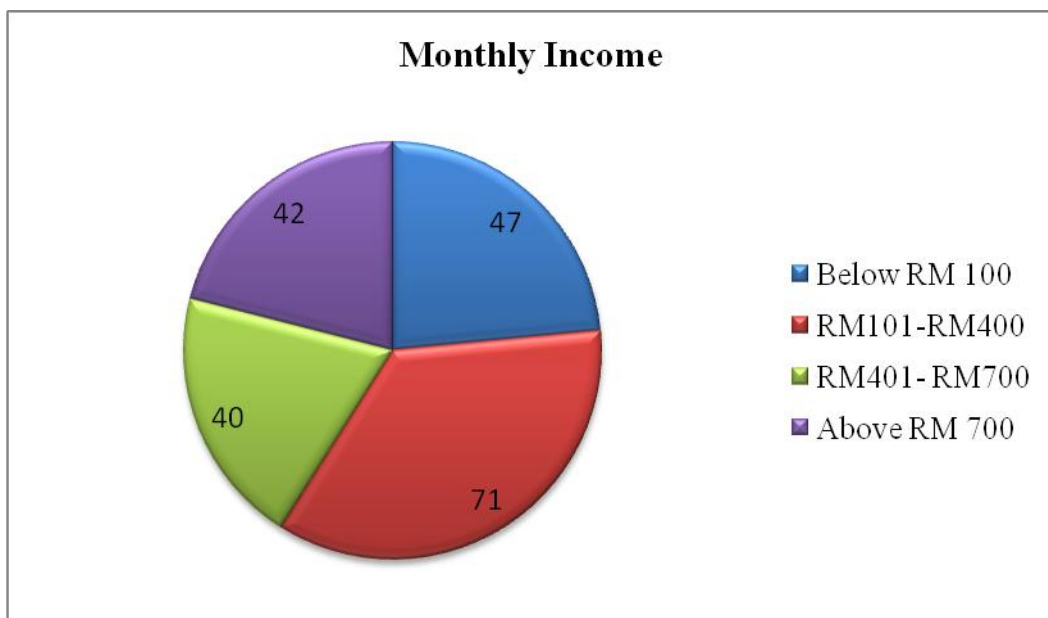
Source: Developed for the research

Table 4.1.4 and Figure 4.1.4 shows that 47 of the respondent's monthly income were below RM100 while 71 respondents had a range of RM101 to RM400. Subsequently, 40 respondents had a monthly income within RM401 to RM700 and another 42 respondents were above RM700.

Table 4.1.5: Prefer Marketing to be conducted via Social Network or Traditional Media

Mode of Marketing Activities	Frequency	Percentage
Social network	140	70
Traditional Media	60	30

Figure 4.1.5: Prefer Marketing to be conducted via Social Network or Traditional Media
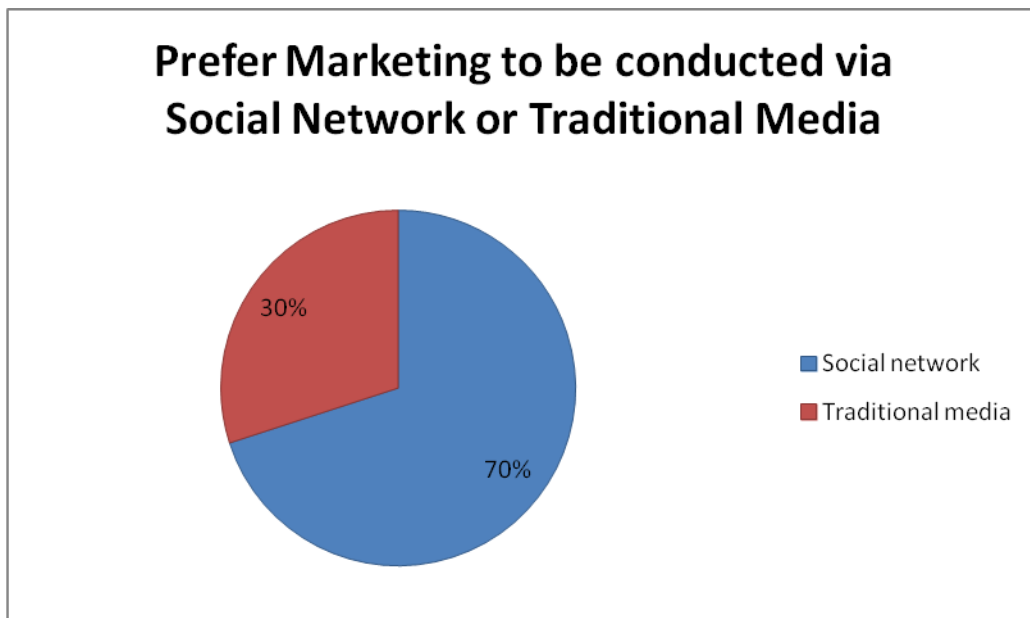
Source: Developed for the research

According to Table 4.1.5 and Figure 4.1.5, 70% of the respondents actually preferred companies to carry out the marketing activities through social networks. Likewise, the other 30% preferred the marketing activities to be carried out still through the traditional tools.

