

UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA

FACTORS INFLUENCING PURCHASE INTENTIONS THROUGH SOCIAL NETWORKING WEBSITES AMONG MALAYSIAN STUDENTS

SAEIDEH SHARIFI FARD

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By
SAEIDEH SHARIFI FARD

Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia, in Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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DEDICATION

Dedicated to My beloved family

My parents ,my sister Mona and my brother Kazem , who have been patient, supportive and caring and a special thanks to my loving husband Hakim who have supported me throughout this journey with his endless love and sacrifice.



Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

FACTORS INFLUENCING PURCHASE INTENTIONS THROUGH SOCIAL NETWORKING WEBSITES AMONG MALAYSIAN STUDENTS

By

SAEIDEH SHARIFI FARD

January 2017

Chairman : Professor Ezhar Bin Tamam, PhD
Faculty : Modern Languages and Communication

As in many other countries, social media has today become one of the fastest and strongest networking and communication tools in Malaysia. This has facilitated the growth of online marketing and online shopping in the country. Realizing this development, companies have to venture into the world of social media. Identifying the factors influencing consumer online purchase intentions through social networking sites (SNSs) is essential in advancing online shopping via SNSs. This study explores the integration of trust into the extended unified theory of acceptance and use of technology (UTAUT2) in an attempt to investigate how the proposed model provides better explanation of the factors affecting purchase intention in the use of SNSs. To achieve the purpose of the study, a cross sectional survey using a self-administered questionnaire was carried to test the hypothesized model. Using a cluster sampling method, a total of 370 undergraduate and graduate students from four universities in in Malaysia participated in the survey. Results of the descriptive analysis showed that (1) the level of online purchase intention was moderate to high, (2) the levels of performance expectancy and perceived ad informativeness were high, (3) the levels of effort expectancy, hedonic motivation, and habit were moderate, and (4) the level of social influence was low to moderate among students surveyed. Results of structural equation modeling analysis showed that the proposed model is relatively appropriate to explain the online consumer behavior (x2/df = 1.73, p < .005, CFI = .943; IFI = .943, TLI = .936, RMSEA = .045). The results showed that performance expectancy, hedonic motivation, habit, and perceived ad informativeness positively affect consumer's intentions to use SNSs. However, effort expectancy and social influence factors do not influence consumer intention to use SNSs. Results of the Multi-group analysis of the moderating effect of trust on the relationships of the selected factors with purchase intention through SNSs revealed that trust in SNSs is a significant moderator when explaining online consumer behavior. The results of the study revealed that selected UTAUT2 constructs plus perceived ad informativeness has been found to explaining 0.60% variance in the direct model. In addition 63% and 54% of purchase intention through SNS variances are explained by moderation models, respectively. Recommendations for practice from the

findings of the study are offered. Online marketers and online advertisers must consider online shopper behavior in designing successful online marketing via SNSs.



Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk ijazah Doktor Falsafah

FAKTOR MEMPENGARUHI TUJUAN PEMBELIAN MELALUI LAMAN WEB RANGKAIAN SOSIAL DALAM KALANGAN PELAJAR MALAYSIA

Oleh

SAEIDEH SHARIFI FARD

Januari 2017

Pengerusi : Profesor Ezhar Bin Tamam, PhD Fakulti : Bahasa Moden dan Komunikasi

Seperti di kebanyakan negara lain, media sosial kini merupakan salah satu jaringan dan alat komunikasi yang terpantas dan terkuat di Malaysia. Perkara ini telah memudahkan pertumbuhan pemasaran dan beli belah atas talian dalam negara ini. Menyedari akan perkembangan tersebut, syarikat telah turut serta ke dalam dunia media sosial. Pengenalpastian faktor yang mempengaruhi tujuan pembelian atas talian pengguna melalui laman rangkaian sosial (SNSs) adalah penting dalam memajukan beli belah atas talian melalui SNSs. Oleh sebab itu, kajian ini meneliti integrasi kepercayaan ke dalam teori gabungan lanjutan bagi penerimaan dan penggunaan teknologi (UTAUT2) dalam usaha untuk mengkaij bagaimana model yang dicadangkan dapat memberikan penjelasan yang lebih baik terhadap faktor yang mempengaruhi tujuan pembelian dari segi penggunaan SNSs. Bagi mencapai matlamat kajian ini, tinjauan keratan rentas menggunakan soal selidik yang diswatadbir telah dijalankan untuk menguji model berhipotesis. Dengan menggunakan kaedah persampelan kelompok, seramai 370 pelajar prasiswazah dan pascasiswazah dari empat buah universiti di Malaysia telah mengambil bahagian dalam tinjauan tersebut. Hasil keputusan analisis deskriptif menunjukkan bahawa (1) tahap tujan pembelian adalah sederhana ke tinggi, (2) tahap jangkaan prestasi dan pemaklumatan iklan terjangka adalah tinggi, (3) tahap jangkaan usaha motivasi hedonik,dan tabiat adalah sederhana, dan (4) tahap pengaruh sosial adalah rendah ke sederhana dalam kalangan pelajar yang diselidiki. Dapatan analisis pemodelan persamaan struktur menunjukkan bahawa model yang dicadangkan secara relatifnya sesuai bagi menjelaskan tinhgkah laku pengguna atas talian (x2/df = 1.73, p < .005, CFI = .943; IFI = .943, TLI = .936, RMSEA = .045). Dapatan kajian menunjukkan bahawa jangkaan prestasi, motivasi hedonik, tabiat, dan maklumat iklan terjangka secara positifnya mempengaruhi tujuan pengguna untuk menggunakan SNSs. Walau bagaimanapun, faktor jangkaan usaha dan pengaruh sosial tidak mempengaruhi tujuan pengguna untuk menggunakan SNSs. Dapatan analisis pelbagai kumpulan dalam memoderasikan kesan kepercayaan ke atas hubungan faktor yang dipilih dengan tujuan pembelian melalui SNSs memperlihatkan bahawa kepercayaan dalam SNSs merupakan moderator yang signifikan apabila menjelaskan tingkah laku pengguna atas talian.

Dapatan kajian ini juga memperlihatkan bahawa konstruk UTAUT2 yang dipilih berserta maklumat iklan terjangka didapati dapat menerangkan 0.60% varians dalam model langsung. Tambahan sebanyak 63% dan 54% tujuan pembelian melalui varians SNS dapat diperjelaskan, masing-masing oleh model moderasi. Rekomendasi bagi amalan daripada dapatan kaijian ini telah diutarakan. Pemasar dan pengiklan atas talian harus mengambil kira tingkah laku pemasar atas talian dalam mereka bentuk pemasaran atas talian yang berjaya melalui SNSs.



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Lastly, I would like to convey my heartfelt thanks to my husband, Hakim, for his patience, support and love. I thank him for everything he has done for me. Without his love and support, I could not have achieved what I have today.

I certify that a Thesis Examination Committee has met on 10 January 2017 to conduct the final examination of Saeideh Sharifi Fard on her thesis entitled "Factors Influencing Purchase Intentions through Social Networking Websites among Malaysian Students" in accordance with the Universities and University Colleges Act 1971 and the Constitution of the Universiti Putra Malaysia [P.U.(A) 106] 15 March 1998. The Committee recommends that the student be awarded the Doctor of Philosophy.

Members of the Thesis Examination Committee were as follows:

Siti Zobidah binti Omar, PhD

Associate Professor Faculty of Modern Languages and Communication Universiti Putra Malaysia (Chairman)

Jusang bin Bolong, PhD

Associate Professor Faculty of Modern Languages and Communication Universiti Putra Malaysia (Internal Examiner)

Abdul Muati @ Zamri bin Ahmad, PhD

Professor Faculty of Modern Languages and Communication Universiti Putra Malaysia (Internal Examiner)

Seon-Gi Baek, PhD

Professor Sungkyunkwan University Korea (External Examiner)

