

ANTECEDENTS OF BRAND EQUITY
IN HAIR CARE PRODUCTS AMONG
YOUNG ADULTS IN KLANG VALLEY, MALAYSIA

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BY

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DECLARATION

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- 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.
- 4) The word count of this research report is **21644 words.**

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

A	Agree
BIN	Bachelor of International Business
CBBE	Customer Based Brand Equity
D	Disagree
N	Neutral
SA	Strongly Agree
SD	Strongly Disagree
Sig.	Significant
SMME	Social Media Marketing Efforts
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Science
Std.	Standard
TARUC	Tunku Abdul Rahman University College
UM	Universiti Malaya
UPM	Universiti Putra Malaysia
UTAR	Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman
WOM	Word of Mouth

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PREFACE

Nowadays, individuals all over the world are becoming more aware and conscious about using the right and safest kind of products in order to make sure their hair care is at the best. This is because there are still many companies and brands that come out with products which contains high amount of chemicals. Besides, not all companies that produce hair care products have started incorporating only natural ingredients as their substances that make up their products as there are only a small number of companies that produce 100% organic-based hair care products. Thus, this has led consumers to be extra careful, conscious and alert in choosing and consuming the right kind of hair care products. On the other hand, marketers and businesses that study and analyse the market have also realized the growing concern of consumers and the importance they are showing towards their health and body care. Thus, companies are facing a huge challenge, today, in trying to win their customers attention, creating a good impression among them and get them to buy their products.

Also, from the past studies, it is found that there was no major findings on the factors that influence brand equity of hair care products in Malaysia so it has prompted us to do a research on this subject that could be helpful for companies doing hair care related business and also for consumers to realize which antecedents/factors they should place importance in and how they should view brands before making a purchasing decision. In this research, young adults are targeted as they are the group of people who uses beauty and personal care products in a big scale as compared to other people of other age groups. Besides, young people today are more meticulous about having the right products as they are very brand-conscious too. Thus, we thought that they are the most relevant group of people to study on.

ABSTRACT

This research aims to study the relationship between brand association, brand loyalty, brand awareness and social media marketing towards brand equity of hair care products among young adults in Klang Valley. The target respondents in this study are young adults who are aged between 20-35 years old. Besides, 175 sets of questionnaires were distributed through online and offline mediums to respondents. Data collected from the survey are analysed using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 23. Respondents' feedback was analysed and presented through descriptive analysis, reliability analysis, Pearson Correlation and Multiple Regression analysis. The research findings shows that brand loyalty, brand awareness and social media marketing have significant positive relationship with brand equity of hair care products and brand association was found to not have a significant relationship with brand equity of hair care products. Lastly, managerial implications have been discussed to provide insightful information to hair care products' manufacturers and businesses. Last but not least, the limitations associated with this research were stated and recommendations were developed in order to assist future researchers in managing the limitation.

CHAPTER 1: RESEARCH OVERVIEW

1.0 Introduction

A general summary of the entire study is presented in chapter one. This research is carried out to understand antecedents of brand equity in hair care products among young adults in Klang Valley. It comprises of components such as background of the research, statement of problems, objectives and questions of the research, hypotheses and importance of the study, chapter outline and finally conclusion. The study begins with the research background, problem statement and objectives in order to build an understanding of the research. Followed by, research questions which guides the study's arguments and inquiries. Then, the hypotheses will be constructed from a proposed conceptual framework. The significance of the study indicates the importance and contribution of this research. Lastly, the research chapters' layout will be explained followed by a conclusion.

1.1 Research Background

1.1.1 Beauty and Personal Care Industry

Beauty and personal care is essential to all human beings and with the increasing number of beauty and personal care products supplied by various brands in the market, it makes it even better and convenient for everybody. Beauty and personal care products can be classified under many categories, such as skincare products, hair care, cosmetics, men's grooming items, fragrances, bathing products, oral care, and many more. Generally, these products are used by consumers for purposes such as cleaning themselves, beautifying themselves, carrying out daily habits to maintain healthiness, to have pleasant body odors or to protect their body from getting diseased.

Brands play a vital role in consumers' decision making. Thus, to remain competitive in the industry, brands need to pay attention on their customers constantly. Among the vast number of brands available under the beauty

and personal care industry, the top 10 global brands that are constantly in a competitive environment in the industry are stated in the table below.

Table 1.1: Top 10 Global Beauty Brands

Rank	Brand	Based in
1	OLAY	United States
2	Avon	United States
3	L'Oreal	France
4	Neutrogena	United States
5	Nivea	Germany
6	Lancôme	France
7	Dove	Britain
8	Estee Lauder	United States
9	Biore	Japan
10	Shiseido	Japan

Adapted from: Forbes (2018)

The beauty and personal care industry has been growing quickly in many countries such as developed and developing countries. Particularly, in the Asia region, the cosmetics market was found to be one of the markets that are growing in a rapid pace (Krishnan, Amira, Atilla, Syafawani and Hafiz, 2017). Many changes has been happening around the world in the economic, social, and cultural aspects which has impacted the increasing usage of beauty and personal care products by the people (Openbravo, n.d.).

As for Malaysia, various categories under the beauty and personal care market showed tremendous growth as Malaysians are becoming confident in buying the products (Euromonitor International, 2018). Fragrances, skin care and colour cosmetics were found to outclass the mass segment (Openbravo, n.d.). One of the common tactics used by businesses in Malaysia under the beauty and personal care market to attract customers is they make use of promotional strategies whereby they set high discounts for the premium cosmetic brands and instalment sale for the costlier products. This is because Malaysian consumers can be easily influenced through the

promotion offers in the market and entices them to look for the products when a discount is given especially for premium products (Hassali, Al-Tamimi, Dawood, Verma and Saleem, 2015).

Moreover, many promotions and advertisement that is done in the local magazines and newspapers about the beauty and personal care brands originated from America and European countries has made them to be popular among Malaysian consumers (Hassali et al., 2015). This is evident as it was found that consumers showed high trust in buying hair care products from global giant brands, for instance, Procter & Gamble, Unilever, Colgate-Palmolive and Wipro Unza (Euromonitor International, 2018).

According to Euromonitor International (2018), it is forecasted that the beauty and personal care industry will continue to have a positive stand in the market due to the increasing purchasing power of customers and their confidence towards the brands. Besides, the skin care and colour cosmetics market are predicted to see stronger growth in the forthcoming years. This is because consumers are becoming keener on making impulse purchases in order to maintain their health and wellness.

1.1.2 Hair Care Market

Among the various markets that exist under the beauty and personal care industry, this research is scoped down to study on the hair care market. There are five main types of products in hair care market which are shampoo, hair colour, hair conditioner, hair styling products and hair oil. Generally, these products are used for cleansing the hair, styling it and also conditioning. Besides, they are also applied to provide natural solutions for common hair troubles such as hair loss, dandruffs, frizzy hairs, split ends, itchy scalp and so on.

In Malaysia, there are a huge number of multinational and local brands competing against each other in the hair care market. Consumers are

presented with many choices to pick from, such as brands like Sunsilk, Pantene, Clear, Rejoice, Head & Shoulders and Dove. Due to the intense competition taking place among the brands in the market, it has led to strong price war between competitors. Thus, hair care brands are recommended to adopt more different product positioning as a lucrative marketing strategy to attract customers (Euromonitor International, 2018).

Across the globe, due to an increasing trend in fashion industry and a surge of the aging population, particularly the hair colour market was found to be flourishing. Furthermore, the growth in male grooming products contributed to the growth of the hair colour market (Reportlinker, 2016). The different hair colour products include permanent hair colour, temporary hair colour, semi-permanent hair colour, hair highlights and also bleach. As for Malaysia, different hair care products showed different trends. For instance, it was found that there was strong demand for hair care specialists due to the opening of more professional salon outlets, in which this stimulated high current value growth for salon professional hair care in 2017 (Euromonitor International, 2018).

Other trends that was found is that the hair colour market showed a positive growth as well whereby it contributed the most to the growth of the hair care industry in Malaysia, whereby it was valued at USD 27.2 million in 2017 and is further estimated to experience higher growth rate of 4.6% during 2018-2023 (IndustryARC, 2018). However, it was found that customers preferred organic hair colours because these consumers are aware of the negative after-effects of colouring the hair using ammonia and paraben containing colours. These two chemicals which are widely used in hair care products is known to cause tissue irritation, affect the immune system, produce severe allergies and skin irritation (Martinez, 2016). Fortunately, it was found that there are many companies in Malaysia that add natural ingredients in their hair care products as they are aware of their health conscious customers (Euromonitor International, 2018). It is evident that consumers today are more concerned about the benefits of natural products for them and the environment as it is found that many of them are willing to

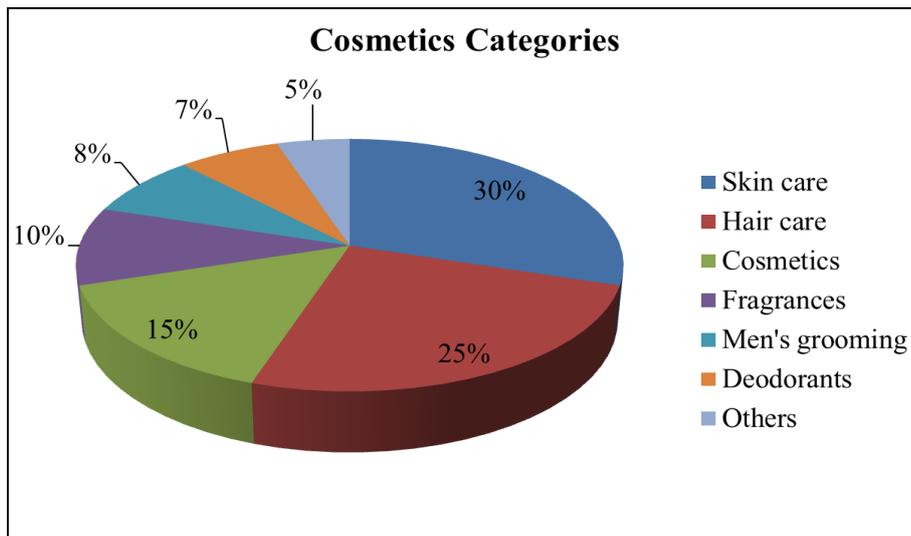
spend more for products which consists natural ingredients (Openbravo, n.d.).

Besides, there was also an emerging trend of more consumers using at-home kits due to the rising number of hair care products which are convenient to use. Also, the large sales of conditioners and treatments in major supermarkets, hypermarkets and health and beauty specialist retailers stimulated the current value growth in 2017 (Euromonitor International, 2018).

1.1.3 Trend of Usage of Hair Care Products by Consumers

Hair care products are also one of the widely used products under the beauty and personal care market by consumers. Figure 1.1 below shows the results of a study done by Krishnan et al. (2017) about the usage of cosmetics among Malaysians. It was found that the hair care products segment was the second major contributor to the consumption of beauty and personal care products among the Malaysian respondents. Here, we can conclude that hair care is one of the most purchased items and high in demand among other beauty and personal care products that are in the market.

Figure 1.1: Usage of Cosmetic Products



Source: Krishnan et al. (2017)

Nowadays, the businesses have differentiated their marketing strategies by catering and giving to importance to the male market too. Bakewell and Mitchell (2003) mentioned that most previous researches studied on the consumption of beauty and personal care products have largely been focused on female consumers only whereas males were side-lined from this topic. However, this has changed over the years as it found that there is a change in the male customer buying behaviour towards grooming and personal care products. This is supported by Tan (2016) who mentioned that “the market of grooming products for the males is an opportunity for marketers and businesses as it is expanding at a rapid pace.”

As for the customer’s buying behaviour, it was found that the younger females in Malaysia purchased beauty and personal care products from Korean brands due to the immense popularity and emergence of K-pop and Korean drama in Malaysia (US International Trade Administration, 2016). However, they also look on buying the US, Australian and Japanese products. These female consumers who are in the age range of 12-30 are residents from urban areas who are categorized from middle to upper-middle class families. They use about two to three products such as shampoo, conditioner and hair serum in terms of hair care products (US International Trade Administration, 2016). Besides, it was found that more

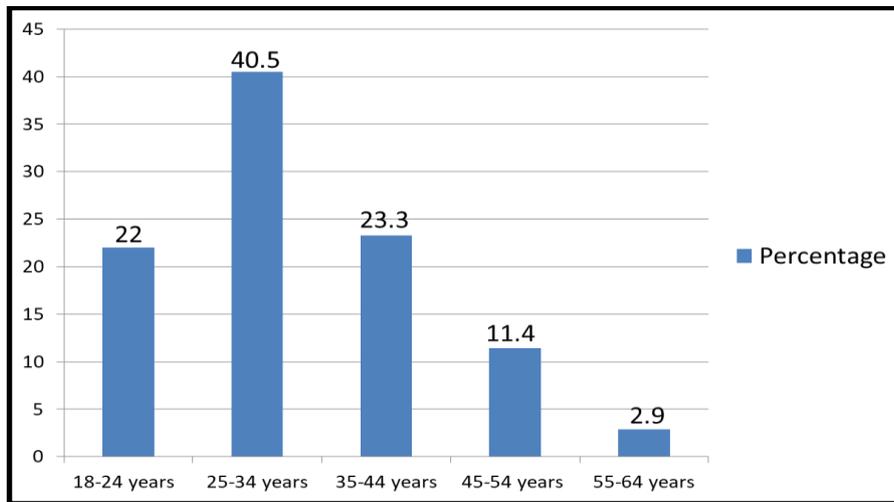
than 48% of the female population in Malaysia who were less than 25 years were mostly engaged in using conditioners which eventually led it to be one of the fastest growing product categories with great value and demand under hair care (IndustryARC, 2018).

As for Malaysian males in that age group, they were found to normally use only one to two face care products but more focused on the usage of hair-styling products. Quantity of hair products used by men can be compared to the females, which are in the range of two to three as well. The products include shampoo, conditioner and hair styling product such as hair-mud, styling clay and hair gels (US International Trade Administration, 2016).

1.1.4 Young Adult Consumers

Starting from the era of modernization; young consumers became an object of all the marketers' interest as nowadays young consumers are very important contributors in the market processes. Doling (2006) mentioned that young adults consist of the age group from 20 to 35 years old. Young adults these days are very brand conscious and are much more aware of marketing tactics as they are sceptical by nature and less likely to passively believe everything thrown at them by marketers (Cannon, 2015). Also, consumers of this age group are those that are easier than ever to reach as they are always active in social media, thus they are prone to more noise and clutter; however they still filter effectively (Cannon, 2015).

Figure 1.2: Percentages of Users of Personal Care Products in Malaysia
2017



Source: Statista (2018)

According to Figure 1.2, majority of the users to consume beauty and personal care products are aged 25-34 years old which means that young adults are the major contributors to the growing beauty and personal care industry in Malaysia. Thus, there is an importance and need to conduct a research based on this group of consumers based on the hair care market segment.

1.2 Problem Statement

Hair care is an important aspect of personal care that every individual gives great importance to. The hair care market has multiple choices of products from different brands available for consumers. The Malaysian hair care market is highly fragmented with multiple multinational and local brands competing to gain a market share. These brands for example, Sunsilk, Pantene, Clear, Rejoice, Head & Shoulders and Dove are accessible to consumers through many retail outlets. Consumers are spoiled with choices these days (Euromonitor International, 2018). However, despite the increasing brands and products in the market for consumers, there are inadequate studies on the antecedents of Brand Equity in hair care products. The study will determine which factors contribute to a strong brand equity of a brand despite heavy competition in the hair care industry. Therefore, this

research intended to study on the antecedents of brand equity in hair care products to have a better understanding on what drives Malaysians to choose a particular brand and the value that is important to them especially among the young adults. The factors discussed in this research include brand association, brand loyalty, brand awareness and social media marketing.

1.2.1 Brand Association

Brand association is defined as anything “linked” in an individual’s memory of a brand (Aaker, 1991). Consumers have personal meaning associated with each brand. Various features of the product or aspects independent of the product reflect brand association (Chen, 2001). Therefore it is important to maintain a positive brand association among consumers. One of the main brand associations will be the contents of the product that can also affect the brand image of the products. The increasing concern among users these days are the chemicals and the contents of the personal care or hair care products that they use. This is due to the increasing awareness of ingredients in products among today’s consumers. Some of the common chemicals that set back consumers are Sodium Lauryl Sulfate, Parabens, Synthetic Fragrance or Parfum and etc. (Fakkert, 2014).

Consumers are often induced by different brand associations of different hair care products which will build the products’ brand equity among consumers and eventually lead to purchase and repurchase actions. Therefore it is important for brands to have the right ingredients in their products and avoid these toxic ingredients especially with the competitive rise of organic products in the market. Therefore, this research intends to study on whether brand association contributes to the brand equity of hair care products among young adults.

1.2.2 Brand Loyalty

The purchasing decision of a product becomes a regular habit (loyalty) as a result of brand equity (Solomon, 1992). Based on Assael (1998) and Oliver (1999), brand loyalty is a condition wherein consumers develop a strong sense of commitment to re-buy and satisfy their previous experiences with the same brand and incur repurchase behavior. It also “denotes a constructive mindset toward a brand leading to constant purchasing of the brand over time” (Aaker, 1991). A research conducted in Pakistan on branded shoes, the regression analysis indicated that there wasn’t any correlation between brand loyalty and brand equity. The reasoning behind it could be because of the brand-conscious market and crowded competition within the industry (Tanveer & Lodhi, 2016).

However, there was a significant association present between brand loyalty and brand equity in another analysis conducted in Pakistan. However this analysis was conducted in an industry more related to hair care which is on imported beauty care products (Ulfat, Muzaffar & Shoaib, 2014). Even though both analyses were conducted in different industries, it was conducted within the same market which was Pakistan and obtained two different results. Brand loyalty might also exist in one industry and not in another in Malaysia, it might not necessarily be an important factor for brand equity in the Malaysian market. This raises a question on whether brand loyalty really contributes to modern day brand equity. Hence, the research wants to investigate how strong brand loyalty affects the brand equity of hair care products among young adults in Klang Valley market.

1.2.3 Brand Awareness

Based on Aaker (1991), brand awareness is the capability of a potential consumer to identify a brand that is a member of a particular product category. It plays an important role for consumers to make decision as it assist the brand to be considered and is used as a heuristic and quality indicator (Macdonald & Sharp, 2000). Brand awareness could be said as a measurement of the knowledge or information of the brand as a part of an industry product category. The measures consist of brand recognition; respondents could recognize the brand name category or both, brand recall; respondents are able to recall different brands under one product category and top of mind brand awareness where a particular brand is recalled first.