Table 4.1.6: Youth's Ranking of Social Networks

	Facebook	Twitter	MySpace	Weibo	Friendster
Most Favorable	138	33	5	11	7
Favorable	30	66	14	32	7
Neutral	22	44	79	48	32
Least Favorable	5	21	38	64	30
Unfavorable	5	36	64	45	124

Figure 4.1.6: Youth's Ranking of Social Networks
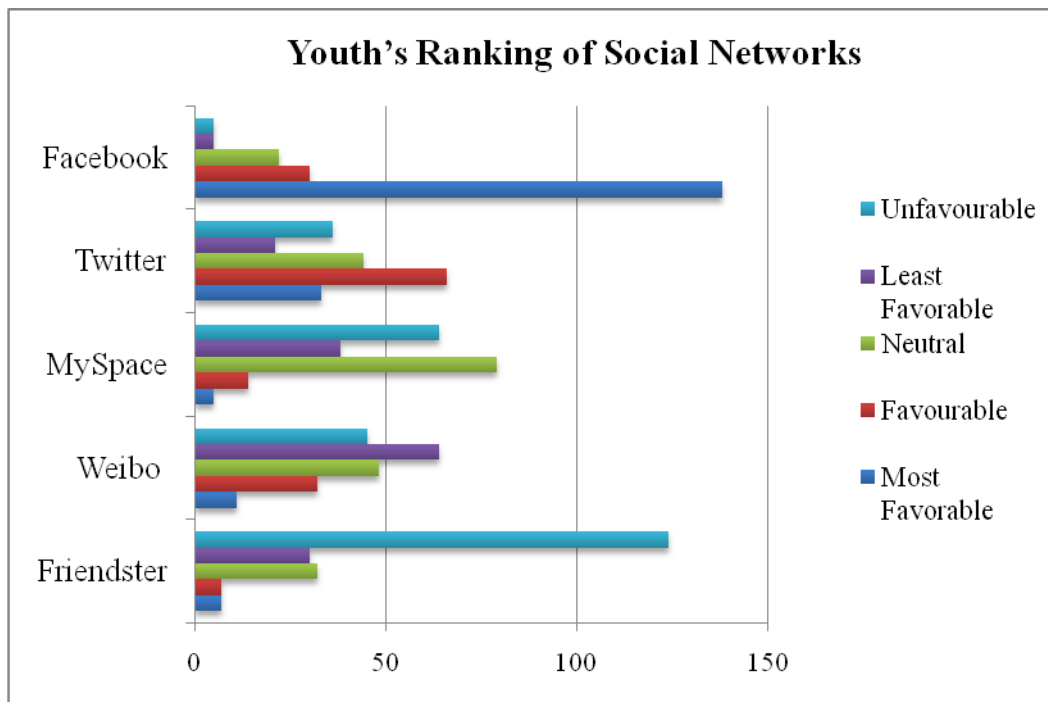
Source: Developed for the research

It can be clearly seen in Figure 4.1.6 that Facebook is the most favorable social network among the youth while Friendster is the most unfavorable social network.

4.1.2 Central Tendencies Measurement of Constructs

Table 4.1.7: How long have Youth used Social Network?

Statistics

N	Valid	200
	Missing	0
Mean		2.66
Std. Error of Mean		.053
Median		3.00
Mode		2
Std. Deviation		.748
Variance		.559
Range		3
Minimum		1
Maximum		4
Sum		531

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1 (Blue)	3	1.5	1.5	1.5
	2 (Red)	93	46.5	46.5	48.0
	3 (Green)	74	37.0	37.0	85.0
	4 (Purple)	30	15.0	15.0	100.0
	Total	200	100.0	100.0	

Figure 4.1.7: How long have Youth used Social Network?
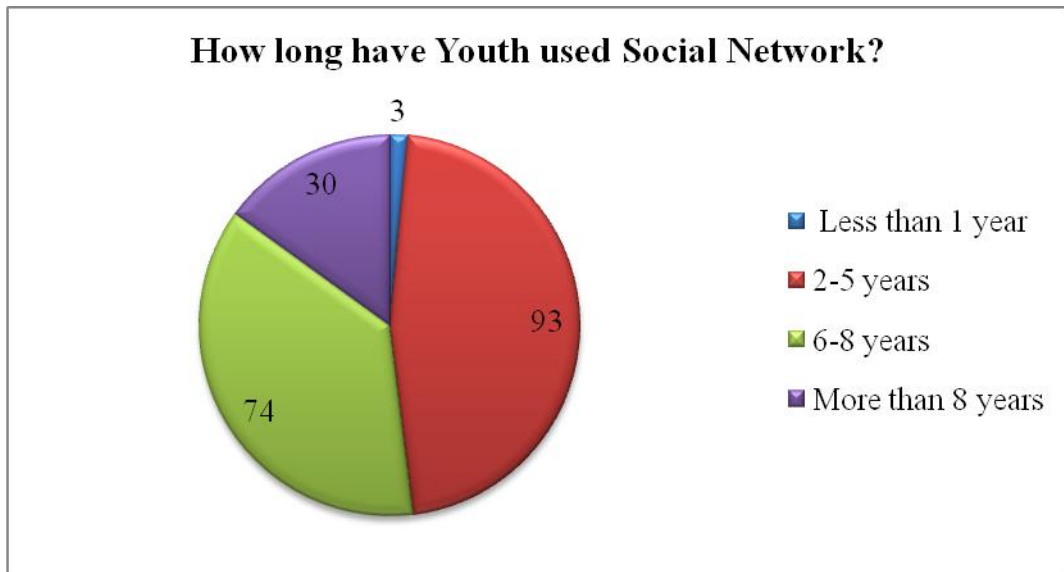
Source: Developed for the research

According to Figure 4.1.7, it shows that only 1.5% of the respondents have been using social networks for less than 1 year, 46.5% has used the social networks within 2 to 5 years while 37% have been using for 6 to 8 years. Subsequently, 15% of the respondents have actually been using social networks for more than 8 years.

Table 4.1.8: How Many Hours a Day Youth Surf the Social Network?