NOR AINI AB. SHUKOR, PhD

Professor and Deputy Dean School of Graduate Studies Universiti Putra Malaysia

Date: 22 March 2017

This thesis submitted to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia and has been accepted as fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. The members of the Supervisory Committee are as follows:

Ezhar Bin Tamam, PhD

Professor Faculty of Modern Language and Communication Universiti Putra Malaysia (Chairman)

Md.Salleh b Hj. Hassan, PhD

Professor
Faculty of Modern Language and Communication
Universiti Putra Malaysia
(Member)

Moniza Waheed, PhD

Senior Lecturer
Faculty of Modern Language and Communication
Universiti Putra Malaysia
(Member)

ROBIAH BINTI YUNUS, PhD

Professor and Dean School of Graduate Studies Universiti Putra Malaysia

Date:

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Signature:	Date:

Name and Matric No: Saeideh Sharififard, GS34973

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Signature:	
Name of Chairman	
of Supervisory	
Committee:	Professor Dr. Ezhar Bin Tamam
Signature:	
Name of Member	
of Supervisory	
Committee:	Professor Dr. Md.Salleh b Hj. Hassan
Signature:	
Name of Member	
of Supervisory	
Committee:	Dr. Moniza Waheed

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Ads Info
Advertisements Informativeness
Amos
Analysis of Moment Structure
AVE
Average variance extracted
B2B
Business to Business
B2C
Business to Consumer
C2C
Consumer to Consumer

CFA Confirmatory Factor Analysis

CFI Comparative Fit Index
CR Composite reliability
EE Effort Expectancy
FC Facilitating Condition
GFI Goodness-of-fit Index

H Habit

HM Hedonic Motivation

ICT Information Communication Technology

IFI Incremental Fit Index
IT Information Technology

JARING Joint Advanced Integrated Networking

LCC Low Cost Carriers

M Mean

MM Motivation Model
MPCU Model of PC Utilization

OECD Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development

PE Performance Expectancy

PI Purchase Intention

PNFI Parsimony Normed Fit Index RMC Resource Management Center

RMSEA Root Mean Square of Estimation Approximation

SD Standard Deviation

SEM Structural Equation Modeling

SI Social influence

SNSs Social networking Sites

SPSS Statistical Package For Social Science

TAM Theory Acceptance Model TLI Tucker-Lewis Index

TPB Theory of planned behavior TRA Theory of Reasoned Action

UTAUT Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology Model



CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

For the past several decades, different kinds of activities have been featured on the Internet, which are predominantly focused at creating, processing, and sharing information. Whether these activities are connected to entertainment, education, or advertising and marketing, the Internet has been used as a very effective and efficient medium for the achievement of individual and organizational goals and objectives that are productivity oriented (Hennig-Thurau, Gwinner, Walsh, & Gremler, 2004; Guo, Wang, & Leskovec, 2011). Consistently, online purchasing has become one of the most prevalent socio-economic activities featured on the Internet. Invariably, online transactions have brought greater efficiency, increased responsiveness, and reduced costs of running businesses, and newcomers in the market can extend their reach far beyond what was previously possible. Also, consumers can gain from wider choices, increased availability of specialized products, more comprehensive product information, lower costs, and more responsive services (Rachagan, 1997; Guo et al., 2011). This implies that the recent migration of Internet technology to the Web 2.0 platform has widened the horizons of instant communications across the globe, and people can create and share information, cheaply, quickly, and more effectively from any location.