However, individual indicates consumers show tendency to alter their responses on recall based brand awareness measures. For the measure of top of mind recall, only 50% of respondents gave similar answers twice (Ragavendran, Devakumar and Upadhyay, 2009). This indicates that there are many brands in the market and they approach consumers with different strategy to win their trust. Consumers are becoming more aware of different brands and this influences them to try new brands from time to time. Therefore it leads to a question whether brand awareness would contribute to individual brand equity because long term recall of one brand is difficult to achieve. Hence, the research will determine to know how brand awareness affects the brand equity of hair care products among young adults.

1.2.4 Social Media Marketing

Social media is replacing traditional media on a fast pace and more information about products, services and brands reach consumers through them (Bruhn, Schoenmueller and Schafer, 2012). Social media assist marketing pattern of a brand to create an individual relationship between the consumers and creates opportunities to interact with consumers (Kelly, Kerr and Drennan, 2010). Marketers have to be careful of online word of mouth as it could positively or negatively affect the organization's reputation in a big scale. Rumors or tittle tattles spread through internet may be seen as a good or bad remark given by future and current/existing customers regarding the product or company that is done publicly and visibly (Thurau, Gwinner, Walsh and Gremler, 2004).

Increasing numbers of consumers are using tools of Web 2.0 like online discussion forums, consumer review sites, weblogs, and social network sites in order to exchange knowledge and information of the product. Online word of mouth creates a platform for the consumers to view other's reviews, experiences and share their own experiences on the particular product (Balakrishnan, Dahnil and Wong, 2014). Therefore it is important for the brand to sustain a positive image in the product aspect and overall brand as it might indicate whether positive or negative word of mouth spreads online. Therefore it is important to investigate whether social media marketing is a important determinant to build the brand equity of hair care products among young adults.

1.2.5 Hair Care Product's Brand Equity

Brand equity is a net consequence of the assets and debts that is related to a brand name and symbol (Aaker, 2009). It serves as sociocultural phenomenon that is more than a regular product name where it shows the meaning of what a brand seeks (Keller, 2003). Brand equity is the added value provided by a brand name (Farquhar, Han and Ijiri, 1991) and overall quality and choice intention (Agarwal and Rao, 1996). Consumers nowadays are more advanced as they are looking more than the brand name itself but what makes the brand worth their money and its benefits. Sales of products that are free from parabens and claim to be natural are growing at 12% (Rost, 2018).

However brands can no longer just claim that they are natural but deliver that authenticity at a truly granular level as consumers are more aware and intelligent when assessing a brand or product. Positive customer-based brand equity can provide better revenue, lower cost, and increase profit where it has direct effects towards the firm's capability to increase the prices, a customer's willingness to discover new supply chains, marketing communications success rate, and brand extensions accomplishment and licensing prospects (Keller, 1993). Therefore marketers have to create brand equity with positive attributes in order to convince consumers to purchase their products. However, there is less research done on the brand equity of hair care products locally in order to get reliable information on what constitute positive brand equity. Therefore, the research will be carried to find out the antecedents of brand equity of hair care products among young adults in Klang Valley.

1.3 Research Objectives

1.3.1 General Objective

This research aims to study the antecedents (brand association, brand loyalty, brand awareness and social media marketing) of brand equity in hair care products among young adults in Klang Valley.

1.3.2 Specific Objectives

1. To find out whether brand association affects young adults' hair care brand equity in Klang Valley.
2. To identify whether brand loyalty affects young adults' hair care brand equity in Klang Valley.
3. To find out whether brand awareness affects young adults' hair care brand equity in Klang Valley.
4. To identify whether social media marketing affects young adults' hair care brand equity in Klang Valley.

1.4 Research Questions

1. Does brand association affect the brand equity of hair care products among young adults in Klang Valley?
2. Does brand loyalty affect the brand equity of hair care products among young adults in Klang Valley?
3. Does brand awareness affect the brand equity of hair care products among young adults in Klang Valley?
4. Does social media marketing affect the brand equity of hair care products among young adults in Klang Valley?

1.5 Hypotheses of the Study

H1: There is a significant positive relationship between brand association and brand equity of hair care products among young adults in Klang Valley.

H2: There is a significant positive relationship between brand loyalty and brand equity of hair care products among young adults in Klang Valley.

H3: There is a significant positive relationship between brand awareness and brand equity of hair care products among young adults in Klang Valley.

H4: There is a significant positive relationship between social media marketing and brand equity of hair care products among young adults in Klang Valley.

1.6 Significance of the study

This study will help us to understand what are the factors that are needed to create strong and positive brand equity and how the young adults view these factors. This research will be a significant discovery especially due to the growing hair care market and high purchasing power of the young adults.

Besides, it will help consumers' especially young adults to realize which antecedents/factors they should place importance in and how they should view brands before making a purchasing decision. Moreover, this study ought to increase the awareness among consumers of what creates good brand equity and how they should assess a brand before purchasing. Furthermore, this will help consumers to gain some basic knowledge on the brand equity and its antecedents among the different the hair care brands/products.

Also, this study will provide a clear direction to the marketers to develop their strategy, marketing and management plans. Marketers can create more effective and efficient management and marketing strategy after knowing the importance of each antecedent towards brand equity in order to create profitable and positive brand equity for their brand. Marketers will obtain more data on the young adult's perception that will help them to create strategy to win this highly profitable market. Smaller brands can use this opportunity to discover the strategy used by more successful brands with good brand equity to develop their brand equity without incurring high cost on market research on their own.

Thus, this research will help both consumers, marketers' even external parties to understand the antecedents of brand equity in hair care products among young adults. It will provide a clear picture on what creates positive brand equity.

1.7 Chapter Layout

Chapter 1: Introduction

Chapter one covers on the general summary of the research. The components discussed are research background, problem statement, research objectives and questions, hypotheses and importance of the study, chapter layout and conclusion.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

This topic covers the discussion, understanding and criticism of the relevant literature to form a theoretical foundation to support the research. Review of literature, relevant theoretical models, proposed conceptual framework and development of hypotheses will be explained and discussed in this chapter. A conceptual framework will be designed to give a better look of the whole research.

Chapter 3: Methodology

The third section discusses procedure of the research as well as methods on how the research is conducted based on the research design, data collection methods, sampling design, research instrument, constructs measurement, data processing and analysis.

Chapter 4: Findings and Data Analysis

This part illustrates about data that is collected which will later be analysed by using SPSS version 23.0. The results will then be presented in tables and figures to find out its significance to the research questions and hypotheses. Moreover, descriptive analyses, scale measurement as well as inferential analysis are also covered.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusion and Implications

The fifth and final chapter draws conclusion to the entire study context. It consists of summary of statistical analyses, explanation on major findings in order to validate the research objective and hypotheses. Besides, drawbacks of the study and relevant recommendations for future research will be included.

1.8 Conclusion

This introductory chapter gives a minor outline of the research study of antecedents of brand equity of hair care products among young adults in Klang Valley as a whole. The overview is defined as expressed in research background, problem statement, research objectives, research questions, hypotheses of study, significance of study and finally chapter layout. The next chapter will further enhance the information needed for study by including literature review and development of theoretical framework.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

Review of writings and works regarding antecedents of brand equity is covered in this chapter where all the dependent variables and independent variables will be elaborated and discussed in detail. The purpose is to allow readers to understand each variable thoroughly and clearly. A conceptual framework will be proposed based on relevant theoretical models. The last part will be the hypotheses development which would discuss relationships between the independent and dependent variables.

2.1 Literature Review

2.1.1 Brand Equity

This concept became an important concept of marketing for the past few decades (Rust, Zahowik, and Keiningham, 1995). Although brand equity had been looked at in multiple perspectives, generally, it is viewed as marketing effects distinctively accredited to the brand (Keller, 1993). Brand equity is a group of assets and liabilities that is related to a brand, name and symbol which increases or decreases the value gave by a product or service to a firm and/or to that firm's customers (Aaker, 1991). Brand equity is anticipated to be present when customers have more confidence in certain brand compared to competitors' brands (Lassar, Mittal & Arun, 1995).

Other researchers such as Arora & Neha (2016) has also described in their study that brand equity is understood to be the value of brand that is achieved through various promotions and marketing efforts that has been implemented and is a valuable asset to a company. In the perspective of more researchers such as Kamakura & Russell (1993), Park & Srinivasan (1994), Rangaswamy, Burke & Oliva (1993), they conceptualized brand

equity as the added value through the brand name of a product whereby the inborn brand value can be developed and lost over time.

Brand equity had been comprehended in many ways. However, its two main perspectives are financial-based and customer-based brand equity (Hakala, Svensson & Vincze, 2012). Feldwick (1996) defined financial-based brand equity as the entire brand value which is an independent asset – when it is sold or involved in a statement of financial position. It is found that more than manufacturers and retailers, investors of a company are usually the group of people whom will be more concerned towards financial-based brand equity (Cobb-Walgren & Ruble, 1995).

As for customer-based brand equity (CBBE), it's seen from the view-point of consumers, irrespective of whether they are an individual or a business entity. It is often said that in order for value to be gained by a brand, it must be first valued by its consumers. This is because in cases where there is high CBBE, consumers tend to respond more favourably towards the marketing activities of the brand (Keller, 2003). Hoeffler and Keller (2002) quoted that a brand's power is hidden behind the minds of the consumers. Thus, organizations that aim to have strong CBBE has to make their customers to go through the correct and suitable type of experiences with their products and services so that the anticipated feelings and images will automatically be associated to the brand. Most researches currently are focused on consumer's perspective because companies see the value of a brand's equity as eventually being a function of the value that the consumers gain (Aaker, 2004).

2.1.2 Brand Association

Aaker (1991) defines this term as “anything linked in memory to a brand”. Information present in consumer’s mind about a brand, whether negative or positive, reflects the brand’s associations (Emari and Mogaddam, 2012). This concept are core concepts of customer-based brand equity as it serves as a differentiation factor to separate brands and this is important for hair care products as it will enable brands to differentiate their products according to the different needs of consumers via extensions (Aaker, 1991 & 1996). Furthermore, it is a mixture of product and non-product related attributes (Keller, 2003).

Different forms of brand associations that will cause the formation of brand equity are attributes, benefits and attitudes (Keller, 1993). Product and organizational associations are the most discussed categories (Chen, 2001). It can be witnessed in the shape, size, packaging and also the solution that the hair care products offer each consumer. Based on Aaker (1991), brand association helps in differentiating the brands; giving a purpose to purchase and providing a basis for extensions that will build brand equity thus create purchase intentions. Information gained through brand association is linked to the brand name in the form of consumer’s ability to remember and this reflects upon the impression of the brand (Keller, 1993; Romaniuk and Sharp, 2003). Thus strong positive brand association will enable consumers to easily recall and provide them a reason to purchase that particular product.

Also, Aaker (1991) has stated that brand association is the root for purchasing decisions and brand loyalty. When association affects brand loyalty, brand loyalty then influences brand equity, portraying the indirect effect that brand association has on brand equity. Therefore, a strong, unique and positive brand association will increase the equity of the product and give an extra edge to win over the markets loyalty towards the brand over competitor’s brand.

It is found that consumers usually focus on brand attributes when evaluating a brand (Lassar and Sharma, 1995; Pitta and Prevel, 1995). Positive brand associations (attributes) act as a barrier for consumers to select other brands as they tend to forget the benefits involved in purchasing other brands (Aaker, 1991 and 1996). Brand association is considered important for consumer's loyalty toward their brand (Aaker, 1996). When customers have more experience with a brand, it causes the brand association to become stronger because of that past experience or cue (Aaker and Keller, 1990).

2.1.3 Brand Loyalty

Loyalty towards a brand occurs when there is long existing response of behavior where a mental purchase process is created through individuals that consider several different brands (Jacoby & Olson, 1970; C.W. Chen, T. H. Chen & Y. F. Lin). Loyalty of brand is based on the degree in which households or an individual stick to a specific brand over time within a group of items (Schoell and Gultinan, 1990). On the other hand, Aaker (1991) quoted that brand loyalty is present when there is constructive mind set in consumers towards a brand which will make them to continuously purchase that brand. Brand loyalty is a dimension of customer-based brand equity (Aaker, 1991 and 1996).

It's common for consumers to change their preferences to other brands when they find that the same type of product that they usually buy is sold elsewhere with a cheaper price or maybe better features. However, it is not the same for consumers who are loyal to a certain brand because it is very unlikely that they would switch to other brands or products very easily (Bowen and Shoemaker, 1998). Thus, it is evident that brand loyalty keeps a customer within their brand and it is essential for marketers to have a good relationship with consumers to build their loyalty. This is the reason why some hair care products can sustain throughout the years despite introduction of new brands.

On the other hand, Keller (2008) mentioned brand loyalty as the terms of resonance: the level of customer-brand relationship which indicates compatibility between the brand and its consumers, thus creates differences in behavioral action where consumers actively seek ways to interact and share personal brand experiences. It is strengthened by integrated marketing communications (Šerić and Gil-Saura, 2012). Loyal consumers can deliver awareness of a brand through word of mouth which is an effective and cost free technique for the marketers.

Dick and Basu (1994) defined loyalty construct as the mixture of "relative attitude and patronage behavior". Therefore, patronage behavior of consumers for a preferred product on a regular basis creates recurring purchase towards the same product (Luarn and Lin, 2003). Brand loyalty has three perspectives to it such as behavioral, attitudinal and choice. Behavioral standpoint shows the scale of consumptions done for a specific brand, attitudinal perspective is about consumer's likings and outlooks of the brand and finally, choice standpoint emphasizes on aspects that influence selections of customers (Javalgi and Moberg, 1997).

Consumers have strong commitment for repeat usage and satisfy past experiences by using the same brand which leads to repurchase behavior (Assael, 1998; Oliver, 1999). Loyal consumers don't mind buying a product or service at premium price if it fulfills their interest or if they are emotionally attached (Hallowell, 1996). This is why premium outlet brands like L'Oréal, Body Shop and traditional brands like Dove and Head and Shoulders can sustain in the competitive market.

Yoo (2000) indicates that brand loyalty has influence on consumer's decision for repurchase and reduces the shift to other brands which is also the base to a brand's value. Aaker (1991) also quoted that brand loyalty contributes a decent amount to a brand's worth as the company has a group of repeat buyers on a long term basis. Aaker (1991) claims that brand loyalty is needed in assessing a brand in the form of value as loyalty can contribute to earnings. Delgado-Ballester and Luis Munuera-Alemán (2005) together with Chaudhuri and Holbrook (2001) quoted that a brand becomes

successful and creates economic benefits through brand loyalty. Keller (2003) further emphasized that brand loyalty plays a vital role on the firm's performance as brand loyalty creates an attachment among consumers which eventually leads to repurchase actions and also contribute to the brand or firm's economic performance thus shows its importance to a brand.

2.1.4 Brand Awareness

This concept refers to when consumers are able to recognize a brand (Keller, 2003). It is the capability of a buyer to recognize and recall a particular brand and this is an important contributing factor to brand equity (Aaker, 1991; Kapferer, 1992; Keller, 1993). Furthermore, Farquhar (1989) indicates that awareness shows the speed and time taken for a consumer to remember the brand element from their memory. Brand recognition and recall are elements of brand awareness. The first one is the basic degree of awareness about a brand which then leads to the latter, brand recall (Holden, 1993; Laurent, Kapferer & Roussel, 1995; Mariotti, 1999). Moreover, it includes the entire explanation and provides complete information about the brand to customers to enable them to differentiate the brand from other competing brand (Ergin, 2005; Papista and Dimitriadis 2012). Hair care industry has numerous brands out there in the market thus it is important to create awareness in order for a brand to create the recognition and recall effect since it is the first step of loyalty in long term as loyalty only begins once consumer has enough information of the products (Aaker, 1991; Jamal, Khan and Tsesmetz, 2012).

Brand awareness has an essential function in consumers' decision making because it gives them learning, contemplation and choice advantages (Keller, 2003). Consumers often obtain the benefit of recall and recognition of brands and in case they can't place the brand in a proper purchasing context, they won't consider choosing that product for purchases (Percy & Rossiter, 1992). Moreover, it shows the depth of a brand that is rooted in the memory of customers (Aaker, 1996). Therefore, brand awareness has to be

developed through continuous visibility, enhancing familiarity and influential associations that should go hand-in-hand with supplementary offerings and buying experiences (Keller, 1998). This builds brand strength in the memory traces of consumers and would reflect the awareness of a brand under different conditions (Percy & Rossiter, 1992). Thus, high awareness will create a solid base in consumer's memory which will be essential for further brand association to enhance the brand equity among consumers (Pitta and Katsanis, 1995). This will ensure a more stable relationship between the brand and consumers especially in a competitive market like hair care.

The first step in any important decision making for purchasing would be brand awareness and a strong awareness of a brand increases the chance for the brand to be selected. This is supported by Keller (1993, 1998) as it's quoted that brand awareness impacts consumers purchasing intentions by influencing the brand associations formation and strength in the brand image. Brand awareness could be an indication of value and commitment because it permits consumers to become familiar with a brand thus provides them a chance to consider it at the point of purchase. Besides, consumers use their awareness of brand for decision heuristic and this will benefit customer-based brand equity management (Chung, Lee and Heath, 2013; Huang and Sarigollu, 2011; Norazah and Norbbayah, 2013).

Brand awareness has a significant part in communications processes in order to appear in a top-of-the-mind awareness (Macdonald and Sharp, 2003; Netemeyer, Krishnan, Chris, Wang, Yagci, Dean, Ricks and Wirdh, 2004). Marketing communication channels like television, mobile and online advertising are used to induce brand awareness among consumers. By doing so, it will provide guarantee of product quality and credibility that will minimize the threat during product evaluation and selection (Keller and Lehmann, 2003; Aaker, 1996; Rubio, Oubina and Villasenor, 2014; Buil, de Chernatony and Martinez, 2013). Brands are given various channels to create awareness thus an effective communication method and positive interactions are essential to reach the right segment of consumers in order

to create awareness and a long term relationship which will eventually create strong brand equity.

2.1.5 Social Media Marketing

Social media marketing is deemed to be an influential marketing tool in today's market environment as many companies attempt to draw the attention of their target audience and attract them through social media marketing (Lipsman, Mud, Rich & Bruich, 2012; Kavisekera & Abeysekera, 2016). There exist a diverse ecosystem of social media sites, which differ in terms of their scope and functionality (Syed Zeeshan Zahoor, Mir Ijtiba Younis, Ishtiaq Hussain Qureshi & Rafi Ahmad Khan, 2016).