Statistics

N	Valid	200
	Missing	0
Mean		2.64
Std. Error of Mean		.069
Median		2.00
Mode		2
Std. Deviation		.973
Variance		.947
Range		4
Minimum		1
Maximum		5
Sum		527

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1 (Blue)	15	7.5	7.5	7.5
	2 (Red)	87	43.5	43.5	51.0
	3 (Green)	66	33.0	33.0	84.0
	4 (Purple)	20	10.0	10.0	94.0
	5 (Light blue)	12	6.0	6.0	100.0
	Total	200	100.0	100.0	

Figure 4.1.8: How Many Hours a Day Youth Surf the Social Network?

How Many Hours a Day Youth Surf the Social Network?

- Less than 1 hour
- 2-4 hours
- 5-7 hours
- 8-10 hours
- More than 10 hours
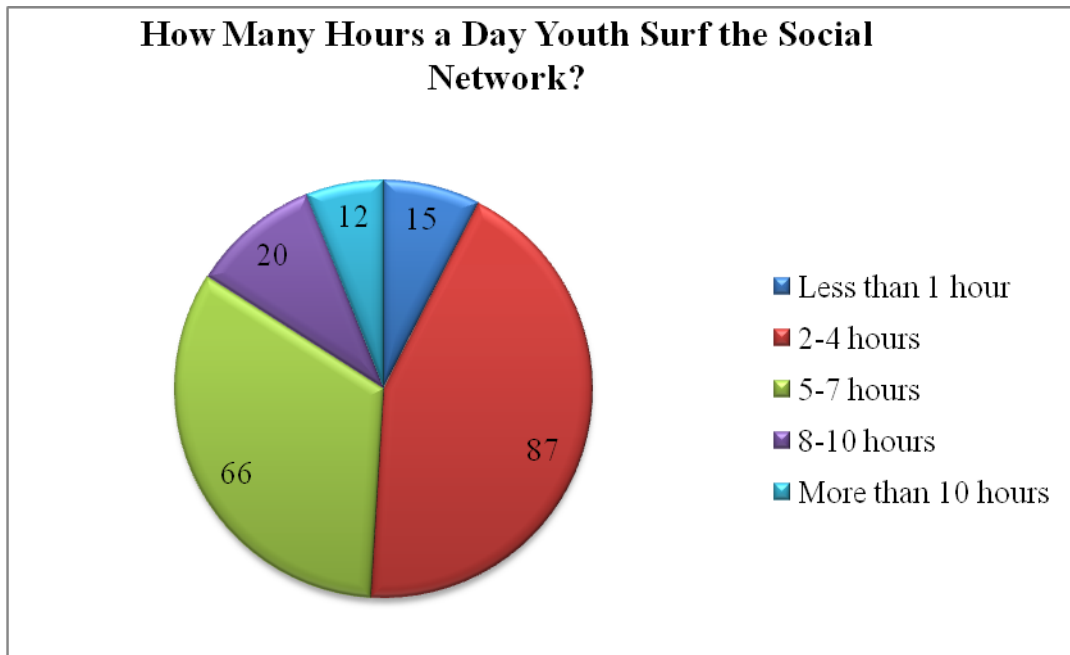
Source: Developed for the research

Figure 4.1.8 shows that 7.5% of the respondents use social networks for less than 1 hour a day while there are 43.5% of the respondents that spend between 2 to 4 hours a day. 33% of respondents spend 5 to7 hours a day and 10% spends between 8 to10 hours a day. The remainder 6% of the respondents spends more than 10 hours a day on surfing the social networking sites.

4.2 Scale Measurement

4.2.1 Reliability Analysis

Reliability analysis is conducted to examine whether the questionnaire prepared is reliable and if it provided accurate results. According to Cooper and Schindler (2006), it is a characteristic of measurement where accuracy, precision and consistency are the main concerns in a study. Consequently, the Cronbach's Alpha reliability analysis is used to test on the internal consistency.

4.2.1.1 Reliability Test for Pilot Testing

For the pilot testing, the questionnaires were distributed to 40 respondents and tested the reliability of the questionnaires. The results are shown as below.

Table 4.2.1: Reliability Analysis on the Pilot Testing

Construct	Cronbach's Alpha	No of item
Perceived Usefulness	0.737	5
Perceived Ease of Use	0.884	6
Preference Towards the use of Social Network Marketing	0.873	4

Form the table above, the Cronbach's Alpha of Perceived Usefulness is 0.737, Perceived Ease of Use is 0.884 while the preference towards the use of social network marketing is 0.873.

4.2.1.2 Reliability Test for the Questionnaire

Table 4.2.2: Reliability Analysis on the Questionnaire

Construct	Cronbach's Alpha	No of item
Perceived Usefulness	0.913	5
Perceived Ease of Use	0.907	6
Preference Towards the use of Social Network Marketing	0.914	4

From the table above, the Cronbach's Alpha value shown are for the 200 respondents we distributed the questionnaires to, which are much higher compared to the pilot testing results before. Here, the Perceived Usefulness is 0.913, Perceived Ease of Use is 0.907 and the preference towards the use of social network marketing is 0.914.

According to Hair, Babin, Money and Samouel (2003), the rule of thumb for Cronbach's Alpha stated that if the value is above 0.9, then it would mean that the questionnaire is excellent (Refer to Appendix C). Thus, the result of the reliability test for our questionnaire would be an excellent and we may continue with the data analysis.

4.3 Inferential Analyses

According to Burns and Bush (2003), based on the respondents' information, hypothesis testing and the estimation of true population is included in the inferential statistics.

4.3.1 Pearson Correlation Analysis

According to Hair, Bush and Ortinau (2006), to measure the degree of linear association between two variables, the Pearson correlation coefficient is used.