As important as the Internet has become today, it was first introduced to Malaysia in 1995 (Paynter & Lim, 2001). Nonetheless, empirical evidence has shown that as of the year 2012, out of a total population of 28.73 million people in the country, 17,723,000 were Internet users with an overall penetration rate of 66.4% and an average usage of 19.8 hours per week (MDeS, 2014). Fortunately, most users are familiar with applications such as Facebook, Twitter, and other social networking sites (SNSs), where they can create, publish and share content across the world, without boundaries (Akar & Topçu, 2011). Social media has become one of the most commonly used virtual landscapes for quick and easy transmission of content. Social media allows users to form groups or communities, share common interests or goals, exchange opinions or suggestions, and form relationships with other users on such platforms (Akar & Topcu, 2011). Though the primary goal of social media is to facilitate networking among users, it has found its use in marketing, and it seems to have changed the way people discover, read, and share information and content (Solis, 2007). SNSs are part of the platforms that have emerged on the social media as mediums for commercial transactions which are easier, simpler, cheaper, and more accessible than the traditional value-added networks such as Twitter, Facebook, and Myspace (Cha, 2009; Vinerean, Cetina, Dumitrescu, & Tichindelean, 2013). However, their usage has not been much recognized like most other online shopping platforms, especially in Malaysia (Nor, Nazarie, & Yusoff, 2013; Lai, & Ngerng 2015). It was reported that an amount of RM1.8 billion was spent through shopping on the Internet, and out of this amount, RM825 million was expended through local website transactions, while RM627 million was expended through foreign website transactions (Nielsen, 2012). Although there is a fair patronage of online purchasing among Malaysians, most of the transactions are with local online shops, rather than internationally oriented platforms such as SNSs. Comparatively, studies have shown that through online shopping, more than 71% of Europeans spent £101,840 million in 2011, while in 2013, almost USD 312 billion was spent in the United States (Retail Research Report, 2012; e-Marketers, 2014). This suggests that Malaysian online transaction turnout is still relatively low. Nevertheless, reports have shown that consumers created more than 500 billion impressions about products and services through social media in 2011 (Harridge & Quinton, 2012). In the same vein, impressions earned through the media significantly help people learn about products, hence ratings and reviews about online purchases through SNSs increased from 12% in 2009 to 54% in 2011 (Sarwar, Haque, & Yasmin, 2013).

Studies have shown that about 70 percent of active online social networking users are using SNSs as a place to shop (Nielsen, 2014). In the year 2013, estimated sales of \$2.69 billion were made directly through social media networks among 500 online marketers (Dusto, 2014). Various Social Networking Websites (SNSs) continually offer ad units that let sellers tailor their messages to consumers, and as a result, social ad spending has continued to increase. Similarly, spending money on social network ads among marketers worldwide increased by 37.3% in 2013 and 27.3% in 2014. In 2015, it was estimated to have increased by 25.4% (Dusto, 2014). Overall, e-commerce sales were estimated to have amounted to US\$1.7 trillion worldwide in 2015 (e-Marketers, 2014).

Out of a total population of 29.9 million Malaysians, 61.7%, or 17.7 million Malaysians, were Internet users, while 41%, or 15.2 million of them, were users of most popular SNSs. Also, young adults in the age category of 15-24 years formed the highest percentage of online users compared to the other categories (Wong, 2014). According to Forbes, on the whole, total e-commerce transactions in Malaysia were estimated at RM900 million (US\$253 million) in 2011 and RM5 billion (US\$1.4 billion) in 2015. This is an indication of growing acceptance of e-commerce among individuals in Malaysia.

Hitherto, models such as the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) and the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) have been applied to explain users' adoption of ecommerce in recent times. In the context of social media, this study applies the extended UTAUT2 to investigate online purchase intentions among university students in Malaysia (Venkatesh, Thong, & Xu, 2012). UTAUT2 incorporates several advances from the original UTAUT model to explain consumer behavior. However, although many studies have been conducted to examine the importance

of social media in e-commerce underpinned by various theories and models, most of these studies are dominated by Western perspectives. Given that a wide range of business opportunities are provided through SNSs, marketers and advertisers need to know what factors are likely to influence young online consumers' behavior and in what way consumers make decisions to buy products online through social networking websites. According to Lipsman, Mudd, Rich, and Bruich (2012), the emergence of social networks has led to changes in youths' lifestyles of digital living and the way youths obtain and share marketing information. These scholars also stated some of the reasons why youths like the social network marketing concept are based on the new and unique ways of sharing information with friends by "liking" a brand and taking pictures and uploading them, while freely giving comments on their experiences with the products used. These acts as an alternative means for marketers to spread marketing information to these target customers as youths generally share this information amongst themselves.