Some of the popular websites and applications across the social media platforms are Facebook, Youtube, Instagram, and Snapchat. These social media applications are used under social media marketing as an extension to fulfil the traditional marketing (Syed Zeeshan Zahoor et al., 2016). Marketers diverge through them and use various marketing strategies to capture and reach to their audience. Facebook is the first social network to have 1 billion users and it continues to dominate the global social media landscape (Statista, 2018). The emergence of social media platforms have essentially altered the marketing landscape as it serves as a platform that helps companies to create successful and long lasting relationship with their customers (Syed Zeeshan Zahoor et. al, 2016).

Many authors have discussed dimensions of social media in various studies and settings. As for Kim and Ko (2012), they categorized social media marketing activities characteristics' into aspects such as interaction, customization, trendiness, word-of-mouth and entertainment. This study will also adopt these five dimensions of social media marketing. Firstly, entertainment is referred to as the enjoyable experience coming from the social media experience (Agichtein, Castillo, Donato & Gionis & Mishne, 2008). Besides, users of social media can be described as people who seek enjoyment in order to be entertained (Manthiou, Chiang, & Tang, 2013).

Different studies by researchers have found that the strong motive for users to use social media is entertainment (Park, Kee, & Valenzuela, 2009; Kaye, 2007; Muntinga, Moorman, & Smit, 2011). In a nutshell, when social media manages to provide entertainment, it would turn out to be an important role in encouraging higher participating and generating positive emotions among users which motivate them to continue using it (Kang, 2005).

Next, social media is a platform that allows interaction to take place as it allows users to socialize, mingle around and communicate with each other (Taprial & Kanwar, 2012). Besides, social media also offers a place for users to discuss and exchange ideas. For instance, users will message and chat away among them regarding their favourite products or experiences about their consumption of the products (Muntinga et al., 2011). Interactions are profoundly influencing the pattern of brand-customer communications (Daugherty, Eastin & Bright, 2008; Gallauter and Ransbotham, 2010; Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010).

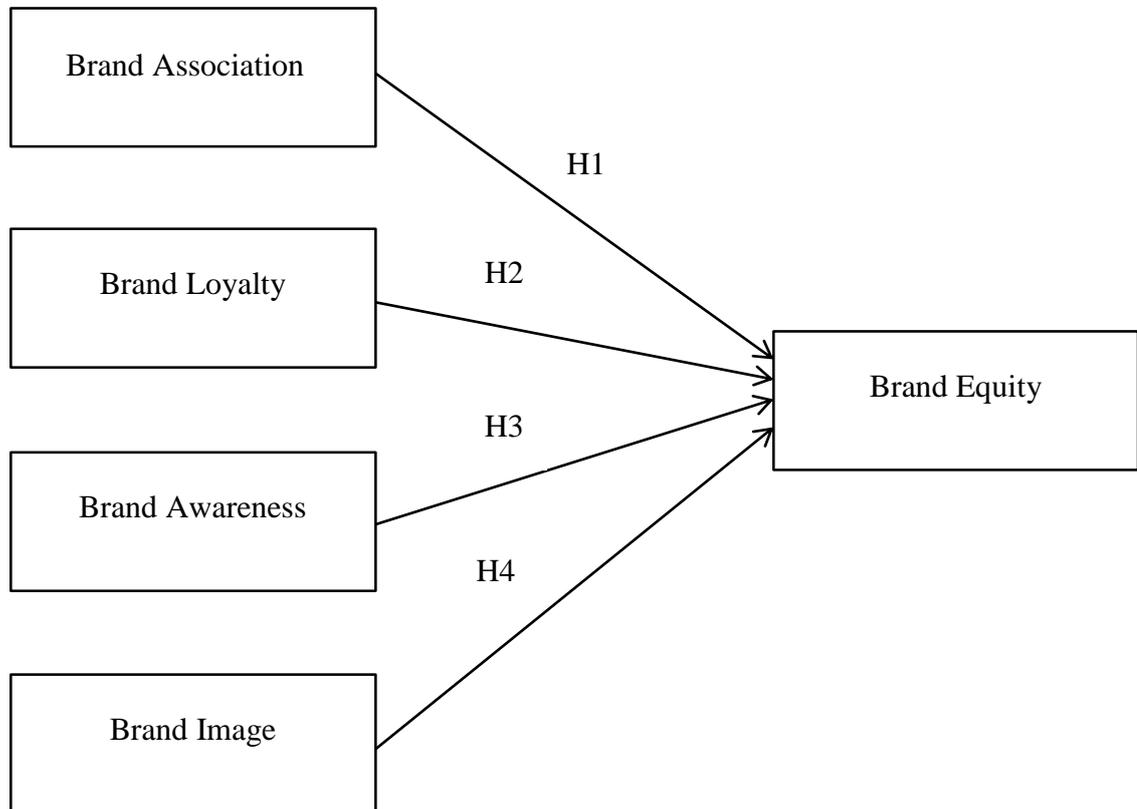
Plus, online marketing activities are also characterized under the subject of trendiness. This is because social media, as other broadcasting channels, also provide the current news and discussion of topics that is happening almost anywhere around the globe. Consumers choose to find information from social media to acquire information as they believe that it is also a reliable source of information (Mangold & Faulds, 2009; Vollmer & Precourt, 2008).

Next, customization refers to what level a service in social media sites is customized (Schmenner, 1986). Various social media sites have their own personalized versions of the websites. By personalizing their site, these brands create an experience for customers, increase brand loyalty and give a glimpse into the company's culture that allows them to express individuality (Martin & Todorov, 2010). Social media customization is important for any businesses, as when company increases followers and interactions with followers, it also increases their search engine rankings and search traffic.

Finally, Litvin, Goldsmith & Pan (2008) defined word of mouth (WOM) as a communication between consumers regarding the product, service, or a business where the sources are considered free from commercial influence. Customers today are spreading a lot of information where they often act as storytellers communicating on behalf of brands providing greater exposure (Goodman, Genest, Elving & Baldwin, 2011). Besides, the impact of WOM in social media has a greater role than traditional media because consumers today rely, share, interact and consume more information in the internet compared to communications through traditional media.

2.2 Review of Relevant Theoretical Models

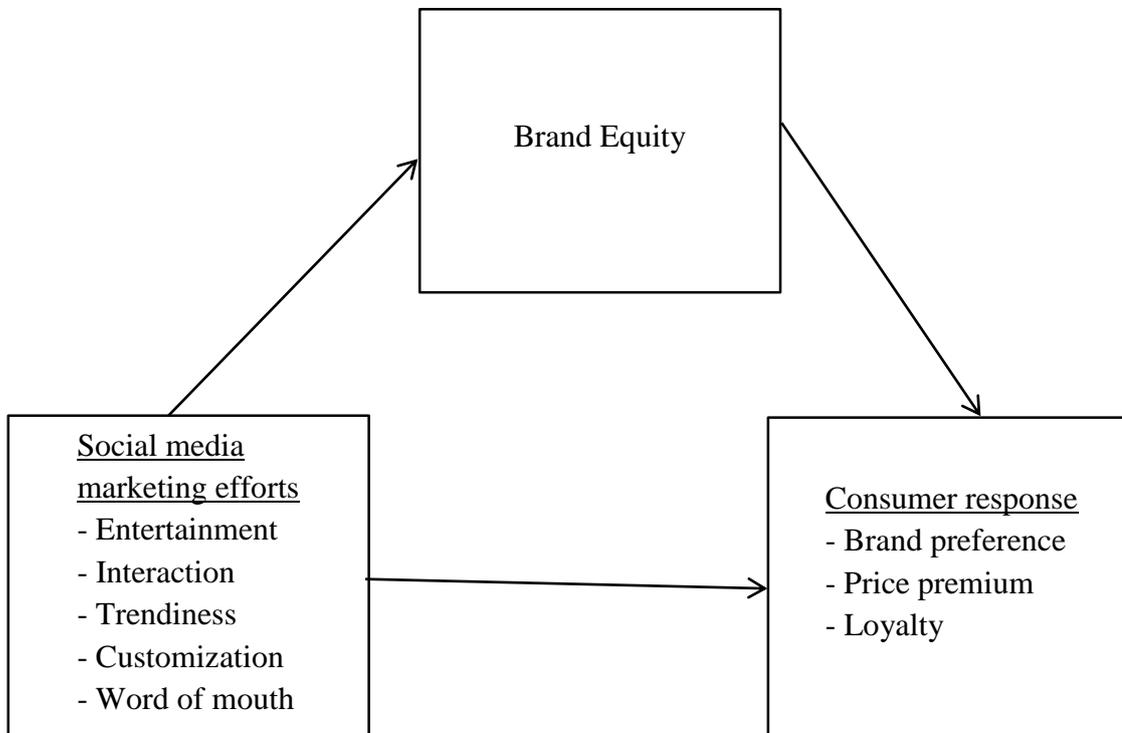
Figure 2.1: The effects of brand association, brand loyalty, brand awareness, and brand image on brand equity among young consumers



Source: Sasmita & Mohd. Suki (2015)

The above figure presents the theoretical framework developed by Sasmita & Mohd. Suki (2015). They investigated about young consumers' insights on brand equity, whereby they examined if factors such as association, loyalty, awareness and image of brands affect brand equity. Their framework was based on Aaker (1991) model of brand equity. The importance of their study is it would help companies to strategically create strategies to improve the brand equity, particularly in the market targeted towards consumers of the younger generation. In the end, the research findings showed that the proposed hypotheses were supported of which brand awareness had the strongest effect on brand equity among young consumers.

Figure 2.2: Social media marketing efforts of luxury brands: Influence on brand equity and consumer behaviour

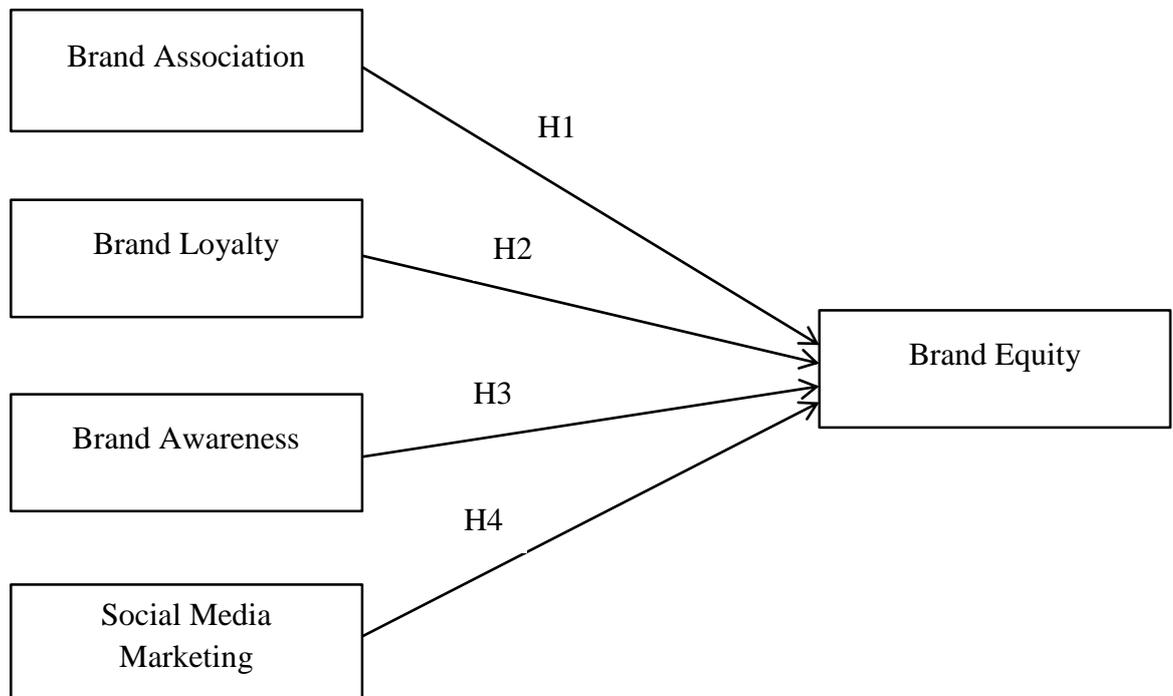


Source: Godey, Manthiou, Pederzoli, Rokka, Aiello, Donvito, & Singh (2016)

Figure 2.2 shows the theoretical framework developed by Godey, Manthiou, Pederzoli, Rokka, Aiello, Donvito, & Singh (2016). Their study examined whether social media marketing activities influence brand equity and consumers' behaviour. They explored these relationships by analysing luxury brands. This research showed the connection between social media marketing efforts (SMME) and their effects on consumer's response. Another focus of their study was they examined whether mediating effect through brand equity is present in the relationship between consumer response and SMMEs. Their research findings were that SMMEs had a significant relationship on brand equity and results indicated that the brand equity influences the overall consumer responses positively and brand equity is a partial mediator of SMMEs.

2.3 Proposed Conceptual Framework

Figure 2.3: Antecedents of Brand Equity of Hair Care Products among Young Adults in Klang Valley



Source: Developed for the research

The figure above shows the framework which is adopted and reformulated for this study. Factors such as brand association, brand loyalty and brand awareness have been adopted from Sasmita & Mohd. Suki (2015); meanwhile the factor of social media marketing was adopted from Godey, Manthiou, Pederzoli, Rokka, Aiello, Donvito, & Singh (2016). The independent variables are brand association, brand loyalty and brand awareness and social media marketing; meanwhile the dependent variable is the brand equity of hair care products. Thus, this research will investigate the causal relationships between these variables.

2.4 Hypotheses Development

2.4.1 The Relationship between Brand Association and Brand Equity

One of the components that are necessary for creation and management of brand equity is brand association (Rio et al, 2016). Moreover Yoo et al. (2000), Pappu and Quester (2006, 2008) and Tong and Hawley (2009) further empirically recognized brand association as a dimension of customer-based brand equity. Based on Bridges et al. (2000), positive association assist to strengthen the brand equity that will help into a leverage situation if affected by other associations linked with the particular brand. Positive associations will help a brand to differentiate them among other competitors and thus earn a competitive advantage that will enable them to create a stronger brand equity that will capture a higher share of the market.

Based on past research by Pouromid and Iranzadeh (2012), a significant relationship between brand association and brand equity is present. Furthermore, based on a local research, it was emphasized that brand association serves as an independent variable which influences brand equity considerably (Severi and Ling, 2013). The significance of brand association and brand equity was further validated through researches done by Kumar, Dash, Purwar (2013), Sasmita and Mohd Suki, (2014), Tong and Hawley (2009). The strongest influence towards brand equity was caused by brand association in a research conducted in Pakistan on branded shoes market compared with other brand equity antecedents (Tanveer and Lodhi, 2016). Brand association is an essential factor in building brand equity among consumers to further develop a long term relationship with consumers. Brand association and brand equity are positively interrelated and is an indicator of quality and commitment which leads consumers to be acquainted with the brand (Aaker, 1991; Tong & Hawley, 2009; Marinova et al., 2011; Yoo et al., 2000).

However in a research conducted in Turkey on their beverage industry, brand association had a negative parameter estimate and wasn't statistically significant with brand equity. Empirical research showed that brand association only had an indirect influence but not a straight-forward one with brand equity. Moreover brand awareness and brand association dimensions were not dispersed well indicating it might be an inter-related concepts (Atilgan, Aksoy and Akinci, 2005). Therefore, brand association is expected to provide a positive and significant relationship with brand equity despite some negative indication in the past research.

H₁: There is a significant relationship between brand association and brand equity of hair care products among young adults in Klang Valley.

2.4.2 The Relationship between Brand Loyalty and Brand Equity

More loyal consumers are, the more favourable are their responses to a brand. Many researchers such as Yoo, Donthu & Lee (2001) and Yasin, Noor and Mohamad (2007) have found that one of the main antecedents of brand equity is brand loyalty. For instance, in the context of young consumers, they usually put their regular product or brand as their first choice for consideration when compared with other products. Later, if they have had a favourable product usage experience, they would recommend this product to their peers or family members. Promisingly, when they are satisfied with a product or brand, chances of them switching to another brand is very low (Sasmita & Mohd Suki, 2015).

According to a study done by Marshall (2010), it was found that brand loyalty is often a thought that is given much importance by firms as it creates customers' patronage which in turn contributes to the increase in brand equity. In another research done by Atilgan, Aksoy & Akinci (2005), who studied on the causal relationship between factors such as loyalty, awareness, association, perceived quality of a brand and brand equity, found out that brand loyalty impacts brand equity. Their findings also showed that

brand loyalty has a greater effect towards brand equity compared to other factors that was investigated.

Similarly, in another study done by Buil, Martinez & Chernatony (2013) which was based on influence of brand equity on consumer responses from two European countries which is United Kingdom and Spain, they found that brand loyalty had a positive control over brand equity. In fact, brand loyalty was found to have a primary influence on brand equity in their study. Another researcher also argued that brand loyalty is an essential component in assessing a brand in terms of value because loyalty can generate revenue (Aaker, 1991). Thus, brand loyalty will contribute to growing brand equity. Hence, the hypothesis is developed as follows:

H₃: There is a significant relationship between brand loyalty and brand equity of hair care products among young adults in Klang Valley.

2.4.3 The Relationship between Brand Awareness and Brand Equity

Brand awareness is a main element of brand equity and often goes unnoticed (Aaker, 1996). It is a major selecting and purchasing factor among consumers (Cobb-Walgren et al., 1995). Consumers have to be very aware and familiar with a brand and have a stable and favorable brand association in their thought process in order for customer-based brand equity to occur (Atilgan, Aksoy and Akinci, 2005). Based on Aaker (1991, 1996), brand awareness is a dimension of customer-based brand equity.

Moreover, Yoo et al. (2000), Pappu and Quester (2006, 2008), Tong and Hawley (2009) empirical studies approved brand awareness as one of the dimensions affecting customer-based brand equity. The height of awareness of a brand among consumers determines the brand equity (Keller, 1993). Therefore, the stronger the brand awareness of a product among consumers, the stronger the brand equity would lay a solid foundation for the brand. Farquhar (1989) quoted that brand awareness is the accessibility part of

brand equity which indicates how fast a consumer could recall and recognize the brand in which it can affect brand equity (Pouromid and Iranzadeh, 2012). Thus, without the presence of strong brand awareness, brand equity of a product would be weak or almost absent (Keller, 2003).

A research conducted on the healthcare industry in India showed that brand awareness was a major element of brand equity and is positively related (Kumar, Dash, Purwar, 2013). This was further validated by a local research (Severi and Ling, 2013) and another study in Pakistan (Tanveer and Lodhi, 2016) where brand awareness was the second strongest factor to positively impact brand equity. Based on the research conducted by Sasmita and Mohd Suki (2014), brand awareness and brand equity has the strongest correlation.