4.3.1.1 Relationship between Perceived Usefulness (PU) and Perceived Ease of Use (PEU)

Table 4.3.1: Correlation between PU and PEU

Correlations

		TotalPU	TotalPEU
TotalPU	Pearson Correlation	1	.781**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	200	200
TotalPEU	Pearson Correlation	.781**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	200	200

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Based on the result provided, p=0.00 which is smaller than 0.5 and the availability of Pearson Correlation is 0.781.

4.3.1.2 Relationship between Perceived Usefulness (PU) and Preference towards the use of Social Network Marketing (PREF)

Table 4.3.2: Correlation between PU and PREF

Correlations

		TotalPU	TotalPREF
TotalPU	Pearson Correlation	1	.763**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	200	200
TotalPREF	Pearson Correlation	.763**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	200	200

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Based on the result provided, p=0.00 which is smaller than 0.05 and the availability of Pearson Correlation is 0.763.

4.3.1.3 Relationship between Perceived Ease of Use (PEU) and Preference towards the use of Social Network Marketing (PREF)

Table 4.3.3: Correlation between PEU and PREF

Correlations

		TotalPEU	TotalPREF
TotalPEU	Pearson Correlation	1	.819[**]
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	200	200
TotalPREF	Pearson Correlation	.819[**]	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	200	200

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Based on the result provided, p=0.00 which is smaller than 0.5 and the availability of Pearson Correlation is 0.819.

4.3.2 Multiple Regression Analysis

4.3.2.1 Relationship between PU and PEU

Table 4.3.4: Model summary of Perceived Ease of Use

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.781[a]	.610	.608	2.653

a. Predictors: (Constant), TotalPEU

Table 4.3.5: ANOVA of Perceived Ease of Use

ANOVA[b]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	2177.651	1	2177.651	309.341	.000[a]
	Residual	1393.849	198	7.040		
	Total	3571.500	199			

a. Predictors: (Constant), TotalPEU

b. Dependent Variable: TotalPU

Table 4.3.6: Coefficient of Perceived Ease of Use

Coefficients[a]

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	3.618	.881		4.109	.000
TotalPEU	.696	.040	.781	17.588	.000

a. Dependent Variable: TotalPU

From Table 4.3.4, the model summary table shows that R-square is 0.610 which means that the PEU can be used to explain the PU. Table 4.3.5 on the other hand, indicates that the overall model is significant with the F ratio equalling to 309.341 and p=0.000. Hence, the Multiple Linear Regression Equation is formed as shown below.

PREF = 3.618 + 0.696 (PEU)

Where, PREF = Preference Towards the use of Social Network Marketing

*   PEU   = Perceived Ease of Use*

The R Square value of 0.610 as shown in Table 4.3.4 indicates that the independent variable can be explained by the dependents variable. While the standardized coefficient under Table 4.3.6 represents the percentage that the dependent variable had contributed to the impact on the independent variable, which is 0.781.

4.3.2.2 Relationship between the PU, PEU and PREF

Table 4.3.7: Model summary between Perceived Usefulness and Perceived Ease of Use

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.842[a]	.710	.707	1.898

a. Predictors: (Constant), TotalPEU, TotalPU

Table 4.3.8: ANOVA of Perceived Usefulness and Perceived Ease of Use

ANOVA[b]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1735.690	2	867.845	240.829	.000[a]
	Residual	709.905	197	3.604		
	Total	2445.595	199			

a. Predictors: (Constant), TotalPEU, TotalPU

b. Dependent Variable: TotalPREF

Table 4.3.9: Coefficient between Perceived Usefulness and Perceived Ease of Use

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.215	.656		.327	.744
	TotalPU	.263	.051	.318	5.168	.000
	TotalPEU	.421	.045	.571	9.289	.000

From the table 4.3.7, the model summary table shows that the R-square is 0.710 which means that the PU and PEU can be used to explain the PREF. Table 4.3.8 shows that overall model is significant the F ratio of 240.829 and p=0.000. Hence, the Multiple Linear Regression Equation is formed as below.

PREF = 0.215 + 0.263 (PU) + 0.421 (PEU)

Where, PREF = Preference Towards the use of Social Network Marketing

PU   = Perceived Usefulness

PEU   = Perceived Ease of Use

The R Square value of 0.710 in Table 4.3.7, indicates the extent where the independent variables can be explained by the dependent variables. While the standardized coefficient under Table 4.3.9 represent the percentage where the dependent variables had contributed an impact to the independent variable. As a result, the PEU has a higher impact than the PU towards the PREF where PEU was 0.517 while PU was 0.318.

4.3   Conclusion

This chapter summarized the raw data of 200 respondents collected intro tables and graphs for thorough explanation of the samples. Frequencies, percentages, central measure of tendencies and more were used for the Pearson Correlation and multiple regression. All of these data summarized will be used to determine if the research objectives, research questions and hypotheses is met and accepted respectively.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter would be discussing on the conclusion, limitations and recommendations of the study according to the data collected and analysed.

5.1 Summary of Statistical Analyses

5.1.1 Descriptive Analysis

5.1.1.1 Respondent's Demographic Profile

From the analysis of the demographic profile, 44% of the respondents were male while 56% of the respondents were female. This shows that the females contributed more towards our study as compared to the males. Out of the 200 respondents, 20 of them were Malay, 11 were Indian, 166 were Chinese and only 3 were from other races. Most of the respondents were students as we distributed the questionnaires at private universities but we still encountered a 19% that were employed while another 4% were unemployed. As for the monthly income, many of the youth had between RM101 to RM400 which shows that they have a quite high purchasing power.