Problem Statement

Online purchasing is becoming popular among the Malaysians, yet empirical evidence has shown that its growth is still relatively slow compared to the global trend. This slow growth is due to consumers' perceived lack of confidence, perceived insecurity, and perceived breach of privacy in the transaction processes (Nor, Nazarie, & Yusoff, 2013). Correspondingly, despite the vast advantages of using social media environments for online purchases, Malaysians patronize local online platforms far more than the SNS platforms (Nor et al., 2013). In other words, even though SNS platforms are better at facilitating local and foreign transactions than traditional online shops (Anderson, Knight, Pookulangara, & Josiam, 2014), the growth of SNS usage among Malaysians is slower than the growth of their usage of traditional online shopping platforms (Chin, Wafa, & Ooi, 2009; Al-Swidi, Behjati, & Shahzad, 2012). Although, attempts have been made to investigate factors that influence individuals' online purchasing behaviour in Malaysia as the country aims at attaining a strong e-commerce/digital economy by 2020 (Chin et al., 2009; Delafrooz, Paim, & Khatibi, 2010; Haque, Sadeghzadeh, & Khatibi, 2011; Al-Swidi et al., 2012), most of the studies have focused on investigating traditional e-commerce (Ling, Chai, & Piew, 2010; Salehi, 2011; Jusoh & Ling, 2012; Zendehdel & Paim, 2012a). Factors affecting consumers' online purchases through SNSs are rarely investigated in Malaysia, even though the trend of SNS shopping has continued to increase (Khong, Onyemeh, & Chong, 2013; Lee, Khong, & Hong, 2014).

Additionally, most of the past studies on consumer purchase intention have emphasized factors such as perceived ease of use, perceived usefulness, and subjective norms (Sin, Nor, & Al-Agaga, 2012), with only few focusing on factors of consumer trust in online shopping through social networking sites (Nor et al., 2013; Adis,Ing, Osman, Razli, Pang, Sondoh & Majid, 2015). Hitherto, studies that investigated the influence of factors such as "Perceived Ad Informativness"

and "Consumers' Trust toward SNSs" on online purchasing intentions of consumers were not prevalent, especially within the Malaysian context. However, numerous studies have recognized the importance of studying SNS users' behaviour in applying effective marketing strategies in SNSs (Chu & Kim, 2011; Lorenzo-Romero, Constantinides, & Alarcón-del-Amo, 2011; Vinerean, Cetina, Dumitrescu, & Tichindelean, 2013). Interestingly, while university students are among the heaviest users of SNS purchasing platforms across the globe (Smith, Caruso, & Kim, 2010), in Malaysia, studies that investigated how students use SNSs as marketing platforms are very few. It is discussed that despite the fact that university students are not earning, they are illustrative of a future gaining population, and hence, their opinions can be considered valid (Chang and Chen, 2008; Su and Huang, 2011; Al-Maghrabi et al., 2011). Students are suitable, because online shoppers are generally young consumers and highly educated people (Chang and Chen, 2008). Consequently, it is crucial to discover the variables which impact students' purchase intention if the government approach is to extend the group of online consumers and the amount of online shopping.