Besides, brand awareness had low parameter estimates and showed an insignificant influence towards brand equity based on another study (Atilgan et al., 2005). Both dimensions of brand awareness and brand association weren't dispersed thoroughly and this might indicate inter-related concepts (Atilgan et al., 2005). This negative significant relationship was further supported by a research conducted in China in their sportswear industry where brand awareness didn't have a direct influence on brand equity (Tong and Hawley, 2009).

Brand awareness lays a foundation for strong brand equity to develop among consumers therefore a strong and stable awareness is needed for a brand to sustain. Thus, brand awareness is expected to provide a positive significant relationship with brand equity despite some negative results in the past research.

H₃: There is a significant relationship between brand awareness and brand equity of hair care products among young adults in Klang Valley.

2.4.4 The Relationship between Social Media Marketing and Brand Equity

Many firms today are building their own social media site because they understand the necessity to involve in social media conversations in order to build their brand equity (Ajanthan, 2017). Plus, there are numerous studies that show the theoretical and practical effects of social media marketing for strengthening and building brand equity (Schultz, 2011; Schultz & Peltier, 2013; Gallagher & Ransbotham, 2010; Kozinets, de Valck, Wojnicki & Wilner, 2010).

Prior studies done by Kim & Ko (2012) found out that under the social media setting, marketing activities can improve brand equity. The effects of constructs of entertainment, interaction, customization, trendiness and word of mouth on equity of value, relationship and brand are found to be positive. In addition, Karman (2015) has indicated that marketing done through social media influenced brand equity of Starbucks in Indonesia.

According to a study done by Bruhn, Schoenmueller, & Schafer (2012), they have disclosed that social media communication and traditional media influences brand equity. Further, Ajanthan (2017) examined the research problem of whether social media marketing impacts brand equity of the Travel & Tourism Industry (TTI) in Sri Lanka. Their research findings revealed that brand equity was positively impacted by social media marketing in the Sri Lankan Travel & Tourism industry.

Moreover, a study done under the facets of the social exchange theory, examined the relationship of social media marketing and brand equity (Son, Narasimhan & Riggins, 2005). The social exchange theory is known to be one of the most dominant conceptual paradigms that were used to understand organizational behaviour (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). This theoretical orientation is based on prior philosophical and psychological orientations that are derived from utilitarianism on one hand and behaviourism on the other (Cook, Cheshire, Rice, & Nakagawa, 2013). This theory provided the theoretical base for the link between social media

marketing and brand equity (Ajanthan, 2017). Hence, the hypothesis is developed as follows:

H₄: There is a significant relationship between social media marketing and brand equity of hair care products among young adults in Klang Valley.

2.5 Conclusion

Chapter two outlined the literature review for this research project whereby it covered on the definitions and discussions about the variables based on the grasp and understandings of this topic. This chapter also encompasses the relationships between the variables and the proposed conceptual framework was established in this chapter as an important component that is required in order to conduct a research.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This part begins with the various techniques that is applied for accumulating and examining data and information that later is used to test hypotheses. Besides, it also covers on the design of the research, techniques of data collection, sampling design, research instrument, constructs measurement and finally on processing and data evaluation. Thus, the chapter aims to ensure that proper research procedures are followed and carried out in order to help readers to gain clarity and can comprehend well the information that will be presented in this study.

3.1 Research Design

3.1.1 Quantitative Research

Tuli (2010) defined quantitative research as the attempts in order to quantify social phenomena and gather to analyze numerical data and focus on the connection between a smaller number of attributes across various cases. So, this study is in the form of a quantitative research. Besides, Burns & Bush (2006) referred to quantitative research as procedure that will be administered by giving structured questions that comes with fixed response options to respondents. This type of research includes a certain size of sample that represents a population and is a formal method for collecting data. The objectives of quantitative research are always specific (Burns & Bush, 2006).

3.1.2 Descriptive Research

Williams (2007) has defined descriptive research as the identification of attributes of a certain phenomenon based on an observational basis or the exploration of correlation between two or more phenomena. So, this study is also in the form of a descriptive research. According to Zikmund, Babin, Carr & Griffin (2010), researchers adopt this research mode with the objective of describing characteristics of individuals, clusters, societies or environments. Besides, it is found that there are four ways in which a descriptive research can be conducted which is through observational studies, correlational, survey research and developmental design (Williams, 2007). This research follows survey research method whereby questionnaires are given to respondents in order for them to complete the questionnaire and later the data collected will be used for analysis.

3.2 Data Collection Methods

Information could be derived from main or secondary sources. The source of information and the method in which data are collected could make a big difference to the success of a research as there are possibilities to where it may affect the validity of end results. Data is highly necessary in any research as it will help to accomplish research objectives and answer research questions after testing hypotheses. Besides, data that is collected, such as theories and facts, can assist researchers to better understand the research. In this research, data is obtained through both main and secondary sources.

3.2.1 Primary Data

Primary data refers to an already acquired information and data by researchers who sought it for a particular purpose by using a procedure that best suits their research problem (Hox and Boeijs, 2005; Sekaran and Bougie, 2013). Some of the common sources for primary data are

observations, individuals, unobtrusive methods, personal interview and experiments (Sekaran and Bougie, 2013). Besides, according to Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill (2009), they have quoted that it is also common for researchers to use questionnaires as a data collection method for primary data. However, questionnaires are most suitable to be used for descriptive research or explanatory research. In this research, self-administered questionnaires are the primary data collection method that was adopted.

3.2.2 Secondary Data

When any sort of data are occasionally added to the collection of primary data that has been collected earlier and is readily present for reuse, it is called as secondary data (Hox and Boeije, 2005). Secondary data are usually cheaper and can be obtained in a faster manner compared to primary data. In the research, data was obtained from common sources of secondary data such as journal publications from databases such as Emerald, Sage, Taylor and Francis are many more. Data has also been gathered from reference books such as Research Methods for Business, Business Research Methods and many more.

3.3 Sampling Design

This is a technique which includes making conclusion about a whole population based on a subset of the particular population. Populations are known as a complete group that shares particular common set of characteristics among themselves (Zikmund et. al, 2010). Generally, the reasons for using a sample for a study are because it is almost unrealistic to study on a whole population as it could be time-consuming and very costly, thus researchers rely on samples to carry out their research. Also, studying a sample as compared to studying an entire population often produces more reliable results (Sekaran and Bougie, 2013).

3.3.1 Target Population

A group of individuals from which a sample is obtained is known as target population. In this research, the targeted population are young adults consisting both males and females who are aged between 20 to 35 years old. These young adults are those studying in various higher education institutions, such as colleges, public and private universities. Another part of this group consists of those who are working in various jobs.

3.3.2 Sampling Frame and Location

The definition for sampling frame as provided by Burns and Bush (2006) is “the master source of sample units in the population”. Also, the target population of this research consists of 175 male and female young adults who are currently studying at Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR), Tunku Abdul Rahman University College (TARUC), University Putra Malaysia (UPM), University Malaya (UM), UCSI University and working in work places in areas around Klang Valley. The questionnaires were randomly distributed and administered in areas of Klang Valley. Klang Valley was chosen as the sampling location because cities and areas in Klang Valley are known as the most populous area in Malaysia and many giant international brands can be found carrying out their business in these areas. Thus, many people would be more aware of various international hair care brands.

3.3.3 Sampling Elements

The target group for this study involves those who have purchased and use hair care products on a regular basis. The rationale is that they are the most qualified individuals for our study of antecedents of brand equity of hair care products as they would be able to recall well about the information regarding their regularly purchased hair care brand or product compared to those who would rarely purchase hair care products. Therefore, their

evaluation and responses are the closest to be representative of the total population.

3.3.4 Sampling Technique

Probability or representative sampling and non-probability or judgemental samplings are the types of sampling methods that are commonly adopted (Saunders et al., 2009). According to Sekaran and Bougie (2013), for probability sampling, every element in the population has known possibilities to be chosen, while non-probability sampling includes parts of the population having unknown possibilities of being chosen as samples. This is because researchers heavily rely on personal judgements or convenience for the selection.

Samples were selected by using non-probability sampling in this study, namely the convenience sampling method. It is defined as sampling by getting individuals that are easily accessible to be your respondents (Zikmund et al., 2010). Samples were being selected until it reached the required sample size. This sampling method was picked because completed questionnaires can be obtained in a big scale and quickly as well.

3.3.5 Sampling Size

Saunders et al. (2009) have mentioned that statisticians has proved that a sample size of 30 or more can most probably cause a sampling distribution's mean to be as similar to a normal distribution. In relation to that, Stutely (2003) presented a rule of thumb stating that the smallest number in each category in an overall sample must be 30 in order to carry out any statistical analyses. Thus, 175 questionnaires were given out, in which 100 questionnaires were distributed through online platforms and 75 were given in person to maximize the research validity. Later, 163 of the questionnaires have been collected with 152 of them being valid.

3.4 Research Instrument

The main research instrument in this study are self-administered questionnaires. It is surveys that are done without the presence of interviewers and respondents are accountable for answering the questions by themselves (Zikmund et al., 2010). The questionnaires were passed around in paper form and also as online questionnaires. The methods of delivery of these questionnaires were through direct delivery to the respondents in person and it was collected from them afterwards and as for the electronic questionnaires, it was sent through e-mails, Internet websites and mobile phones. These methods were chosen as it would reduce the chances for biasness, such as the respondents trying to please the interviewers and also it is less costly and saves time.

3.4.1 Questionnaire Design

Questions were adapted from various journals and English was chosen as the language medium for the questionnaire because it is a widely spoken language among people, thus we could reach more respondents by doing so. Besides, extra attention and detail was given to the way questions were formed. This is to avoid respondents from being confused when answering questions.

The questionnaires were designed with fixed-alternative questions, which means that the questions are specific and has pre-determined options for the respondents. By designing the questions with fixed-alternative questions, it is convenient and less time-consuming for respondents and from an interviewer's viewpoint, comparison of responses can be done accordingly and not much skill are required by interviewers (Zikmund et al., 2010).

Firstly, an overall overview and purpose of this research were included in the questionnaire. Next, there were a total of three sections that was covered in the questionnaire. Section A covered on general information of respondents such as about their usage, purchase and awareness of hair care brands or products. The six questions that consisted in this section were in

the form of determinant-choice, frequency-determination and checklist questions.

As for Section B, it includes construct measurement which had five to six questions under each of the five variables that are studied in this research. Questions in this section are designed with a five-point Likert-style rating scale whereby respondents are asked to what extent they approve or don't approve a statement or series of statements (Saunders et al., 2009). According to Zikmund et al. (2010), they quoted that Likert scales are useful due to its measurable attitude which is also simple and versatile. Plus, it is certain that respondents will find it hard to differentiate the scales if a nine-point or eleven-point is used.

In Section C, the questions covered on respondent's demographic details which includes their age, gender, education level and monthly earnings. This section helps researchers to understand the characteristics and profile of respondents. Multiple choices questions were set and instruction to select choose any one answer only was stated.

3.4.2 Pilot Test

This is often referred to as pre-tests. Pilot study is something similar to a mini research project whereby the respondents whom were used to collect data from are the same people that will be used in the entire study (Zikmund et al., 2010). This test helps in checking the reliability and validity of questionnaires and to identify if there are errors in the questions. Thus, pilot studies are necessary to refine the questions in the questionnaire and to reduce the possibility of the full study being flawed terribly. Mitchell (1996) listed three common methodologies in evaluating reliability, which are internal consistency, alternative form and test re-tests. In this study, internal consistency approach is adopted. Table 3.1 below depicts Cronbach's Alpha coefficient's acceptable and unacceptable level.

Table 3.1: Acceptable and Unacceptable Level of Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient

Alpha's Coefficient	Implied Reliability
below .60	Poor
between .60 and .80	Acceptable
above .80	Good strength of association

Source: Sekaran (2003)

The Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) version 23.0 was applied in order to check the internal consistency. Before that, 30 questionnaires were collected in order to perform this test. The table below presents the results of pilot test that was carried out after collecting data using the questionnaires. Thus, according to Sekaran (2003), all the variables studied in this research are deemed to be significant as the Cronbach's alpha value is above 0.6 for all of them.

Table 3.2: Pilot Test Results

No.	Constructs	Cronbach's Alpha	Number of items
1	Brand Association	0.904	5
2	Brand Loyalty	0.854	5
3	Brand Awareness	0.923	5
4	Social Media Marketing	0.898	6
5	Brand Equity	0.938	6

Source: Developed for the research

3.5 Construct Measurement

3.5.1 Origin of Constructs

Table 3.3: Origin of Constructs

Constructs	Sources
Brand Association	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Sasmita and Mohd Suki (2015)
Brand Loyalty	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Sasmita and Mohd Suki (2015)
Brand Awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Sasmita and Mohd Suki (2015)
Social Media Marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Godey, Manthiou, Pederzoli, Rokka, Aiello, Donvito, & Singh (2016)
Brand Equity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Wang, & Tang (2018)Murtiasih, Sucherly, & Siringoringo (2014)

Source: Developed for the research

Table 3.4 Sample Items of the Constructs

Constructs	No. of Items	Sample Items
Brand Association	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I trust the parent brand/corporation who owns the particular hair care product • I am familiar with the hair care products or brands that appear in various marketing media • There are reasons to buy this particular hair care product/brand over the competing hair care product/brand that appeared in the social media
Brand Loyalty	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am satisfied with my regular hair care product/brand • I would recommend my regular hair care product/brand to others • I will not switch to another hair care product/brand
Brand Awareness	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can quickly recall symbol or logo of the hair care products/brands in different marketing activities or places • Some characteristics of my regular hair care product/brand that appears in different situation or marketing activities come to my mind quickly • I'm aware of the hair care products/brands in market
Social Media Marketing	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content of the preferred hair care brand/product's social media seems interesting. (Information, contests, visuals, creativity and etc.)

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is easy to provide my opinion through the preferred hair care brand's social media • Content of the preferred hair care brand's social media is the latest information
Brand Equity	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It makes sense to buy my regular hair care brand instead of any other brand, even if they have similar characteristics • Even if another hair care brand has the same features as my regular hair care brand, I would prefer to buy my usual hair care brand • Make sense to buy my regular hair care brand instead of any other hair care brands even if they have the same quality

Source: Developed for the research

3.5.2 Scale of Measurement

Self-administered questionnaires were used in order to gain data from respondents for the research. The types of scales that were used are interval, nominal and ordinal scales.

Nominal scale helps to distinguish the categories of each of the variables involved in the research (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2012). Numbers are used to represent the categories of the respondents however it only serves as an identification purpose and does not pose any particular value of its own (Zikmund, Carr and Griffin, Babin, 2010). As for ordinal scale, it shows the position order among the groups of the related variables (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2012). Only an approximate difference between the points can be derived. There is a logical and ordered relationship between each categories which leads to the measurement of the differences but not a specific and definite value (Chow, Dickson, Tham and Wong, 2013).

Interval scale is applied to find out the order and to measure the gap in terms of units in equal distance (Saunders et al., 2012). One of commonly used interval scale in most researches is the Likert scale. It is also used for the research as it helps to test the strength of the relationship of each item with the respondents. It is five point scale that indicates to which extent and level the respondents has agreed to an item (Forgas-Coll, Palau Saumell, Sanchez-Garcia and Callarisa- Fiol, 2012). The choices are 1 as “Strongly Disagree”, 2 as “Disagree”, 3 as “Neutral”, 4 as “Agree” and 5 as “Strongly Agree”.

Section A (General Information) of the questionnaire helped to identify and gather information on the respondents purchasing pattern and buying behaviour of hair care products. Nominal and ordinal scales were used for this section. Respondents brand recognition was measured by nominal scale while respondents’ purchasing pattern and period was measured by ordinal scale.

Interval scale was used for Section B (Construct Measurement). The five points Likert scales helped to establish and investigate the relationship between the independent and dependent variables. Furthermore, Section C (Demographic Profile) helped to collect the personal information of the respondents. This was

aided by nominal scales where gender, occupation and academic qualification information was gathered and ordinal scale where age and monthly income was measured.

3.6 Data Processing

In order to determine that all data collected via the questionnaires are valid and reliable to be able to use it for in-depth analysis, processing of the data needs to be done. The steps involved in this process are questionnaire inspection and editing, coding, transcribing and cleaning of data (Malhotra, 2012).

3.6.1 Questionnaire Checking

The process of glancing through and inspecting the questionnaire is an on-going process that is done from beginning of the first set of questionnaire that was prepared for the research study (Saunders et al., 2012). A pilot test involving 30 respondents is done to check the reliability of the outcomes. This will indicate if any amendment is needed before a large scale data collection is carried out. This stage will help to reduce the errors in the questionnaire thus make the data collection more reliable hence increase the standard of the research.

3.6.2 Data Editing

This is a method of screening and checking to eliminate responses which are irrelevant, incomplete and ambiguous (Saunders et al., 2012). It includes reviewing the collection of data forms for exclusions, legibility and accuracy in the classification (Zikmund et al., 2009). Therefore the raw data has to edit in order to derive results to create value for the research. It will ensure the data collected to be used for research are consistent and relevant to the research subject.

3.6.3 Data Coding

This process includes analysing, sorting, documenting and transmitting of data to data storage media occurs (Zikmund et al., 2009). A fixed set of numbers should be applied for the respondents. Also, the data in the column should be the similar across all respondents (Malhotra, 2009). This is will be useful for the Statistical Project of Social Science to derive and interpret the responses. Therefore in Section B a common Likert scale was used and in Section C; “Male” assigned with 1 and “Female” with 2.

3.6.4 Data Transcribing

This stage is about information that was obtained via coding from the questionnaire is transmitted to the computer (Malhotra, 2012). The data will then be transcribed to SPSS software version 23.0 to carry out data analysis which will find out and interpret the results of the research conducted.

3.6.5 Data Cleaning

This is the last stage of processing data that involves consistency of responses being examined and treatment of the responses that are absent is carried out after transliterating data using SPSS software (Saunders et al., 2012). It would help in indicating if the data is not in place, not consistent and possess extreme value. A proper and consistent data analysis can be carried out after data cleaning to gain accurate results.

3.7 Data Analysis

Performing several interconnected processes in order to summarize and convert raw data into useful statistics is called data analysis (Zikmund, 2003). In this study, 152 valid questionnaires were obtained after distribution. Later, after all data was completely gained, SPSS software was used to evaluate the data. It is a popular statistical software as it is capable of producing quality results and also in a quick manner (Saunders et al., 2012).

Data analysis will help to gain a feel for the data (descriptive analysis), test the goodness of the data (scale measurement) and test the hypotheses developed for the research (inferential analysis) (Sekaran, 2003). The data are studied using both descriptive and inferential analysis and the information gained from data analysis will contribute to conclude the research problems.