5.1.1.2 Central Tendencies Measurement of Constructs

Many of the youths have actually been using social networks for 2 years, according to Table 4.1.7. More specifically, the mean shows about 2.66 years. However, the maximum number of years the youths have been using social networks would be 4 years while the minimum is 1 year.

On average, the youths only spends about 2.64 hours online based on the mean we generated in Table 4.1.8. While looking at the mode, the youths spend 2 hours daily on social networks. The maximum hours youths spend time on social networks is 5 while the minimum is only 1 hour. Also, the data collected is quite accurate as the standard error of mean and standard deviation is less than 1.

5.1.2 Inferential Analysis

5.1.2.1 Pearson Correlation

Table 5.1.1: The Summary Table of the Correlations between the Variables

Correlations

		TotalPU	TotalPEU	TotalPREF
TotalPU	Pearson Correlation	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)			
	N	200		
TotalPEU	Pearson Correlation	.781**	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		
	N	200	200	
TotalPREF	Pearson Correlation	.763**	.819**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	
	N	200	200	200

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The correlations between the three variables were in positive values. The p-values for the correlations were 0.00 which is less than 0.05. Thus, the alternative hypotheses of H1, H2 and H3 were accepted and while the null hypotheses of each were rejected. The Pearson data refers to what extent the variables are correlated to each other. From the Table 5.1.1, we can conclude that the variables are related to each other with a positive value and perceived ease of use (PEU) has the strongest relationship to the preference towards the use of social network marketing (PREF) with a Pearson value of 0.819 as it is nearly value 1.

Thus, we can explain that the youths would more prefer the use of social network marketing when they perceive that there is an ease in using the social network. The second strongest relationship would be between PEU and PU with a Pearson value of 0.781 and lastly is the relationship between PU and PREF where youths felt that the perceived ease of use has a strong impact that would lead to perceived usefulness, where ultimately will lead to the preference towards social network marketing.

5.1.2.2 Multiple Regression Analysis

Relationship between PU and PEU

A Multiple Linear Regression Equation is formed to shown there is a straight linear relationship between perceived usefulness (PU) and perceived ease of use (PEU). The equation is shown as below:

PU = 3.618 + 0.696 (PEU)
Where: PU   = Perceived Usefulness
PEU   = Perceived Ease of Use

From the equation, we can conclude that PU does depend on PEU in order for the youths to perceive that social networks are useful. Furthermore, the 61% variation in PU is explained by the PEU with the R square value of 0.610 in Table 4.3.4. By looking at the standardized coefficient, it can determine that there is a strong relationship between PU and PEU as there is a 78.1% strong relationship from PU towards PEU.

Figure 5.1.2: Standardized Regression Result of PU and PEU
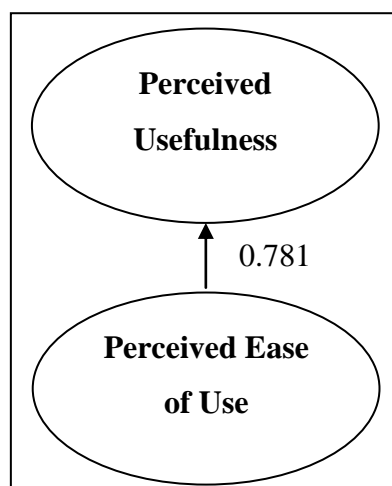
Source: Developed for the research

Relationship between PU, PEU and PREF

By testing the influence of the dependents variables (PU and PEU) towards the independent variable (PREF), the result shows that there is a significant positive relationship. The equation is formed as below:

PREF = 0.215 + 0.263 (PU) + 0.421 (PEU)

Where: PREF = Preferences towards the use of social network marketing

        PU   = Perceived Usefulness

        PEU   = Perceived Ease of Use

The R square shown is 0.710 which indicates that there is a 71% variation in preferences towards the use of social network marketing that is explained by both dependents variables (PU and PEU).

The standardized coefficient Beta stated in Table 4.3.9 shows that there is a positive relationship between the dependent variables and the independent variable. The summary of the relationship can be concluded as the graph below.

Figure 5.1.3: Standardized Regression Result of PU, PEU and PREF
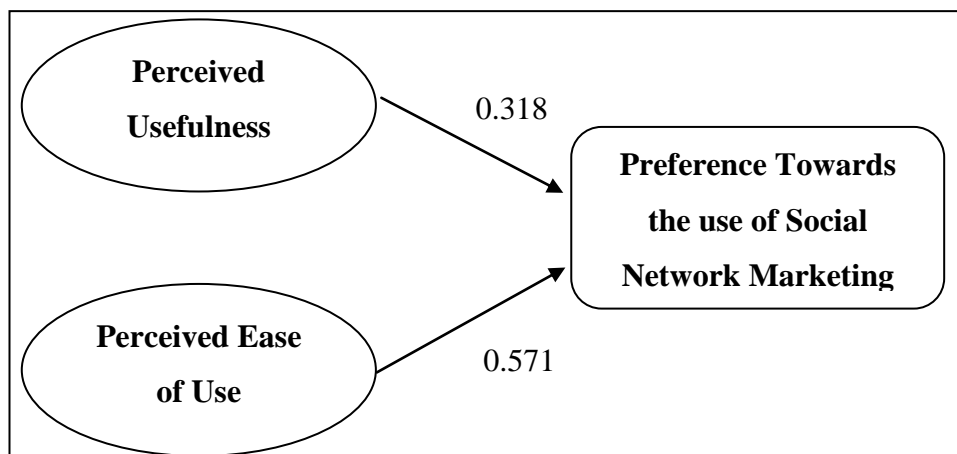
Source: Developed for the research

5.2   Discussion of Major Findings

5.2.1 Research Objectives

Varley (2010) stated that "The Urban Market Report has revealed that only 10% of youths spend 5 hours or more on email with social networking and texting being the communication channels of choice." This also shows that everyday, the youths would at least visit the social networks to seek for information, be it entertainment or work for at least 1 hour. Here, we were able to meet the research objective of determining youth's level of exposure online.