Given the relevance of online purchasing in facilitating e-commerce, the purpose of the current research is to propose a theoretical model based on the Extended Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT2), specifically, hypothesizing the association of performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence, hedonic motivation, and habit with online purchase intentions of consumers. The UTAUT2 suggests that habit influences the use of technology and the intention to use it. Unfortunately, replicated studies on the influence of constructs such as habit on use of technology within Malaysia are rare. Previous studies have found support that hedonic motivation and utilitarian motivation influence individual behaviour and contribute to a user's acceptance of new Information Technology (Davis and Venkatesh, 2004; Kim and Malhotra, 2005; Kim, Malhotra, & Narasimhan, 2005; Limayem, Hirt, & Cheung, 2007; Venkatesh, Thong, & Xu, 2012, Tomás Escobar-Rodríguez & Carvajal-Trujillo, 2013; Wang et al., 2013); however, most of the previous studies scarcely focused on people's online purchasing behaviours through SNSs (Khong, Onyemeh, & Chong, 2013; Nor et al., 2013; Adis et al., 2015). As a support to the theoretical underpinning of the study model, the perspectives of Business to Consumer (B2C) online shopping have been used in the current study (Khalifa & Limayem, 2003; Madlberger, 2004; Al-Maghrabi et al., 2011). Furthermore, the model is adjusted with additional factors relevant for purchasing intentions though SNSs. That is, trust in SNSs and perceived Ad Informativness are further presumed to affect purchase intentions. Generally, these additional variables fall into two categories: additional predictor and moderator. According to previous studies (Ducoffe, 1996; Zhau & Bao, 2002), web advertisements may take advantage of addressable media technology to select appropriate advertisements that are congruent with consumers' online behaviours, thereby making the advertisements more relevant to consumers. Ultimately, there is little academic research published in the area of consumer perceptions of advertising on SNSs.

Moreover, studies using the B2C online models on e-commerce have suggested that lack of trust constituted a key barrier to the use of Internet shopping as well as lack of long-term commitment to relationship building (Delafrooz et al., 2010; Haque, Sadeghzadeh, & Khatibi, 2011; Zendehdel & Paim, 2012b; Nor et al., 2013). However, among these studies none have attempted to investigate the moderating role of trust on consumers' intentions to make online purchases. Yet literature has revealed that Malaysians lack confidence in online purchasing (Khong, Onyemeh, & Chong, 2013; Nor et al., 2013). Therefore, in this study, trust in SNSs is included in UTAUT2 to test its moderating effects on the linkages between purchase intention through SNSs and its determinants (i.e., performance expectancy, effort expectancy, hedonic motivation, social influence, habit, and perceived ad informativeness).

Research Questions

Based on the above mentioned discussion, the below questions have arisen, which will be answered through this research:

- 1. What are the levels of perceived Ad Informativeness, performance expectancy, effort expectancy, hedonic motivation, social influence, and purchase intention of Malaysian students?
- 2. What are the relationships, if any, between perceived Ad Informativeness, performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence, hedonic motivation, and habit toward intentions to purchase through social networking websites?
- 3. Does trust moderate the relationships of perceived Ad Informativeness, performance expectancy, effort expectancy, hedonic motivation, social influence, and habit with purchase intention?

Research Objectives

The research objective was to examine factors influencing consumer purchasing intentions through social networking websites among Malaysian students. The specific objectives of the study were:

- 1. To determine the levels of perceived Ad Informativeness, performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence, hedonic motivation, and habit on intentions to purchase through social networking websites among Malaysian university students.
- 2. To examine the levels of Malaysian university student consumers' intentions to purchase through social networking websites.
- 3. To examine the relationships of perceived Ad Informativeness, performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence, hedonic motivation, habit, and trust with intention to purchase through social networking websites.

4. To examine the moderating effect of trust on the relationships of perceived Ad Informativeness, performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence, hedonic motivation, and habit with purchase intention.

Significance of the Study

This study theoretically contributes to the general knowledge regarding potential mechanisms of SNSs by establishing a framework for increasing consumer purchase intentions situated in the Malaysian context. The proposed theoretical model adds the variable of consumers' perceived ad informativeness and trust to UTAUT2. The integrated model clarifies the roles of effort expectancy, performance expectancy, hedonic motivation, social influence habits, perceived Ad Informativeness, and trust in SNSs online purchase intentions. The study makes important contributions to the literature pertaining to intentions to purchase through SNSs by providing potentially generalizable quantitative data. Further, while most of the past literature on social media in the marketing domain rarely applies the theoretical work of Venkatesh et al. (2012), this research extended the applicability of the theory for studying intentions to purchase through SNSs. The findings of the study provide a practical framework for marketing via social media, which is lacking in this area. Thus, the current study has an important role in research because of its development of a framework for future research by combining empirically grounded findings together with theoretical explanations from the literature. In addition, this study establishes valid and reliable instrumentation and criteria for measuring purchase intention.