3.7.1 Descriptive Analysis

This is a basic data transmitting method that is done to define its characteristics (Zikmund et al., 2009). It helps to scale down huge amount of information regarding the respondents to an easier and comprehensible manner (Saunders et al., 2012). Descriptive analysis is done by interpreting data by using mean, median and mode for measures of central tendency and using range, variance and standard deviation for quantifying dispersion. Frequency distribution helps to summarize the frequency a particular value that comes in the research from organizing a set of data (Zikmund et al., 2013). The measurement only involves one categorical variable which is nominal or ordinal scale (Zikmund, 2003). The frequencies are visually represented as bar charts, histograms, or pie charts (Sekaran, 2003).

3.7.2 Scale Measurement

This step measures reliability, validity and consistency of data gained from respondents. Reliability is the extent the measure is error free and able to produce stable and consistent results (Zikmund, 2003). Reliability shows the measure's internal consistency that relates to the uniformity of the measure (Saunders et al., 2009). Cronbach's alpha, a assist to measure the internal consistency. Reliability coefficient varies from 0 to 1 and if the Cronbach's alpha value found to be more than 0.6, the internal consistency is acceptable (Sekaran, 2003).

3.7.3 Inferential Analysis

In order to vindicate hypothesis of researches, this analysis needs to be done (Saunders et al., 2012). It helps to make assumptions and predictions through the data collected from the respondents to draw a conclusion on the population involved. Inferential analysis test the hypothesis and brings to a conclusion through the results obtained. Pearson Correlation Coefficient and Multiple Regression Analysis are conducted to obtain the results for this study.

3.7.3.1 Pearson Correlation Coefficient

By carrying out this test, it helps to experiment the linear relationship to see the strength and direction between variables (Saunders et al., 2012). Besides analysing the relationship between variables, two-tailed significant level is used in testing null hypotheses (Zikmund et al., 2013). Coefficient (r) will show the direction and magnitude of linear relationships (Zikmund et al., 2013). Then coefficient's range is from +1.0 to -1.0 in which +1 indicates positive relationship between the variables and -1.0 indicates negative relationship between the variables (Saunders et al., 2012). 0 means no linear relationship. If both variables have positive correlation coefficient, the

increase in one variable is linked to another, and vice versa applies (Hair, Babin, Money & Samouel, 2003).

3.7.3.2 Multiple Regression Analysis

This statistical method is employed to find out the relationship between two or more independent and single dependent variable. The variables must be in a ratio or interval scale (Saunders et al., 2012). As for R square, it helps to determine the proportion of dependent variables that will be explained by the independent variables. As for Anova, it evaluates the significant variations between dependent and independent factors (Saunders et al., 2012). Multiple regressions can determine positive or negative relationship between the independent and dependent factors. The p-value has to be less than 0.05 in order for the hypothesis to be accepted as the confidence level is 95 percent.

The multiple regression equation is as follows:

$$Y = a + b_1X_1 + b_2X_2 + b_3X_3 + \dots$$

Where Y = dependent variable

X = independent variable

a = constant value or y-intercept

b = unstandardized coefficient

3.8 Conclusion

Chapter three covered on methodology of the research in which data collection methods, research design and instrument, sampling designs, data processing and analysis and finally construct measurement was discussed. Later, with the information that was gathered and analysed using the methods discussed, the follow-up results will be shown and explained in upcoming chapters.

CHAPTER 4: DATA ANALYSIS

4.0 Introduction

This section entails analyzing results of the survey research that was conducted using questionnaires. Data congregated from 152 people will be analyzed using SPSS software. Generally, this chapter will include components such as descriptive analysis and statistics, measurements of scale and inferential analysis. In order to make sure that information is presented in a clear and organized manner, charts and tables are utilized to illustrate the achieved outcomes. Finally, findings of the hypotheses will be included.

4.1 Descriptive Analysis

4.1.1 Respondent Demographic Profile

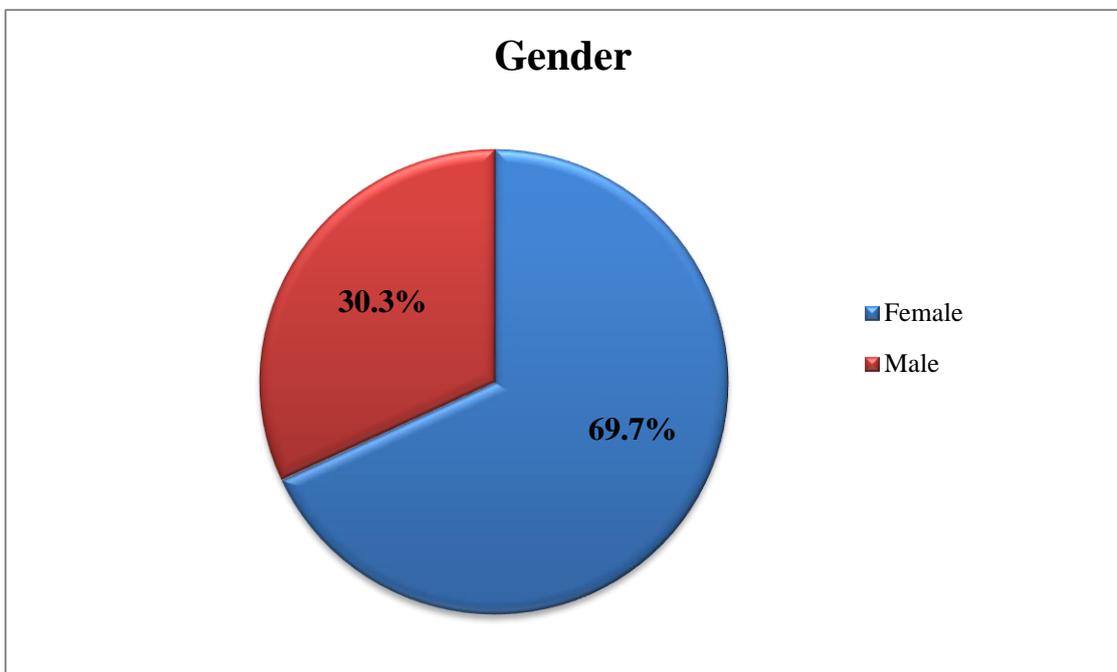
Under Section C (Demographic Profile) of this research, 4 questions were asked. It was about their age, gender, education level and monthly income of respondents. The answers from this section will be used to gain insights of the demographic profile of the respondent.

Table 4.1: Gender

		Frequency	Percentage (%)	Valid Percentage (%)	Cumulative Percentage (%)
Valid	Male	46	30.3	30.3	30.3
	Female	106	69.7	69.7	100
	Total	152	100	100	

Source: Developed for the research

Figure 4.1: Gender



Source: Developed for the research

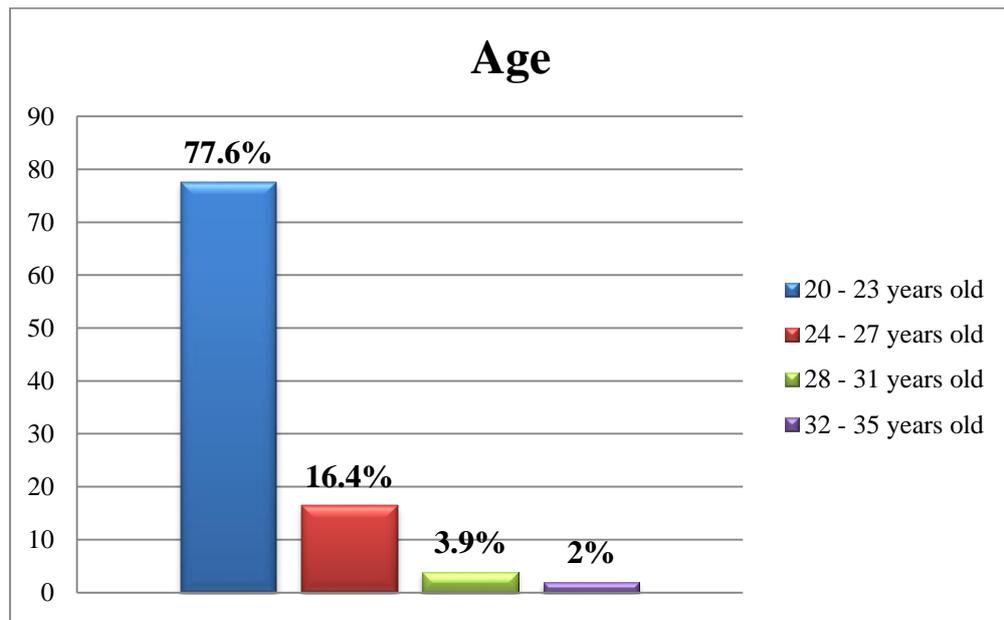
Based on Table 4.1 and Figure 4.1, the research consists 152 respondents, where 69.7% or 106 of the respondents are female meanwhile the other 30.3% or 46 respondents are male.

Table 4.2: Age

		Frequency	Percentage (%)	Valid Percentage (%)	Cumulative Percentage (%)
Valid	20 – 23 years old	118	77.6	77.6	77.6
	24 – 27 years old	25	16.4	16.4	94
	28 – 31 years old	6	3.9	4	98
	32 – 35 years old	3	2	2	100
	Total	152	100.0	100	

Source: Developed for the research

Figure 4.2: Age



Source: Developed for the research

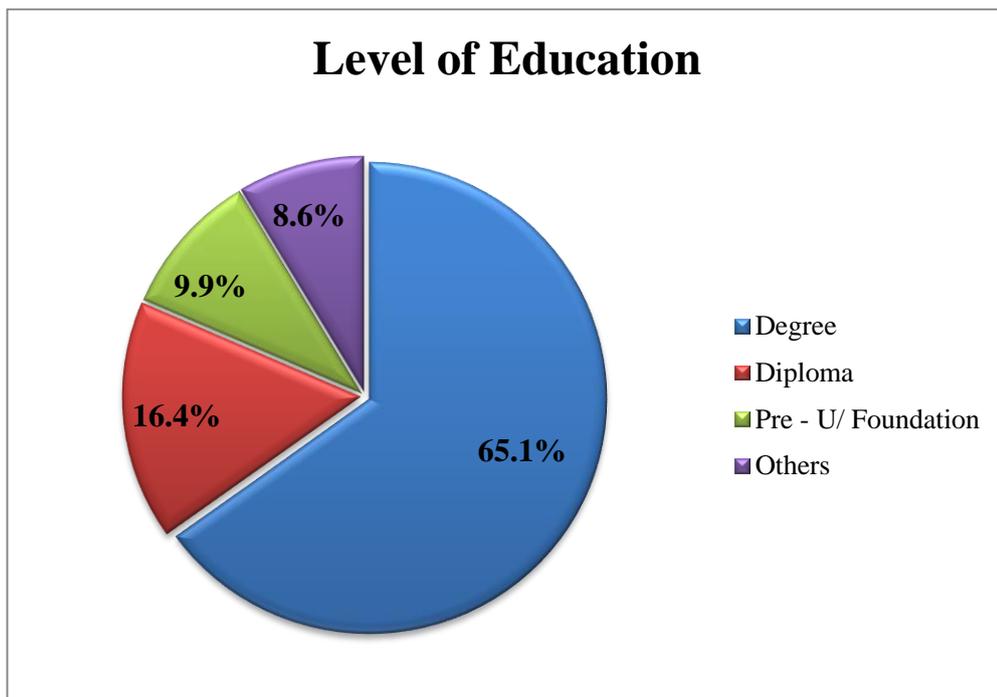
The table and figure above shows that young adults who are in the category of 20 – 23 years old represent the highest percentage of the total respondents which is 77.6% or 118 respondents. The second highest percentage consists of those that fall in category of 24 – 27 years old which is 16.4% or 25 respondents. 4% or 6 respondents belong to the 28 – 31 years old range while only 2% or 3 respondents are from the 32 – 35 years old range.

Table 4.3: Level of Education

		Frequency	Percentage (%)	Valid Percentage (%)	Cumulative Percentage (%)
Valid	Degree	99	65.1	65.1	65.1
	Diploma	25	16.4	16.4	81.5
	Pre-U/ Foundation	15	9.9	9.9	91.4
	Others	13	8.6	8.6	100
	Total	152	100.0	100.0	

Source: Developed for the research

Figure 4.3: Level of Education



Source: Developed for the research

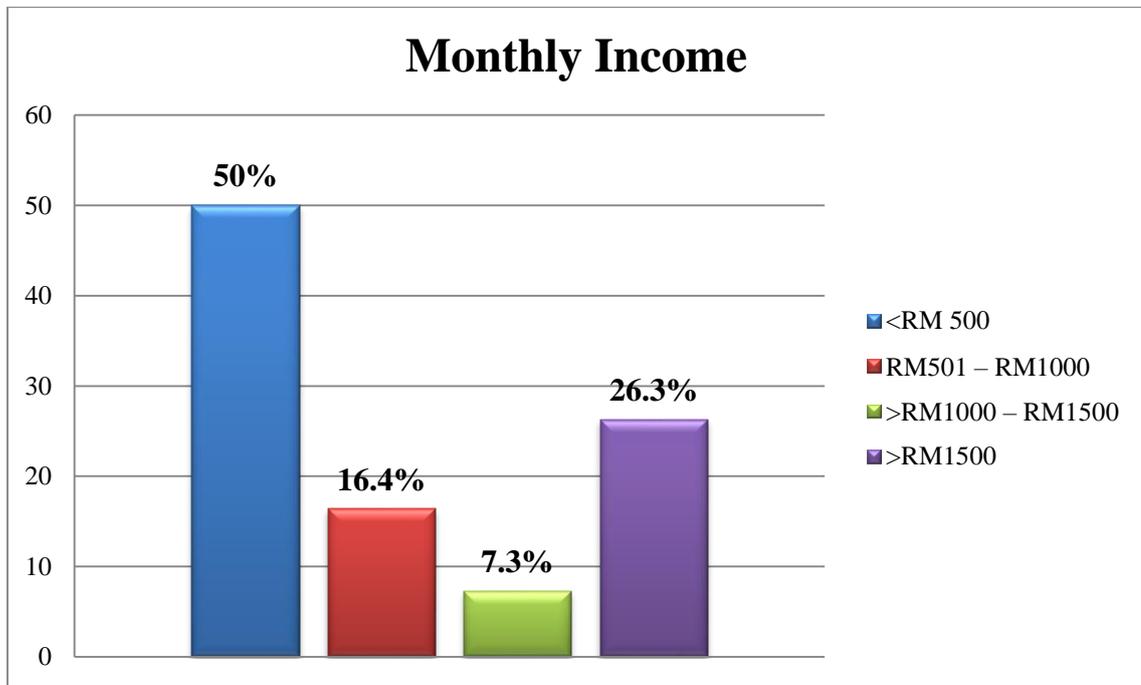
As displayed in the chart and table above, 65.1% or 99 people were found to hold a Bachelor’s Degree, followed by those who has completed Diploma which is 16.4% or 25 respondents. 9.9% or 15 respondents have done some sort of Pre – University or foundation program. Meanwhile another 8.6% or 13 respondents are doing a variety of different courses such as ACCA, professional certificates or Master’s Degree.

Table 4.4: Monthly Income

		Frequency	Percentage (%)	Valid Percentage (%)	Cumulative Percentage (%)
Valid	<RM 500	76	50	50	50
	RM501 – RM1000	25	16.4	16.4	66.4
	>RM1000 – RM1500	11	7.3	7.3	73.7
	>RM1500	40	26.3	26.3	100
	Total	152	100	100	

Source: Developed for the research

Figure 4.4: Monthly Income



Source: Developed for the research

The above charts indicates that 50% of the respondents or 76 of them have a monthly income less than RM500. 16.4% or 25 respondents have an income of RM501 to RM1000 and only 7.3% or 11 respondents have an income between RM1000 to RM1500. Finally the second highest proportion is more than RM1500 that is 26.3 or 40 respondents of the research. The monthly income includes allowances.

4.1.2 Respondent General Information

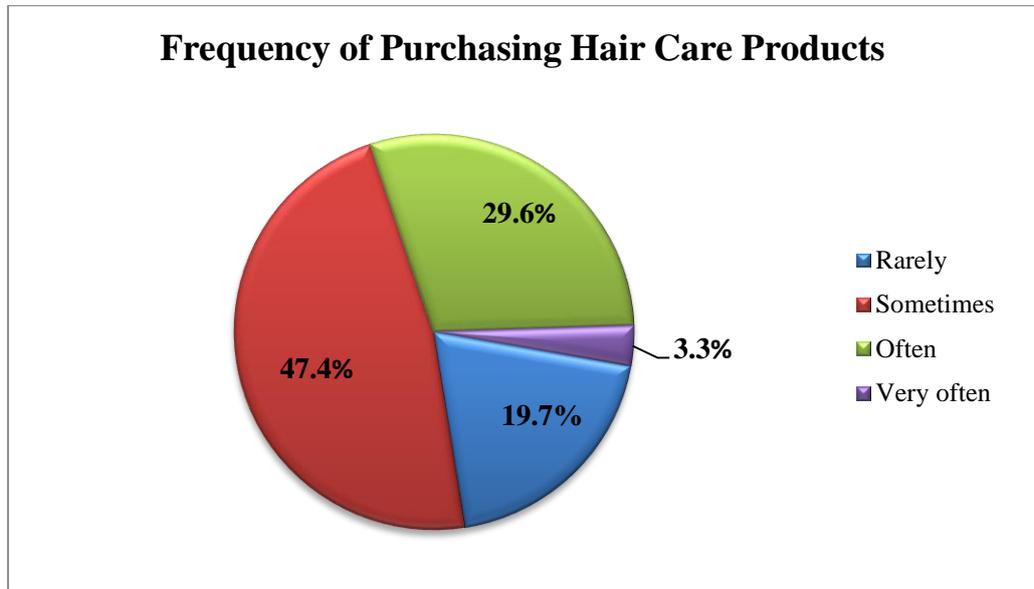
In this section, 6 questions were asked regarding the frequency of purchasing hair care products, time interval of how recently purchase of hair care products were made, money spent on hair care products per visit, the types of hair care products that are used on a regular basis, awareness about hair care brands that exist and finally, the hair care brands which have been used before.