Based on the results generated in Table 4.1.7 on the number of years youths have been using social networks, it proved that every youth would have experienced surfing the internet or consistent with our studies, would be the social networks. "The youth are the most active users of social networking sites (SNS) but are also the biggest perpetrators of behavior that would not be tolerated offline." This would contribute to one of the reasons why youth today prefer to obtain information from social networks. Therefore, we were able to answer the research objective of why youth prefer to obtain information from social networks.

Most of the respondents preferred companies to use social networks to conduct their marketing activities which are quite consistent with our study. According to Ellison, Steinfield and Lampe (2007), "this trend had grown beyond school to some business and trade professionals, who recognized the benefit of social networks marketing to their business." Ellison et al. (2007) also stated that "some of these business professionals are seeking niche networks to communicate with others in their field of work and outside their business activities are the faster way of marketing, because of the ability to present pictures, videos, and information for potential clients to access." Despite that, there were still 30% of the respondents that still preferred it to be done via traditional media. Here we were able to answer the research objective of the extent youths preferred social network over traditional media.

Nevertheless, Facebook and Twitter were the most used and favorable social networks to use among the youth. According to Bulik (2007), "while Facebook ranked as the most popular website among the 18-to-24 set, social networking was twice as popular with young women as young men". Thus, it would be significant and in line with our research objectives as well. We have ranked the social networks accordingly from number 1 to 5 (Refer to Appendix D).

5.2.2 Hypotheses

Table 5.2.2.1: Results of the Hypotheses

Hn	Alternative Hypothesis	Results
H1	Perceived Ease of Use has a positive and significant effect on Perceived Usefulness	Supported since p-value = 0.000 which is lower than 0.05. **Correlation :** R=0.781, positive and strong relationship between PU & PEOU **Multiple Regression:** A strong relationship indicated by the standardized coefficient (ß)of 0.696 towards PU
H2	Perceived Usefulness has a positive and significant effect on the preference towards the use of social network marketing	Supported since p-value = 0.000 which is lower than 0.05. **Correlation:** R=0.763, positive and strong relationship between PU & PREF **Multiple Regression:** A strong relationship indicated by the standardized coefficient (ß) of 0.318
H3	Perceived Ease of use has a positive and significant effect on the preference towards the use of social network marketing	Supported since p-value = 0.000 which is lower than 0.05. **Correlation:** R=0.819, positive and strong relationship between PEU&PREF **Multiple Regression:** A strong relationship indicated by the standardized coefficient (ß)of 0.571

| H4 | There is a positive relationship between Perceived Ease of Use, Perceived Usefulness and the preference towards the use of social network marketing | Supported since p-value = 0.000 which is lower than 0.05. **Multiple Linear Regression Equation :** **PU   = 3.618 + 0.696 (PEU)** **PREF = 0.215 + 0.263 (PU) + 0.421   (PEU)** Positive relationship |

5.2.2.1 PEU and PU

H1: Perceived Ease of Use has a positive and significant effect on Perceived Usefulness

With a p-value of 0.00 which is less than 0.05, H1 is accepted. From the results generated for Pearson Correlation test as shown in chapter 4, there was a positive value of 0.781 between the variables PU and PEU. Thus, it indicated that there is a positive strong relationship between the two variables. According to a research conducted by Davis, Bogozzi and Warshaw (1989); Wang, Wang, Lin and Tang (2003) and Wadie and Lanouar (2011), the results are consistent to our study which proved that there was also a relationship between PU and PEU. According to Wadie and Lanouar (2011), the customers in Tunisia felt that there was a significant relationship between perceived ease of using internet banking and perceived that it was also useful to them.

In addition, we also conducted a multiple regression analysis to test if there was a relationship between the dependent and independent variable. The results showed that PEU has an impact towards PU with a standardized coefficient of 0.781.

5.2.2.2 PU and PREF

H2: Perceived Usefulness has a positive and significant effect on the preference towards the use of social network marketing

With the p-value of 0.00 which is less than 0.05, H2 is accepted. There is also a significant positive relationship between PU and PREF with the r value of 0.763. By conducting the multiple regression, it can prove that PU has a significant positive relationship to PREF with a Beta of 0.318.

According to previous studies done by Lee, Kozar and Larsen (2003) and Wang et al. (2003), the results were proven as they stated that PU is one of the most significant predictors on the customer's behavioral intention to adopt a system. In the case of our study, customers would be more preferable towards social network marketing if they are able to obtain useful information from the social network. "Perceived usefulness will be influenced by perceived ease of use, because the easier a technology is to use, the more useful I can be" (Venkatesh and Bala, 2000).

5.2.2.3 PEU and PREF

H3: Perceived Ease of use has a positive and significant effect on the preference towards the use of social network marketing

With the p-value of 0.00 which is less than 0.05, H3 is accepted. To test this relationship, we conducted the Pearson Correlation analysis and the result showed that there was a positive relationship between PEU and PREF with the r value of 0.819. Thus, indicating a strongest relationship among other pairs of relationship. Furthermore, a multiple regression test was conducted and the result showed that there was a positive impact of 57.1%, which has the second strongest impact to PREF.