From a practical view point and in line with the government's plans to achieve a knowledge-based community through ICT, this study provides a more in-depth understanding of the nature and roles of social media in community development. Therefore, practical recommendations are suggested for use by donor agencies and governments involved in the development of e-commerce technology in the industrial and commercial sectors. The present research provides useful recommendations to enhance purchase behaviour in recent advanced media. The findings are beneficial to various groups that are directly or indirectly involved in the planning, execution, and evaluation ICT use in commerce.

Limitations of the Study

In the proposed integrated model, while pursuing the purpose of the study, limitations were expected. The limitations within a study include potential weaknesses that are beyond the control of the researchers (Simon & Goes, 2011). As with any research study, the limitations must be acknowledged. First, the use of self-administered data is a limitation of this study. That is, the use of self-reporting scales to measure study variables suggests the possibility of a common method bias for some of the results. According to Andrew, Pedersen, and McEvoy (2011), the incidence rate of social desirability, or the tendency of respondents to

answer questions to portray themselves in a favourable manner, will likely increase.

Second, a limitation of the study was the sampling limited to undergraduate and graduate students. Accordingly, the result of this study will not represent the whole population of the study. Future research should be conducted with a sample more representative of the entirety of online product buyers. More specifically, Schepers and Wetzels (2007) suggested that students are a more homogenous group than non-students and have a stronger tendency to comply with authority. Accordingly, using a student sample may inflate effect sizes of both social and technological constructs (Schepers & Wetzels, 2007). In order to eliminate such an interpretation limitation issue, the generalizability of the findings should be further validated with the different types of samples in future research.

Third, the nature of the study is cross sectional, indicating that the data was collected at one point in time. Cross sectional studies usually have some limitations. For example, consumers' online purchase patterns may vary depending on the economy at the particular point in time of the data collection. That is, participants may be less likely to buy products online during a recession, and thus, the recession may have influenced the responses of respondents. Future research can address this limitation through a longitudinal study in which online product purchase habits are measured at multiple points in order to reflect any changes that may occur.

Similar to the limitations associated with the use of a convenience sample, only four universities in Malaysia were selected for use within the study, further limiting the generalizability of the findings of the study. Although the measures and the model used in the present study performed well with the selected sample, replication with different population samples will be necessary to examine the generalizability of the research model.

Organization of the Thesis

The thesis consists of five chapters, the contents of which include the introduction, literature review, methodology, and results and discussion, followed by implications and suggestions for future research. This first chapter provides a brief overview of online shopping via social media with the theoretical rationale for the problem statement of the study, research questions, the objectives of the study, hypotheses development, the significance of the study, and limitations of the study.

The second chapter is divided into two parts, with the first part covering the general background about social media, specifically social networking sites, and e-

commerce in the world and Malaysia. The chapter then outlines and reviews previous research among studies in e-commerce and social media. Support is provided for employing the UTAUT2 model as a framework that seeks to fill the gaps in the extant literature.

The third chapter addresses the research design, population and sample, sampling procedure, operationalization of research variables, description and development of the research instruments, pilot study, and the final data collection procedures. More specifically, assessment of reliability and validity of the instrument are addressed. For assessment of reliability, the results of an internal inconsistency test are provided. For validity of the instrument, the results of content, face, and construct validities are also provided.

The fourth chapter includes, firstly, the profiles of the respondents. Secondly, the results of descriptive statistics are presented for the independent variables (exogenous variables) including performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence, hedonic motivation, habit, and perceived ad informativeness. Thirdly, the level of purchase intention as a dependent variable (indigenous variable) is discussed. Fourthly, the results of Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) analyses are provided to answer the study hypotheses. Then, discussions of the results based on the objectives and research findings are addressed. Finally, the fifth chapter presents a summary of the study, the conclusion, theoretical and practical implications of the study and recommendations, which is followed by limitations and recommendations for future studies.

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