Table 4.5: Frequency of Purchasing Hair Care Products

		Frequency	Percentage (%)	Valid Percentage (%)	Cumulative Percentage (%)
Valid	Rarely	30	19.7	19.7	19.7
	Sometimes	72	47.4	47.4	67.1
	Often	45	29.6	29.6	96.7
	Very often	5	3.3	3.3	100
	Total	152	100	100	

Source: Developed for the research

Figure 4.5: Frequency of Purchasing Hair Care Products



Source: Developed for the research

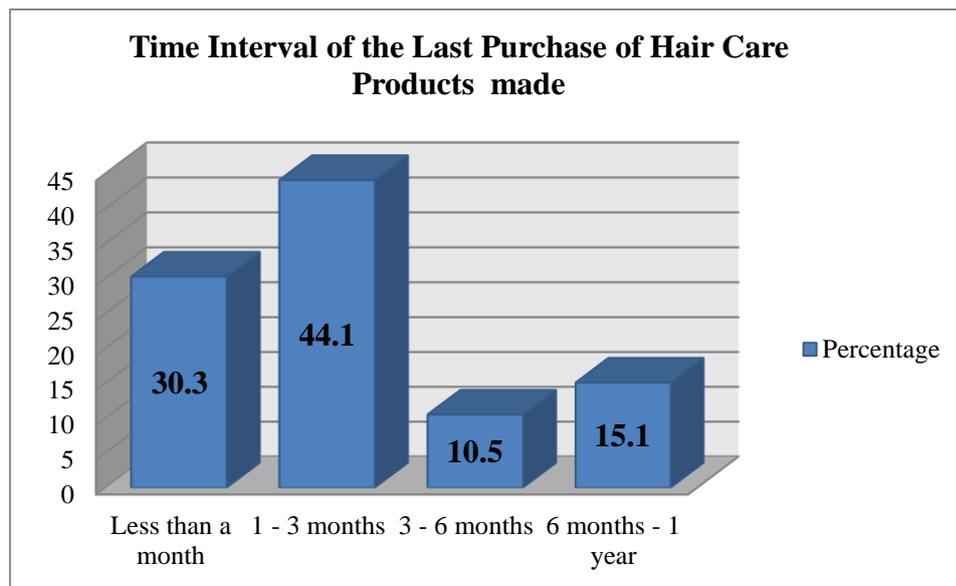
As depicted above, it shows that majority of them purchased hair care products only sometimes, which constitutes the highest percentage of 47.4%. Respondents who purchase hair care products often follows next, which constitutes the second highest percentage of 29.6% and it is found that 30 out of the 152 respondents were found to purchase hair care products rarely which are 19.7%. However, the respondents who buy hair care products very often are those who comprised of the lowest percentage and the smallest number of respondents, which is 3.3% and 5 respondents respectively.

Table 4.6: Time Interval of the Last Purchase of Hair Care Products made

		Frequency	Percentage (%)	Valid Percentage (%)	Cumulative Percentage (%)
Valid	Less than 1 month	46	30.3	30.3	30.3
	1 - 3 months	67	44.1	44.1	74.4
	3 - 6 months	16	10.5	10.5	84.9
	6 months - 1 year	23	15.1	15.1	100
	Total	152	100	100	

Source: Developed for the research

Figure 4.6: Time Interval of the Last Purchase of Hair Care Products made



Source: Developed for the research

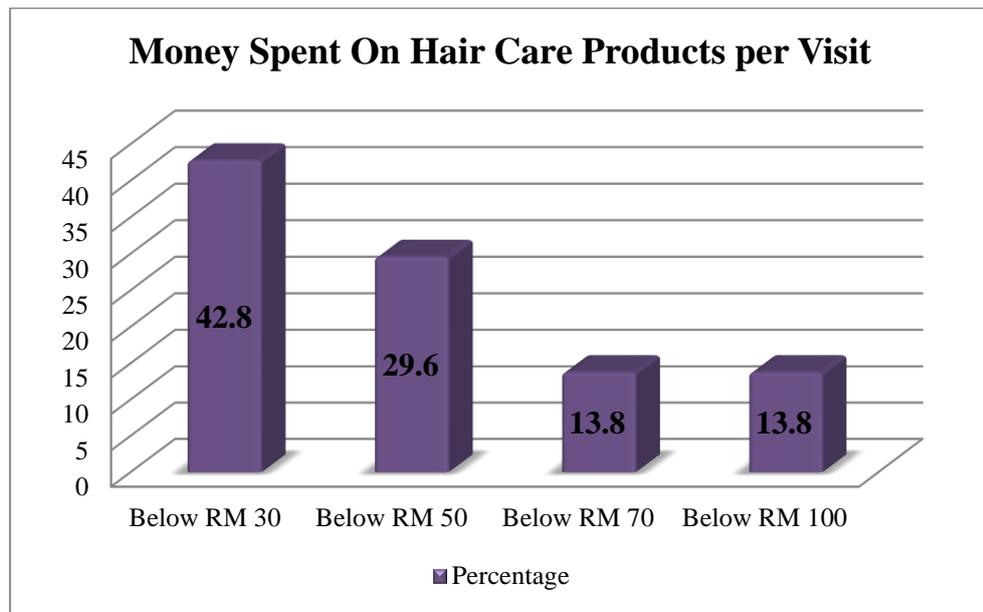
The above table and figure shows that most of the respondents last purchased hair care products in the last 1-3 months, which are 67 out of 152 respondents or 44.1%. It is followed by 30.3% of them who purchased hair care products in less than a month, which constitutes the second highest percentage of 30.3%. Subsequently, it was found that only a small percentage of the 152 respondents purchased hair care products in the last 3-6 months and the last 6 months-1 year, which is 10.5% and 15.5% respectively.

Table 4.7: Money Spent on Hair Care Products per Visit

		Frequency	Percentage (%)	Valid Percentage (%)	Cumulative Percentage (%)
Valid	Below RM 30	65	42.8	42.8	42.8
	Below RM 50	45	29.6	29.6	72.4
	Below RM 70	21	13.8	13.8	86.2
	Below RM 100	21	13.8	13.8	100
	Total	152	100	100	

Source: Developed for the research

Figure 4.7: Money Spent on Hair Care Products per Visit



Source: Developed for the research

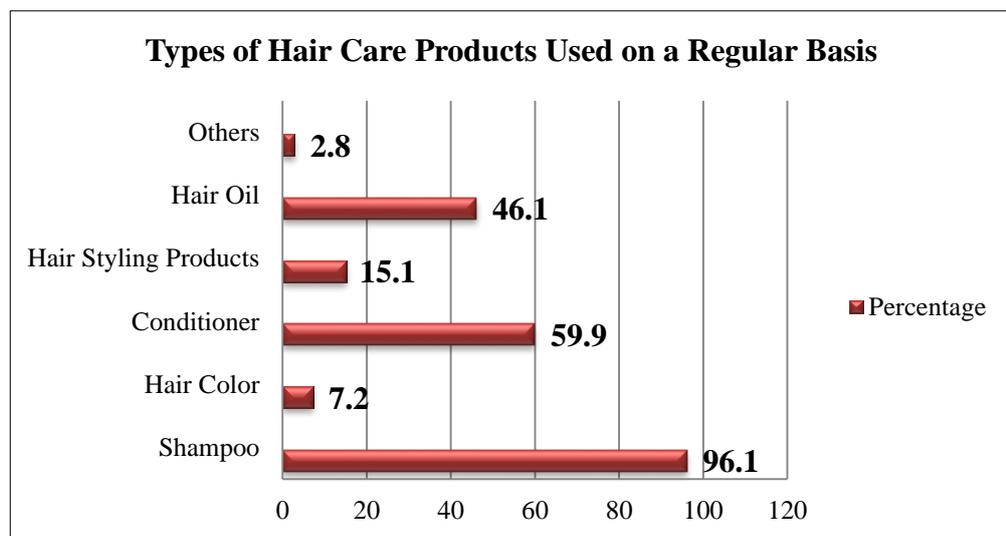
Table and figure 4.7 explains that there are 65 respondents who spend below RM 30 on hair care products per visit, which also constitutes the highest percentage of 42.8%. On the other hand, the second highest percentage which is 29.6% is represented by those who spend below RM 50 for hair care products per visit that is 45 of them. However, the lowest percentage was represented by those who spend below RM 70 and also below RM 100 for hair care products per visit, as it was represented by an equal number of 21 respondents.

Table 4.8: Types of Hair Care Products Used on a Regular Basis

		Frequency	Percentage (%)	Valid Percentage (%)	Cumulative Percentage (%)
Valid	Shampoo	146	96.1	96.1	96.1
	Hair Color	11	7.2	7.2	103.3
	Conditioner	91	59.9	59.9	163.2
	Hair Styling Products	23	15.1	15.1	178.3
	Hair Oil	70	46.1	46.1	224.4
	Others	4	2.8	2.8	227.2
	Total	345	227.2	227.2	

Source: Developed for the research

Figure 4.8: Types of Hair Care Products Used on a Regular Basis



Source: Developed for the research

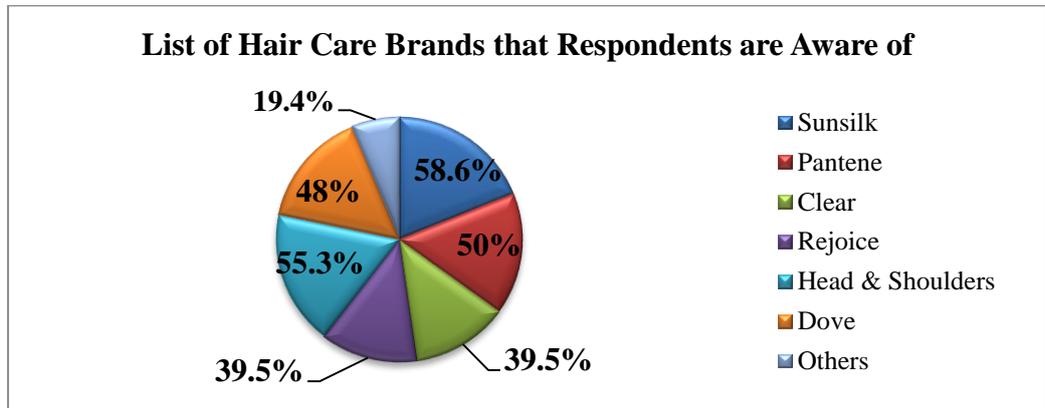
Respondents were allowed to pick more than one option for this question as it was a multiple-choice question. Hence, the charts show that a lot of them chose shampoo as the type of hair care product which is used on a regular basis, which is 96.1%. It is followed by respondents who chose conditioner as their option, which constitutes the second highest percentage of 59.9%. Next, it is followed by those who chose hair oil with 46.1% then hair styling products and hair color as their options were 15.1% and 7.2% respectively. Finally, there were 2.8% of them who listed other regularly used hair products as their option which are masks, wax, herbals and hair treatments.

Table 4.9: List of Hair Care Brands that Respondents are Well Aware of

		Frequency	Percentage (%)	Valid Percentage (%)	Cumulative Percentage (%)
Valid	Sunsilk	89	58.6	58.6	58.6
	Pantene	76	50	50	108.6
	Clear	60	39.5	39.5	148.1
	Rejoice	60	39.5	39.5	187.6
	Head & Shoulders	84	55.3	55.3	242.9
	Dove	73	48	48	290.9
	Others	26	19.4	19.4	310.3
	Total	468	310.3	310.3	

Source: Developed for the research

Figure 4.9: List of Hair Care Brands that Respondents are Well Aware of



Source: Developed for the research

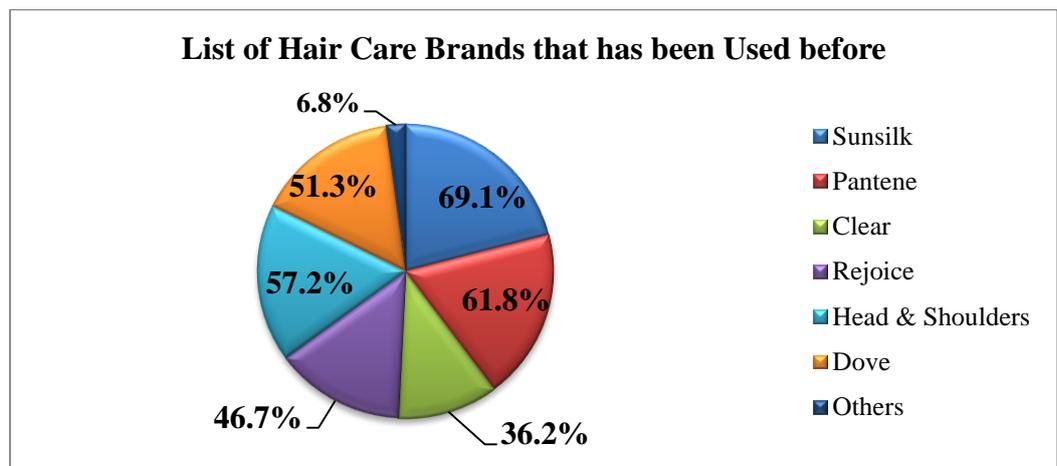
This was also a question that required respondents to choose more than one option. Thus, according to the charts above, the Sunsilk hair care brand is the choice chosen by most of them as the hair care brand that they are well aware of, which constitutes the highest percentage of 58.6%. Subsequently, 50% respondents chose Pantene, followed by Clear at 39.5%, Rejoice at 39.5, Head & Shoulders at 55.3% and Dove at 48%. Besides, the smallest percentage of 19.4% is represented by those who listed other hair care brands that they are aware of such as Himalaya, Avon, L’Oreal, Safi Shayla, Sailajah, Tsubaki and many more.

Table 4.10: List of Hair Care Brands that has been used before

		Frequency	Percentage (%)	Valid Percentage (%)	Cumulative Percentage (%)
Valid	Sunsilk	105	69.1	69.1	69.1
	Pantene	94	61.8	61.8	130.9
	Clear	55	36.2	36.2	167.1
	Rejoice	71	46.7	46.7	213.8
	Head & Shoulders	87	57.2	57.2	271
	Dove	78	51.3	51.3	322.3
	Others	8	6.8	6.8	329.1
	Total	498	329.1	329.1	

Source: Developed for the research

Figure 4.10: List of Hair Care Brands that has been Used before



Source: Developed for the research

This was also a multiple-choice question and according to Table and Figure 4.10, the hair care brand that has been used before by most respondents is Sunsilk, as it constitutes the largest percentage of 69.1%. Subsequently, 61.8% respondents who have used Pantene followed by Head & Shoulders are 57.2%, Dove 51.3%, Rejoice at 46.7 and Clear at 36.2%. Besides, the smallest percentage of 6.8% of them listed other hair care brands that they had used before which is Himalaya, L’Oreal, Tsubaki, Feather, Princess Molan and others.

4.1.3 Descriptive Statistics

Table 4.11: Descriptive Statistics on Variables

No.	Variables	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Ranking
1	Brand Association	152	3.6026	0.67264	2
2	Brand Loyalty	152	3.4750	0.72853	4
3	Brand Awareness	152	3.6224	0.66255	1
4	Social Media Marketing	152	3.2928	0.66584	5
5	Brand Equity	152	3.5066	0.74137	3

Source: Developed for the research

According to the descriptive statistics displayed above, brand awareness has the highest mean of 3.6224. Subsequently, followed by brand association that has a mean of 3.6026, brand equity with a mean of 3.5066 and brand loyalty which is 3.4750. However, the lowest mean of 3.2928 belongs to social media marketing. Also, the statistics above shows that respondents agreed to the fact that brand awareness plays a dominant role in impacting brand equity whereas social media marketing has the least effect towards brand equity.

On the other hand, standard deviation specifies the extent of how near the data is compared to the mean. The highest standard deviation is 0.74137 represented by brand equity followed by brand loyalty which is 0.72853. Next, brand association and social media marketing have a standard deviation of 0.67264 and 0.66584 respectively. Finally, brand awareness had the lowest score of 0.66255 for its standard deviation.

4.2 Scale Measurement

4.2.1 Internal Reliability Test

Table 4.12: Summary of Reliability Test

No.	Construct	Cronbach's Alpha	No.of Items
1	Brand Association	0.829	5
2	Brand Loyalty	0.844	5
3	Brand Awareness	0.849	5
4	Social Media Marketing	0.903	6
5	Brand Equity	0.913	6

Source: Developed for research

A popular and widely accepted approach to carry out reliability analysis is by using Cronbach's alpha. It assisted in analysing the internal reliability of all items of the five variables in this research. According to Sekaran (2003), reliability coefficient varies from 0 to 1 whereby any value above 0.6 shows a signal that the internal consistency is acceptable.

The above table shows that all independent variables and dependent variable exceed 0.6 and it's reliable. The highest alpha coefficient is brand equity with a score of 0.913 with 6 items followed by social media marketing with 6 items and an alpha coefficient of 0.903. This is followed by brand awareness where the alpha coefficient is 0.849 and consists of 5 items. Next, brand loyalty has a 0.844 alpha coefficient score and is measured by 5 items. The lowest is brand association with 5 items and 0.829 alpha coefficient.

To conclude, all the factors has a Cronbach's alpha value above than 0.6 which proves a good internal consistency and reliability of the data.

4.3 Inferential Analysis

4.3.1 Pearson Correlation Analysis

Table 4.13: Pearson Correlation Analysis

		Brand Association	Brand Loyalty	Brand Awareness	Social Media Marketing	Brand Equity
Brand Association	Pearson Correlation	1	.640**	.565**	.526**	.490**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	152	152	152	152	152
Brand Loyalty	Pearson Correlation	.640**	1	.539**	.538**	.611**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000	.000
	N	152	152	152	152	152
Brand Awareness	Pearson Correlation	.565**	.539**	1	.454**	.519**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000	.000
	N	152	152	152	152	152
Social Media Marketing	Pearson Correlation	.526**	.538**	.454**	1	.499**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000		.000
	N	152	152	152	152	152
Brand Equity	Pearson Correlation	.490**	.611**	.519**	.499**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	152	152	152	152	152

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

Source: Developed for the research

Table 4.13 indicated that the correlation of factors such as brand association, brand loyalty, brand awareness and social media marketing is significant at 0.01 level (2-tailed) towards brand equity. Brand loyalty achieved the highest significant level against brand equity where $r = 0.611$ ($P < 0.01$) which means that it possess the strongest relationship with brand equity. Brand awareness follows where $r = 0.519$ ($P < 0.01$) and social media marketing where $r = 0.499$ ($P < 0.01$) and finally brand association where $r = 0.490$ ($P < 0.01$) which means it has the weakest positive relationship among all the independent variables toward brand equity. All the correlation of independent variables is deemed to be significant towards brand equity.

4.3.2 Multiple Regression Analysis

Table 4.14: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.670 ^a	.448	.433	.55805

a. Predictors: (Constant), Brand Association, Brand Loyalty, Brand Awareness, Social Media Marketing

Source: Developed for the research

Table 4.14 indicates that R Square is 0.448 for regression of brand equity of 0.670. Meanwhile, 44.8% variation of brand equity was influenced through the four independent variables (brand association, brand loyalty, brand awareness, social media marketing). The other 55.2% remain uninfluenced. Furthermore, the correlation coefficient (R) which is equal to 0.670 proves that a positive relationship between dependent and independent variables is present. Thus, there are other factors present that affect the brand equity of hair care products.