The result is also consistent to previous researches which indicated that PEU has a positive influence on the advanced technology and behavioral intention. According to Bigne, Sanz, Ruiz and Aldas (2010), Kim, Kim and Shin (2009), Li and Huang (2009) and Moon and Kim (2001), the results of their research proved that the easier it is to use the internet, the higher the customer's intention to adopt a system.

5.2.2.4 PEU, PU and PREF

H₄: There is a positive relationship between Perceived Ease of Use, Perceived Usefulness and the preference towards the use of social network marketing

With the p-value of 0.00 which is less than 0.05, H4 is accepted. In order to identify this relationship, we conducted the multiple regression analysis twice as we had 2 sets of dependent and independent variables. There were positive relationships for both sets of the dependent and independent variables. The equations are shown as below:

Equation 1   : PREF= 3.618 + 0.696 (PEU)
Equation 2   : PREF= 0.215 + 0.263 (PU) + 0.421 (PEU)
Where, PREF = Preference Towards the use of Social Network Marketing
       PU   = Perceived Usefulness
       PEU   = Perceived Ease of Use

"Behavioral intention in using a system is determined by two major beliefs: Perceived Usefulness (PU) and Perceived Ease of Use (PEU)" (Mulero, 2012). The youths might increase their preferences towards social network marketing if they felt that it is fairly beneficial to use social networks in obtaining information and easy to learn on how to use the social networks.

5.3   Implications of the Study

5.3.1 Managerial Implications

This study would be very useful for managers and entrepreneurs as it is closely related to their businesses. It would be able to make them realize the importance of adopting the social network in order to carry out their marketing activities to attract the youth market segment. Furthermore, it is significant for businesses to identify the vast opportunities available with social network marketing as many people today are using the social networks regardless of age.

In terms of perspective of perceived usefulness, marketers should provide more variety of information to provide value to customers as able to gain comprehensive information regarding the goods and services. Knowing that it is easy and uncomplicated to use to use the social network, marketer and customer able to benefit as they can easily gain and provide detailed information about potential goods and services.

5.4   Limitations of the Study

One of the main limitations of this study would be the generalization of the results as the sample size does not appropriately represent the whole population of the Malaysian youths. Furthermore, cluster sampling was used in selecting the sample where questionnaires were only distributed to 4 private universities in the Klang Valley. Other limitations would include the inaccuracy of the results as we lacked the time and budget to conduct a big scale study.

5.5   Recommendations for Future Research

Thus in future, a selection of a bigger sample size is recommended to represent the Malaysian youth population. In addition, the future research should not only cover more private universities but other tertiary institutions in Malaysia too. Thus, this would allow a more accurate study on the youth's preference towards the use of social network marketing.

5.6   Conclusion

In conclusion, 4 research objectives were met and 4 hypotheses generated were accepted. Therefore, social networks have become the main communication tool for youths not only to interact with others but also as a medium to seek for marketing information and for marketers to be closer to the target market. Thus, it is strongly recommend more Malaysian companies to adopt the social network marketing in order to improve their market share. Furthermore, implications, limitations and recommendations were also stated for this study for better improvements in future.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Questionnaire

UNIVERSITI TUNKU ABDUL RAHMAN

FACULTY OF ACCOUNTANCY AND MANAGEMENT

Bachelor of International Business (Hons)

_____

UKMZ3016 FINAL YEAR PROJECT

Topic: Malaysian Youth's Preferences towards Marketing Conducted via Social Network

Instructions:

We are Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman students from the Faculty of Accountancy of Management and are currently pursuing our Bachelor of International Business (Hons). We are conducting this questionnaire for the purpose of meeting the requirements of UKMZ3016 Final Year Project based on our topic as stated above. We hope you will participate in helping us answering the questionnaire in order for us to collect the data required for our project. It will only take about 10 minutes of your time to complete this questionnaire. Please return it to us within a day's time.

We promise you that your information stated in the questionnaire will be kept private and confidential at all times. We appreciate for your participation.

Student's Name	Student ID
1. Goh Pei Chuin	09UKB04608
2. Leong Huey Huey	09UKB02945
3. Vina Tong Mei Hwee	09UKB03094

INSTRUCTIONS: Please read each of the following questions carefully and provide your answers in the spaces given below.

Please tick (✓) your answer only in one box given below, unless indicated that you may tick more than one.

A. Demographic Profile

1. Gender

☐ Male   ☐ Female

2. Age group

☐ Below 15 years old   ☐ 15 – 24 years old   ☐ Above 24 years old

3. What is your race?

☐ Malay   ☐ Indian   ☐ Chinese   ☐ Others, please specify _____

4. What is your current employment status?

☐ Student   ☐ Employed   ☐ Unemployed

5. What is your monthly disposable income / allowance?

☐ Below RM100   ☐ RM100 – RM400   ☐ RM400 – RM700   ☐ Above RM700

B. Youth's Experience Online

1. How long have you been using the social network?

☐ Less than 1 year   ☐ 2 - 5 years   ☐ 5 - 8 years   ☐ More than 8 years

2. Have you come across any advertisements or other marketing activities carried out via social network?

   ☐ Yes   ☐ No

3. Have you ever clicked on the advertisements found in social networks?

   ☐ Yes   ☐ No

4. Have you ever been cheated for purchasing online or false marketing conducted online? If yes, what was the reason?

   ☐ Yes (*Please tick the following*)   ☐ No

   ☐ Misleading information

   ☐ Order never arrived

   ☐ Goods or services provided not as promised/displayed

   ☐ Others, please specify _____

C. Youth's Exposure Online

1. How many hours a day do you stay online surfing the social network?

   ☐ Less than 1 hour   ☐ 2 - 4 hours   ☐ 5 - 7 hours   ☐ 8 - 10 hours   ☐ More than 10 hours

2. How many social network account(s) do you have?

   ☐ None   ☐ 1   ☐ 2   ☐ 3   ☐ 4   ☐ More than 5

D. Youth's General Information Regarding Social Network Marketing

1. Which of the following social network(s) would you prefer marketers to conduct their marketing activities on?

   (*You may tick more than one*)

   ☐ Facebook   ☐ MySpace

   ☐ Twitter   ☐ Weibo

   ☐ Friendster   ☐ Others, please specify _____

2. Please rank the social networks you frequently visit to obtain information.

	Most Favorable	Favorable	Neutral	Least Favorable	Unfavorable
Facebook	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Twitter	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
My Space	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Weibo	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Friendster	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

3. If marketing activities (promotions, advertisements, etc) were to be conducted via social networks, would it influence you to purchase the product (either physically or virtually)?

☐ Yes   ☐ No

4. Do you consider the advertisements placed in social networks relevant to your interests?

☐ Yes   ☐ No

5. Do you prefer companies to carry out their marketing activities (promotions, advertisements, etc) via social network (Facebook, Twitter, etc) or traditionally (TV, newspaper, etc)?

☐ Social Network   ☐ Traditional Media

6. Do you read any of the print media?

   ☐ Yes (*Please tick the following*)   ☐ No

      ☐ Newspaper

      ☐ Newsletter

      ☐ Brochure

      ☐ Magazine

      ☐ Others, please specify _____

7. You prefer advertisements to be:

   ☐ Wordy   ☐ Pictorial (picture, symbol, graphic, etc)

E. Preference Towards Social Network Marketing

<u>Please indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with each item by circling the appropriate numbers.</u>

	Strongly Agree		Strongly Disagree		

a) Perceived Usefulness of Social Networks

1. Functions of social networks are very useful for me to obtain marketing information	1	2	3	4	5
2. Social networks allow me to easily obtain marketing information	1	2	3	4	5
3. Social networks allow me to gain access to a wide range of marketing information	1	2	3	4	5
4. Social networks allow me to share the information with me friends easily	1	2	3	4	5
5. I am able to find the marketing information needed from social networks	1	2	3	4	5

b) Perceived Ease of Use on Social Networks

1. I find it easy to learn on how to use the social network	1	2	3	4	5
2. Social networks are able to provide me the marketing information I want	1	2	3	4	5
3. Social networks allow me to communicate with marketers and other consumers clearly and understandable	1	2	3	4	5
4. Social networks allow me to flexibly communicate with marketers without any constraints	1	2	3	4	5
5. I find it easy to be skillful in using the social network	1	2	3	4	5
6. I find the social network easy to use	1	2	3	4	5

c) Preferences towards Social Network Marketing

1. I will begin to use the social network to obtain marketing information	1	2	3	4	5
2. I will continue to use the social network to obtain marketing information	1	2	3	4	5
3. I would share the marketing information with friends via the social network	1	2	3	4	5
4. I would recommend others to use the social network to seek for marketing information	1	2	3	4	5

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Appendix B: Constructs Measurement

Construct	Indicator	Description
Perceived usefulness (PU)	PU1	Functions of social networks are very useful for me to obtain marketing information
	PU2	Social networks allow me to easily obtain marketing information
	PU3	Social networks allow me to gain access to a wide range of marketing information
	PU4	Social networks allow me to share the information with me friends easily
	PU5	I am able to find the marketing information needed from social networks
Perceived ease of use (PEU)	PEU1	I find it easy to learn on how to use the social network
	PEU2	Social networks are able to provide me the marketing information I want
	PEU3	Social networks allow me to communicate with marketers and other consumers clearly and understandable
	PEU4	Social networks allow me to flexibly communicate with marketers without any constraints
	PEU5	I find it easy to be skilful in using the social network
	PEU6	I find the social network easy to use
Preference	PREF1	I will begin to use the social network to obtain

towards social network marketing (PREF)		marketing information
	PREF2	I will continue to use the social network to obtain marketing information
	PREF3	I would share the marketing information with friends via the social network
	PREF4	I would recommend others to use the social network to seek for marketing information

Appendix C: Rules of Thumb about Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient Size

Alpha Coefficient Range	Strength of Association
Below 0.6	Poor
0.6 – 0.7	Moderate
07 – 0.8	Good
0.8 – 0.9	Very Good
Above 0.9	Excellent

Source: Hair, J. F. Jr., Babin, B,. Money, A. H., & Samouel, P. (2003)

Appendix D: Youth's Ranking of Social Networks

Ranking	Social Networks
1 (Most Favorable)	Facebook
2 (Favorable)	Twitter
3 (Neutral)	MySpace
4 (Least Favorable)	Weibo
5 (Unfavorable)	Friendster

Appendix E: Reliability Data for PU (Pilot Testing)

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	40	100.0
	Excluded[a]	0	.0
	Total	40	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.737	5

Appendix F: Reliability Data for PEU (Pilot Testing)

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	40	100.0
	Excluded[a]	0	.0
	Total	40	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.884	6

Appendix G: Reliability Data for PREF (Pilot Testing)

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	40	100.0
	Excluded[a]	0	.0
	Total	40	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.873	4

Appendix H: Reliability Data for PU (200 Respondents)

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	200	100.0
	Excluded[a]	0	.0
	Total	200	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.913	5

Appendix I: Reliability Data for PEU (200 Respondents)

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	200	100.0
	Excluded[a]	0	.0
	Total	200	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.907	6

Appendix J: Reliability Data for PREF (200 Respondents)

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	200	100.0
	Excluded[a]	0	.0
	Total	200	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.914	4