Table 4.15: ANOVA^a

	Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	37.214	4	9.304	29.875	.000 ^b
	Residual	45.779	147	.311		
	Total	82.993	151			

a. Dependent Variable: Brand Equity

b. Predictors: (Constant), Brand Association, Brand Loyalty, Brand Awareness, Social Media Marketing

Source: Developed for the research

The above table shows that $F = 29.875$ and $p = 0.000 < 0.001$. So, the fitness of the model is confirmed in which the overall regression model with four predictors of brand association, brand loyalty, brand awareness and social media marketing has played an important role in explaining the variation under brand equity.

Table 4.16: Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.507	.295		1.718	.088
	Brand Association	.036	.096	.033	.377	.707
	Brand Loyalty	.383	.088	.376	4.371	.000
	Brand Awareness	.241	.088	.216	2.758	.007
	Social Media Marketing	.202	.085	.182	2.370	.019

a. Dependent Variable: Brand Equity

Source: Developed for the research

The following linear equation is formed based on the above table:

$$\text{Brand Equity} = 0.507 + 0.036 (\text{Brand Association}) + 0.383 (\text{Brand Loyalty}) + 0.241 (\text{Brand Awareness}) + 0.202 (\text{Social Media Marketing})$$

Based on the results, it was found that a significant positive relationship was present between brand loyalty, brand awareness, social media marketing and brand equity. However, brand association indicates insignificant relationship toward brand equity since it is above the significant value 0.05. The t-value is 0.377. Based on the formed equation above, brand association was found to have a regression coefficient of 0.036. This means that the degree of brand equity will increase by 0.036 units if brand association increases by one unit while the others remain. Besides, the regression coefficient of brand loyalty is 0.383. Therefore, the degree of brand equity will increase by 0.383 units if brand loyalty increases by one unit while the others remain and its t-value is 4.371.

Moreover, based on the coefficient beta, the regression coefficient of brand awareness is 0.241. Thus, the degree of brand equity will rise by 0.241 when brand awareness increases one unit while others are the same. The t-value of brand awareness is 2.758. Finally, as for the regression coefficient of social media marketing, it is 0.202 and a t-value of 2.370. This means that it means the degree of brand equity will increase 0.202 when social media marketing increases one unit while others remain.

Besides, among all the four independent variables, brand loyalty has the most influence on brand equity because of its' standardized beta that is equal to 0.376. Thus, brand loyalty is an important predictor of brand equity followed by brand awareness (0.216), social media marketing (0.182) and finally brand association (0.033).

4.3.3 Hypotheses Testing

Hypotheses 1

H0: There is no significant positive relationship between brand association and brand equity of hair care products among young adults in Klang Valley.

H1: There is a significant positive relationship between brand association and brand equity of hair care products among young adults in Klang Valley.

Reject H0, if $p - \text{value} > 0.05$.

The significant value for brand association was 0.707 based on Table 4.13. The significant value is larger than P-value of 0.05. Therefore, H0 is accepted and H1 is rejected. Therefore, there isn't any significant relationship between brand association and brand equity of hair care products among young adults in Klang Valley.

Hypotheses 2

H0: There is no significant positive relationship between brand loyalty and brand equity of hair care products among young adults in Klang Valley.

H2: There is a significant positive relationship between brand loyalty and brand equity of hair care products among young adults in Klang Valley.

Reject H0, if $p - \text{value} > 0.05$.

From the results shown previously, the significant value for brand association is 0.000. The significant value is lesser than P-value of 0.05. Thus, H2 is accepted and H0 is rejected. Therefore, a significant relationship between brand loyalty and brand equity of hair care products among young adults in Klang Valley is present.

Hypotheses 3

H0: There is no significant positive relationship between brand awareness and brand equity of hair care products among young adults in Klang Valley.

H3: There is a significant positive relationship between brand awareness and brand equity of hair care products among young adults in Klang Valley.

Reject H0, if $p - \text{value} > 0.05$.

Based on Table 4.13, the significant value for brand association is 0.019. The significant value is lesser than P-value of 0.05. Thus, H3 is accepted and H0 is rejected. This means that there is a significant relationship between brand awareness and brand equity of hair care products among young adults in Klang Valley .

Hypotheses 4

H0: There is no significant positive relationship between social media marketing and brand equity of hair care products among young adults in Klang Valley.

H4: There is a significant positive relationship between social media marketing and brand equity of hair care products among young adults in Klang Valley.

Reject H0, if $p - \text{value} > 0.05$.

Based on Table 4.13, the significant value for brand association is 0.007. The significant value is smaller than P – value of 0.05. Therefore, H4 is accepted and H0 is rejected and there is a significant relationship between social media marketing and brand equity of hair care products among young adults in Klang Valley.

4.4 Conclusion

To conclude, this chapter has analysed and discussed the general information and demographic profile of the samples through descriptive statistics. An internal reliability analysis was carried to validate and assure the reliability of all five constructs. Finally the association, significance and relationship between the variables was analysed and drawn to conclusion in the inferential analysis. The following chapter will discuss and support the findings of chapter four while stating the limitations and recommendations for the study.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATION

5.0 Introduction

This chapter will analyze and discuss the findings from the past chapter and draw an overall conclusion for the research. Firstly, descriptive, reliability and inferential analysis from chapter four will be summarized. Results and findings of the research will be discussed in order to validate the research objectives and hypotheses. Thirdly, a discussion on the implications of the research findings will be carried out. After that, both the limitations and recommendations will be stated and elaborated for the use of future studies in the same field. Finally, a conclusion will be drawn.

5.1 Summary of Statistical Analyses

5.1.1 Descriptive Analyses

Through the demographic profile, personal information and data of the respondents was gained. Female were the majority respondents with 69.7% of the sample investigated and the most respondents were aged between 20 to 23 years old with a percentage of 77.6%. Meanwhile, 65.1% of the respondents are currently pursuing or have a bachelor's degree. Finally, half or 50% of the respondents earn below RM500 per month which includes allowances.

While for the respondent's general information, majority or 47.4% of them purchase hair care products sometimes and 44.1% of them had made their last purchase about 1-3 months ago. It was also found that 42.8% of the respondents spend less than RM30 per visit to purchase hair care products. 96.1% of the respondents have mentioned that they use shampoo on a regular basis. 58.6% are aware of the brand Sunsilk and 69.1% of them have used that said brand before.

5.1.2 Scale Measurement

This part consists of the reliability test which helped to validate the reliability and effectiveness of the items used to measure the constructs. The test was used to measure all 27 items of the independent and dependent variables. Brand equity had the highest with a reliability score of 0.913 which was followed by social media marketing with a score of 0.903 and then by brand awareness with a score of 0.849. Brand loyalty was second lowest with 0.844 and the lowest is brand association where the variable got 0.829 through the reliability test. All variables proven reliable through the Cronbach's Alpha reliability test as all were above 0.6.

5.1.3 Inferential Analysis

5.1.3.1 Pearson Correlation

Pearson Correlation was applied to investigate and measure the relationship between independent variables and dependent variable. Results gained prove that the correlation of independent variables (brand association, brand loyalty, brand awareness and social media marketing) is significant towards the dependent variable (brand equity). Brand loyalty has the highest significant level against brand equity where $r = 0.611$ and followed by brand awareness where $r = 0.519$. Meanwhile, social media marketing is significant at $r = 0.499$ and the lowest is brand association where $r = 0.490$ which shows it has the weakest positive relationship among all the independent variables toward brand equity.

5.1.3.2 Multiple Regression Analysis

In chapter four, multiple regression analysis was carried out to test the association between independent variables, which is brand association, brand loyalty, brand awareness and social media marketing, against brand equity, the dependent variable. Referring to regression result presented in Table 4.14, the R Square is 0.448 for the regression of brand equity of 0.670. This means that 44.8% of variation of brand equity had been influenced by the four independent variables of our research. Thus, according to Table 4.16, a linear equation was formed as shown below.

$$\text{Brand Equity} = 0.507 + 0.036 (\text{Brand Association}) + 0.383 (\text{Brand Loyalty}) + 0.241 (\text{Brand Awareness}) + 0.202 (\text{Social Media Marketing})$$

Table 4.16 showed that three of the independent variables showed a positive influence towards brand equity. However, the factor of brand association didn't significantly influence brand equity. Also based on the equation, the regression coefficient of brand association, brand loyalty, brand awareness and social media marketing is 0.036, 0.383, 0.241 and 0.202 respectively.

Furthermore, among all the three independent variables which had a significant positive influence on brand equity, brand loyalty gives the strongest impact on brand equity whereby the standardized beta is 0.376. Thus, brand loyalty serves as an essential predictor of brand equity, subsequently by brand awareness (0.241) and social media marketing (0.202). Four hypotheses were tested and only three of the hypotheses were accepted. As a result, H2, H3 and H4 are supported.

5.2 Discussions of Major Findings

Table 5.1: Summary of Research Objectives, Hypotheses and Results

Research Objectives	Hypotheses	Results	Achieved
To identify whether brand association affects young adults' hair care brand equity in Klang Valley.	There is a significant positive relationship between brand association and brand equity of hair care products among young adults in Klang Valley.	t = 0.377 (P > 0.05) p = 0.707	No
To identify whether brand loyalty affects young adults' hair care brand equity in Klang Valley	There is a significant positive relationship between brand loyalty and brand equity of hair care products among young adults in Klang Valley.	t = 4.371 (P < 0.05) p = 0.000	Yes
To identify whether brand awareness affects young adults' hair care brand equity in Klang Valley.	There is a significant positive relationship between brand awareness and brand equity of hair care products among young adults in Klang Valley.	t = 2.758 (P < 0.05) p = 0.007	Yes
To identify whether social media marketing affects young adults' hair care brand equity in Klang Valley.	There is a significant positive relationship between social media marketing and brand equity of hair care products among young adults in Klang Valley.	t = 2.370 (P < 0.05) p = 0.019	Yes

5.2.1 Brand Association

Research Objective 1: To identify whether brand association affects young adults' hair care brand equity in Klang Valley.

Research Question 1: Does brand association affect the brand equity of hair care products among young adults in Klang Valley?

H1: There is a significant positive relationship between brand association and brand equity of hair care products among young adults in Klang Valley.

Based on Pearson Correlation Analysis, a significant association between brand association and brand equity of hair care product ($r = 0.490$) is present. However, the p-value of brand association is 0.707 which is above 0.05 based on the Multiple Regression analysis. The t-value was 0.377. Meanwhile, the Cronbach's Alpha value was 0.829. Hence, it is deemed that there isn't any significant relationship between brand association and brand equity of hair care products among young adults in Klang Valley and H1 is rejected.

Aaker (1991) has said that brand association is a basis for purchasing decisions and brand loyalty and emphasized that brand loyalty serves as the core dimension of brand equity. He further indicated that brand association affects brand loyalty which then influences the brand equity, resulting in an indirect effect between the brand association and brand equity. This is supported by the Pearson Correlation Analysis where the significance value between brand association and brand loyalty is the highest ($r = 0.640$) compared to the value between any other independent values or even with the dependent value; brand equity. Brand loyalty also has highest value ($r = 0.611$) with brand equity which supports Aaker's statement.

Besides, a research conducted in Turkey on their beverage industry further supports that the brand association has a negative relationship and statistically insignificant with brand equity. They had stated that the brand association has no direct significant influence towards brand equity and its dimensions weren't dispersed well which indicates there might be an inter-

related concepts in the study (Atilgan, Aksoy and Akinci, 2005). The results of this research being in line with Aaker's statement and high significant value between brand association and brand loyalty shows that brand association might only have an indirect influence but not a significant relationship with brand equity.

Thus, the research objective was not fulfilled and the study did not answer the research question "Does brand association affect the brand equity of hair care products among young adults in Klang Valley?" due to the insignificance of the results gained from the study.

5.2.2 Brand Loyalty

Research Objective 2: To identify whether brand loyalty affects young adults' hair care brand equity in Klang Valley.

Research Question 2: Does brand loyalty affect the brand equity of hair care products among young adults in Klang Valley?

H1: There is a significant positive relationship between brand loyalty and brand equity of hair care products among young adults in Klang Valley.

Based on Pearson Correlation Analysis, brand loyalty shows the strongest significant correlation with brand equity ($r=0.611$). Also, according to the multiple regression analysis results, brand loyalty affects brand equity positively ($p=0.000$) and has a t-value of 4.371. This means that customers who are loyal to a brand will impact the brand equity positively. On the other hand, the Cronbach's Alpha for brand loyalty is 0.844. Hence, hypothesis (H2) is supported.

According to Marshall (2010), brand loyalty is often taken seriously by many firms, multinational companies, international companies and even global giants. Likewise, researchers such as Yoo, Donthu & Lee (2000) and Yasin, Noor and Mohamad (2007) quoted that brand loyalty serves as one of the main drivers of brand equity. This is because brand loyalty has the ability to create and sustain customers' loyalty and patronage over a longer-

term which indicates the importance and effectiveness of consumers' loyalty towards a brand in enhancing a brand's equity. This is supported by Buil, Martinez & Chernatony (2013) whereby they found that brand loyalty was one of the dimensions to positively affect the overall brand equity.

Based on this research, brand loyalty has the strongest impact on brand equity compared to the other three variables (brand association, brand awareness, social media marketing). This is undeniably accurate because only by having consumers that are aware of a brand wouldn't create strong repurchase behaviour towards a brand. It is the loyalty of consumer's towards a brand that would sustain a customer's repurchase behaviour as loyal consumers are unlikely to change brands to a competitor due to the pricing strategy and purchases more regularly than compared to non-loyal customers (Bowen and Shoemaker, 1998). This is supported by Atilgan, Aksoy & Akinci (2005) who found brand loyalty serving a more dominant effect on brand equity compared to other dimensions of the brand equity that they investigated.

For an instance, in the perspective of hair care products and brands, it is very rare to find consumers or households that often switch to another hair care brand, especially in a short span of time. This is usually because consumers are aware of the risk of changing to other hair care brands due to the damage it may cause to their hair's condition and health. Thus, when customers are satisfied in using a particular hair care brand, it is very likely that the customer would stick to the same hair care brand for a long period of time, in which brand loyalty is formed and in turn enhances the particular hair care brand's equity.

Therefore, the research objective to identify whether brand loyalty affects young adults' hair care brand equity is achieved. While the research question "Does brand loyalty affect the brand equity of hair care products among young adults in Klang Valley?" is also addressed through the research.

5.2.3 Brand Awareness

Research Objective 3: To identify whether brand awareness affects young adults' hair care brand equity in Klang Valley.

Research Question 3: Does brand awareness affect the brand equity of hair care products among young adults in Klang Valley?

H3: There is a significant positive relationship between brand awareness and brand equity of hair care products among young adults in Klang Valley.

A significant positive association is present between brand awareness and brand equity of hair care product ($r = 0.519$). Besides, Multiple Regression analysis indicates the p-value of brand association is 0.007 which is below 0.05 and a t-value of 2.758. Furthermore, the value that was shown for brand awareness after doing the reliability test is 0.849. Therefore, there is a significant relationship between brand awareness and brand equity of hair care products among young adults in Klang Valley and H1 is accepted.

Brand awareness is an essential construct as it shows the capability of a potential consumer to recognize and recall a brand which is part of a particular product category (Aaker, 1991). Furthermore, it also indicates the durability of a brand that is present in the customer's memory (Aaker, 1996). Strong brand awareness is essential for sustainable brand equity. Being aware of a brand could indicate the quality and commitment by allowing consumers become familiar with a brand (Keller, 1993 and 1998). Most consumers have heard of Sunsilk and have applied their products, this shows their awareness of the brand and also the trust they place on the quality of a high-awareness product.

The result of the research has been further validated by the studies conducted by Yoo et al. (2000), Pappu and Quester (2006, 2008) and Tong and Hawley (2009) where their empirical studies prove brand awareness as a dimension of CBBE. Besides, a research on the Indian healthcare industry also showed brand awareness as a significant dimension of brand equity and is positively correlated (Kumar, Dash, Purwar, 2013). It has been further

validated by a local research (Severi and Ling, 2013) and by another study in Pakistan (Tanveer and Lodhi, 2016) where brand awareness was the second strongest factor to positively impact brand equity. These researches further validates and supports the results of the study and without the presence of a strong brand awareness, brand equity of a product would be weak or nearly non-existent (Keller, 2003).

Thus, the relationship between brand awareness and brand equity of hair care products among young adults in Klang Valley is significant. The research objective has been fulfilled and the study has answered the research question “Does brand association affect the brand equity of hair care products among young adults in Klang Valley?” due to the significance of the results gained from the study.

5.2.4 Social Media Marketing

Research Objective 4: To identify whether social media marketing affects young adults’ hair care brand equity in Klang Valley.

Research Question 4: Does social media marketing affect the brand equity of hair care products among young adults in Klang Valley?

H1: There is a significant positive relationship between social media marketing and brand equity of hair care products among young adults in Klang Valley.

Based on the findings, it is shown that social media marketing has a significant correlation with brand equity ($r=0.499$). Besides, based on multiple regression analysis, social media marketing affects brand equity positively ($p=0.019$). The t-value would be 2.370. This means that when effective and comprehensive social media marketing efforts are done, it makes customers to place greater confidence and trust in a specific brand compared to the competitors’ brands which increases the customers’ willingness to purchase, and thus increases the brand equity. As for the internal reliability test, the Cronbach’s Alpha value for social media

marketing is 0.903, which is the highest among other independent variables. Hence, the hypothesis (H4) is supported.

It can be supported by Karman (2015) who indicated that social media marketing has a significant impact towards brand equity of Starbucks Indonesia, one of the famous coffeehouse chain brands known globally. Besides, according to Kim and Ko (2012), under a social media setting, marketing activities can enhance brand equity. The study was based on five constructs of perceived social media marketing activities of luxury fashion brands which included entertainment, interaction, trendiness, customization, and word of mouth. This research is also based on these five characteristics of social media marketing.

For instance, in the study done by Kang (2005), it is found that entertainment in social media is a key component as it has the potential to bring positive emotions, encourages higher participating behaviour, and generates intention among users to use continuously. This is because usually when a content of particular brand's social media is less attractive and engaging, customers wouldn't bother to follow up with the social media's content. They would only be interested if the content seems interesting, creative and is filled with useful information, on-going contests, and attractive visuals.

Besides, as for social media marketing efforts that enable interactions between customers, it also impacts a particular brand's equity positively. This is supported by Taprial & Kanwar (2012), who found in their study that social media is an important tool and place that allows users to interact, connect, share, and communicate in real-time. Through this interaction that is made possible through the social media platform, it would certainly increase the customer base of a particular brand because of the convenience of interaction it offers.

Moreover, when trendiness and social media marketing efforts comes hand-in-hand, it also has a significant influence towards brand equity. This is because consumers more frequently refer to different online platforms to get information as they recognise them as a more reliable source of information compared to traditional media (Mangold & Faulds, 2009; Vollmer &

Precourt, 2008). Thus, it is important that marketers share the current and updated version of the news and content about their company on their social media.

Next, as for the customization construct under social media marketing activities, it is common to see various social media sites that have their own personalized versions of their websites. This is because when companies or brands have sites that are personalized, these brands create an experience for customers and increases brand loyalty and gives a glimpse into the company's culture allowing them to express individuality and build a stronger brand affinity (Martin & Todorov, 2010). Thus, customization of social media is important for any businesses.

Lastly, word-of-mouth spread through the internet also has an impact on brand equity as these days a lot of information often act as storytellers communicating on behalf of brands which provides greater exposure (Goodman, Genest, Elving & Baldwin, 2011). Besides, the impact of WOM in social media has a greater role than traditional media because consumers today rely and consume more information in the internet compared to communications through traditional media.

In a nutshell, it is evident that when elements such as entertainment, interaction, trendiness, customization and word of mouth are incorporated in social media marketing activities, it impacts the brand equity positively. Therefore, the research objective to identify whether social media marketing affects young adults' hair care brand equity is achieved and the research question "Does social media marketing affect the brand equity of hair care products among young adults in Klang Valley?" is also answered through this research.

5.3 Implications of the Study

5.3.1 Managerial Implications

5.3.1.1 Brand Association

According to the research, the relationship between brand association and brand equity of hair care products among young adults in Klang Valley is not significant. However, based on Aaker (1991), brand association affects brand loyalty therefore there is an indirect effect on brand equity. This was also supported by the Pearson Correlation Analysis value between both independent variables. Marketers still need to give attention to brand association to build a strong brand loyalty. Brand association can be witnessed in various forms and reflects the characteristics of a product which are independent to that brand (Chen, 2001). Positive associations to hair care products such as anti-dandruff, anti-hairfall, Halal certification, Health body and professional recommendations have to be included with the product which will attract and convince consumers of the brand's products. Aaker (1991) has further stated that brand association helps with brand differentiating, provides a reason to purchase, create positive attitudes and assist in processing information of a brand in consumer's mind. It also serves as an indication of quality and commitment which allows consumers to familiarize with the brand (Aaker, 1991; Tong & Hawley, 2009; Marinova et al., 2011; Yoo et al., 2000). Thus, brand association is more than just affecting brand equity but it also affects the other factors of brand equity creating an indirect effect.

5.3.1.2 Brand Loyalty

Among all the independent variables tested for this research, brand loyalty plays the most strong and important role in influencing brand equity of hair care products among young adults in Klang Valley. Generally, brand loyalty keeps a customer within the brand and it is essential for marketers to have a good relationship with consumers to build their loyalty. Thus, business people in the hair care industry should prioritize their customers always by taking every possible effort to get a deeper understanding of their customers as the more they know about customers, the better they can serve them. This can be done by checking in with customers at regular intervals, asking their opinions about their improvised hair care products, have an excellent customer service and most importantly listening and giving attention to their feedback on their experience in using their hair care products. Besides that, consumers have strong commitment for repeat usage and satisfy past experiences by using the same brand which leads to repurchase behaviour (Assael, 1998; Oliver, 1999). Loyal consumers are willing to purchase a product or service at a premium price if it fulfils their interest or if they are emotionally attached (Hallowell, 1996). Thus, it is highly crucial that the hair care brands or companies practice consistency as when companies constantly deliver good products; customers tend to sustain their confidence towards the value the brand promises to offer and also customer patronage sustains for a long term. Thus, hair care brands or companies should maintain some of the very basic things, such as the experience their brand offers, its visual consistency, such as their logo and its elements, personal branding and so on.

5.3.1.3 Brand Awareness

According to the research, the relationship between brand awareness and brand equity of hair care products among young adults in Klang Valley is significant. Keller (2003) states that brand awareness is consumer's ability to identify a brand. Brand recognition and brand recall are the two main factors of brand awareness. It has the full explanation and complete information about a brand in order to differentiate from competing brand as there are many choices for the hair care market (Ergin, 2005; Papista and Dimitriadis, 2012). Proper advertising and marketing campaign has to be carried out in social media and other traditional media to reach and create awareness of the existence of brands or new products of well-known brands to a large segment of the market. Famous celebrities and personalities can be used as the face of the campaign to show a sign of trust and create confidence among consumers towards the brand such as Cristiano Ronaldo for Clear's MEN Anti-Dandruff campaign which helps to pull active athletic men to use their product by having a famous sports personality. Campaigns like this are essential as it helps to create recognition and recall effect which is the first step for a long term relationship with the consumers as they need enough information of a brand before making any purchasing decisions (Aaker, 1991; Jamal, Khan & Tsesmetz, 2012).

5.3.1.4 Social Media Marketing

The research findings discovered that social media marketing is another contributing factor that affects brand equity of hair care products among young adults in Klang Valley. Social media marketing has become the most important marketing tool that has evolved within a short period and formed thousands of connections which exposed them to various marketing activities (Lipsman, Mud, Rich & Bruich, 2012). It is a tool that has assisted many companies to emerge as famous companies internationally and even globally because of its capability to transmit information to people in any parts of the world regardless of time bounds or regions, creating awareness about brands and increasing a company's customer base. Therefore, it is necessary for managers under company or brands that produces hair care products to take note of their brand's social media presence, effectiveness and efficiency so that it can impact the brand equity positively. Managers should design their social media to allow customers to interact, get them more engaged and involved with their social media site and their company. They can share their brand's new and exciting developments on their new line of hair care products for an instance, or news and opinions of customers who reviewed their hair care products in their social media space. Besides, they can use their social media site to inform customers about exclusive deals and promotions for the hair care products. In this way, when customers feel like they are involved in the company, it is likely for them to develop positive associations towards the particular hair care brand. Other than that, it is recommended that the particular hair care brand's social media content creator create an original content, in a unique and interesting way, instead of using the easy way to create content, which is using curated content. This is because by being a company that practices on coming up with original ideas, it would turn out to become a company to create and start new trends, in which it would give potential to the company to become famous as a front-runner and thinker within the industry which would further build the brand in a positive way.

5.4 Limitations of the Study

In this research, there were several limitations towards the progress of completion. Identification of limitations is essential so more reliable studies can be carried out in future.

Firstly, the data collection was carried out through convenience sampling therefore proper proportions of demographics characteristics such as gender and age weren't able to be collected or gathered. 69.7% of the respondents are female while only 30.3% are male. Even though, the researchers had tried to approach equal amounts of both genders but females were more interested in the research topic as it involved beauty and personal care. Furthermore, 77.6% of the respondents were aged between 20 – 23 years old that were more willing to respond to the questions as most of them were students. Since most of the respondents are still students, 50% of the respondents had an income range below RM500. This might not provide an accurate representation of the intended market segment for this research project.

Moreover, there was limited access to journals, articles and texts. Some journals and online reference text required a sum to be paid in order to view which hinders a student researcher's ability to access it. Therefore, it was difficult to find research studies on brand equity of hair care products, its supporting journals and past results to support the findings of the research.

Lastly, time was also a major limitation. Limited time to complete the research has caused the researchers to rush in order to complete it. Thus, only 175 questionnaires was distributed and a final count of valid 152 was used for the research purpose. The sample size might not be big enough to represent Klang Valley young adult's market. The questionnaires were also distributed around Cheras, Petaling Jaya and Kajang area due to limited time. This may not fulfill the requirement of the whole Klang Valley. Limited time to collect and analyze the data might not give an accurate representation of the market.

5.5 Recommendations

In future, the researchers have to pre determine the sample size and percentage of each demographic characteristics before the questionnaire distribution. An equal or based on the market's consumer characteristics, these percentages have to be set in order to be met after the collection of questionnaire. Proper market proportions especially demographics wise can be met. This will allow the researchers to constantly monitor the percentages as the collection of data progress. If there is an extreme in balance between the characteristics of the particular demographic item, adjustments can be done. This will ensure an accurate and balance representation the market under investigation can be gained which in return produce a more reliable results.

Besides that, researches also can talk and carry out interview session with market experts from well-known brands in order to gain their insights on the market and the topic being researched. This will help the researches to gain more valuable knowledge and information from these professionals as they work in the field for a long time. Their information is also valuable as they will talk in terms of the local market and having its conditions in mind. International journals information might not reflect local market's conditions. This will assist for topics that are being researched less.

Lastly, time management is an important factor as it will help the researchers to properly plan and carry out their research. Collection of data has to be started earlier as researchers will be able to cover more area of their market segment and send out and get more people to answer their questionnaires. Proper time management will provide the space for researchers to adjust their sample in case of any extreme demographic imbalance. Time management will ensure data is properly collected, analysed and the research is completed accurately in time.

5.6 Conclusion

Thus, this study was conducted to gain a better understanding on brand equity of hair care products by using factors such as brand association, brand loyalty, brand awareness and also social media marketing which was studied through young adults in Klang Valley, Malaysia. This research project had fulfilled the set of objectives which is to investigate the relationship of the four variables towards brand equity.

After the completion of Pearson Correlation analysis, multiple regression analysis, and internal reliability analysis test, the result indicated that three of the independent variables such as brand loyalty, brand awareness and social media marketing, have positive significant relationship with brand equity. The other independent variable, which was brand association, was insignificant and does not have a positive relationship with brand equity. Moreover, the research also contains some insights for hair care product or brand owners on ways they can impact their brand equity more effectively.

In a nutshell, the research showed that brand loyalty as the most important determinant that influences brand equity of hair care products. Plus, this study has highlighted some limitations that was faced and made recommendations for the reference of future researchers. Thus, the study provides proper analysis and results for those who would want to study on antecedents of brand equity in hair care products among young adults in Klang Valley.

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Appendix 3.1: Questionnaire



UNIVERSITI TUNKU ABDUL RAHMAN FACULTY OF ACCOUNTANCY AND MANAGEMENT

Bachelor of International Business (Hons)

Survey on Antecedents of Brand Equity in Hair Care Products among Young Adults in Klang Valley

Survey Questionnaire

Dear respondents,

We are students from Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR), Faculty of Accountancy and Management, pursuing degree in Bachelor of International Business (Hons), currently conducting a study on “Antecedents of Brand Equity in Hair Care Products among Young Adults in Klang Valley” as our final year project. The objective of this research is to understand the factors affecting brand equity of beauty and personal care products among young adults.

We sincerely hope that you will take a few minutes to complete this questionnaire. Your responses are essential for us to complete our study. Your participation is on voluntary basis.

Please take note that this survey is strictly for academic purposes and we would like to assure you that all the information collected will remain PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL. We greatly appreciate you for taking the time and effort in completing this questionnaire. Thank you for your cooperation.

Name	Student ID
Szujaa A/P Suthesan	1607343
VikhnesKumar A/L Selvakumaran	1607167

Section A: General Information

INSTRUCTION: Please read EACH question carefully and provide the correct information by placing a TICK (✓) in the boxes provided.

Q1. How often do you purchase hair care products?

- Rarely
- Sometimes
- Often
- Very often

Q2. When did you make your last purchase of hair care products?

- Less than 1 month
- 1 - 3 months
- 3 - 6 months
- 6 months -1 year

Q3. How much do you spend for hair care products per visit?

- Below RM 30
- Below RM 50
- Below RM 70
- Below RM 100
- Below RM 200

Q4. What kind of hair care products you use on a regular basis?

- Shampoo
- Hair Colour
- Conditioner
- Hair Styling Products
- Hair Oil
- Others (please specify):

Q4. Please select the brands under hair care products that you're well aware of. (You may choose more than one)

- Sunsilk
- Pantene
- Clear
- Rejoice
- Head & Shoulders
- Dove
- Others (please specify):

Q5. Which of the brands listed above have you used before? (You may choose more than one)

- Sunsilk
- Pantene
- Clear
- Rejoice
- Head & Shoulders
- Dove
- Others (please specify):

Section B: Construct Measurement

INSTRUCTION: Based on the statement, please **CIRCLE** the most suitable answer to indicate the importance rating of attribute with the statement by placing a circle on a scale of 1 to 5.

Strongly Disagree (SD)	Disagree (D)	Neutral (N)	Agree (A)	Strongly Agree (SA)
1	2	3	4	5

Question	Brand Association	SD	D	N	A	SA
1	I trust the parent brand/corporation who owns the particular hair care product.	1	2	3	4	5
2	I am familiar with the hair care products or brands that appear in various marketing media.	1	2	3	4	5
3	There are reasons to buy this particular product/brand over the competing product/brand that appeared in the social media	1	2	3	4	5
4	Different brands has its own personality.	1	2	3	4	5
5	This particular product/brand which I prefer is different in comparison with the other competing product/brands.	1	2	3	4	5

Question	Brand Loyalty	SD	D	N	A	SA
1	I am satisfied with my regular hair care product/brand.	1	2	3	4	5
2	I would recommend this particular product/brand to others.	1	2	3	4	5
3	I will not switch to another product/brand.	1	2	3	4	5
4	I usually use my regular product/brand as my first choice in comparison with the other product/brand.	1	2	3	4	5
5	I regularly refer or follow the progress or updates on this product/brand.	1	2	3	4	5

Question	Brand Awareness	SD	D	N	A	SA
1	I can quickly recall symbol or logo of the hair care products/brands in different marketing activities or places.	1	2	3	4	5
2	Some characteristics of my regular product/brand that appear in different situation or marketing activities come to my mind quickly.	1	2	3	4	5
3	I'm aware of the hair care products/brands in market.	1	2	3	4	5
4	I can recognize my regular product/brand in comparison with the other competing product/brand.	1	2	3	4	5
5	I know how my usual product/brand looks like.	1	2	3	4	5

Question	Social Media Marketing	SD	D	N	A	SA
1	Content of my favourite hair care' social media seems interesting. (Information, contests, visuals, creativity and etc.)	1	2	3	4	5
2	It is easy to provide my opinion through the brand's social media.	1	2	3	4	5
3	Content of the brand's social media is the latest information.	1	2	3	4	5
4	The brand's social media offer a customized information search.	1	2	3	4	5
5	Conversation or opinion exchange with others is possible through the brand's social media.	1	2	3	4	5
6	I would like to pass information on my preferred brand, product, or services from the brand's social media to my friends.	1	2	3	4	5

Question	Brand Equity	SD	D	N	A	SA
1	It makes sense to buy my regular brand instead of any other brand, even if they have similar characteristics.	1	2	3	4	5
2	Even if another brand has the same features as my regular brand, I would prefer to buy my usual brand	1	2	3	4	5
3	Make sense to buy my regular hair care brand instead of any other brands even if they have the same quality	1	2	3	4	5
4	Make sense to buy the regular brand instead of any other brands even if they are in the same price.	1	2	3	4	5
5	I consider myself to be consistent to the regular brand.	1	2	3	4	5
6	My regular product/brand would be my first choice all the time.	1	2	3	4	5

Section C: Demographic Profile

INSTRUCTION: Please read EACH question carefully and provide the correct information by placing a TICK (✓) in the boxes provided.

1. Gender

- Male
- Female

2. Age

- 18-21 years old
- 21-25 years old
- 25-30 years old
- 30-35 years old

3. Level of education

- STPM
- Pre-U
- Diploma
- Bachelor of Degree
- Others (please specify: _____)

4. Monthly income (including pocket money)

- <RM 500
- RM501-RM1000
- RM1001-RM1500
- >RM1500

<p>Thank you for completing this questionnaire. Your participation is sincerely appreciated.</p>
--

Appendix 3.2: SPSS Output: Pilot Test

Brand Association

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	30	100.0
	Excluded ^a	0	.0
	Total	30	100.0

a. List wise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.904	5

Brand Loyalty

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	30	100.0
	Excluded ^a	0	.0
	Total	30	100.0

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

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.854	5

Brand Awareness

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	30	100.0
	Excluded ^a	0	.0
	Total	30	100.0

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

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.923	5

Social Media Marketing

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	30	100.0
	Excluded ^a	0	.0
	Total	30	100.0

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

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.898	6

Brand Equity

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	30	100.0
	Excluded ^a	0	.0
	Total	30	100.0

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

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.938	6

Appendix 3.3: SPSS Output: Central Tendencies

Brand Association

Statistics

		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5
N	Valid	152	152	152	152	152
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0
Mean		3.5724	3.5263	3.5658	3.7566	3.5921
Std. Deviation		.74231	.84530	.88901	.96286	.90879
Ranking		3	5	4	1	2

Brand Loyalty

Statistics

		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5
N	Valid	152	152	152	152	152
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0
Mean		3.7763	3.6579	3.1184	3.6908	3.1316
Std. Deviation		.89293	.89963	.96929	.88575	.98790
Ranking		1	3	5	2	4

Brand Awareness

Statistics

		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5
N	Valid	152	152	152	152	152
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0
Mean		3.4671	3.3618	3.6447	3.7697	3.8684
Std. Deviation		.86826	.87307	.85667	.78454	.81121
Ranking		4	5	3	2	1

Social Media Marketing

Statistics

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6
N Valid	152	152	152	152	152	152
Missing	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mean	3.2368	3.2566	3.4013	3.2697	3.3421	3.2500
Std. Deviation	.88203	.75902	.79118	.78875	.79822	.83982
Ranking	6	4	1	3	2	5

Brand Equity

Statistics

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6
N Valid	152	152	152	152	152	152
Missing	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mean	3.5000	3.5329	3.4408	3.4408	3.5789	3.5461
Std. Deviation	.83785	.86826	.88948	.93308	.87289	.92671
Ranking	4	3	5	6	1	2

Appendix 4.1: SPSS Output: Reliability Test

Brand Association

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	152	100.0
	Excluded ^a	0	.0
	Total	152	100.0

a. List wise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.829	5

Brand Loyalty

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	152	100.0
	Excluded ^a	0	.0
	Total	152	100.0

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

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.844	5

Brand Awareness

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	152	100.0
	Excluded ^a	0	.0
	Total	152	100.0

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

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.849	5

Social Media Marketing

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	152	100.0
	Excluded ^a	0	.0
	Total	152	100.0

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

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.903	6

Brand Equity

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	152	100.0
	Excluded ^a	0	.0
	Total	152	100.0

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

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.913	6