

Influence of Social Media on Consumers' Purchase Intention: A Study in Malaysian Public University

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Abstract: Nowadays consumers' purchase intention has evolved with the facilitation of the social media platforms. With the existence of social media, consumers can actively seeking for information about a product or service, and other consumers' experiences before committing to buy the product or service. The purpose of this research is to investigate the influence of social media factors towards consumer' purchase intention among public university students in Malaysia. Uses and Gratification Theory was employed to explain the influence of three social media factors which are electronic word of mouth, perceived usefulness, and value consciousness on consumers' purchase intention. Pilot test was conducted for 30 respondents and all the variables obtained Cronbach's alpha result more than 0.6 which is acceptable. Simple random sampling method was applied in data collection of 384 respondents from various public universities in Malaysia in the survey. Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to evaluate the data. Based on the multiple regression analysis, the results revealed that electronic word of mouth, perceived usefulness and value consciousness have significant influence towards the consumers' purchase intention through social media. Therefore, this research suggests that marketers need to stress the importance of positive electronic word-of-mouth in disseminating useful information to consumers and increase the engagement with the value conscious consumers. This research also suggests that future researchers study other factors of social media that can influence the consumers' purchase intention so that the undiscovered factors in this research can be explained.

Keywords: *Consumers' purchase intention, social media, electronic word of mouth (eWOM), perceived usefulness, value consciousness, uses and gratification theory*

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The rapid changes in technological era has make social media become one of the most used application that influence people in purchase decision. The growing availability of the technologies has led to the creation of social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, WhatsApp and many more (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). The number of users of social media also increase every years. Social media has become a part of the internet users' daily life across the world. With the rapid adoption of social media, a lot of companies used it as advantages for them to market their products and services. Since social media continues to grow, businesses have changed their marketing approach to social media marketing (Laksamana, 2018; Toor, Husnain, & Hussain, 2017). Social media platforms are widely utilized by businesses to market their products (Yadav & Rahman, 2017). By doing so, it become more convenient for companies to influence the consumers' purchase intention through social media as it is the easiest and fastest medium that businesses can use to convey their message to customers around

the world. This is because for most people, online purchase intention is considered as more effective and efficient, also can help them in solving problems regarding products that they want to purchase (Riorini, 2018).

At the same time, people has utilized the usage of social media and are increasingly using social media in their daily life which includes the online purchasing, searching product information, news reading, and for many other usage and forms of entertainment. Social media has changed the way people interact and share information. It has become as the centre of information distribution about products, and as a method to shape the consumers' intention (Pütter, 2017). It also has transformed how people and business organizations can commercially, educationally, and socially interact with each other and exchange information (Alalwan, 2018). Thus, it has become very critical to study the impact of social media (Alfeel & Ansari, 2019). Social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, WhatsApp and many more also are being used as a medium of communication among the users.

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Nowadays, most consumers' purchase intention depends on their participation in electronic word of mouth (eWOM) which came from the traditional promotional mix known as word-of-mouth (WOM). WOM happen when a customer's expectation in a company's products or services is meet by their needs, and they communicate by talking and give information about it to other people (Almana & Mirza, 2013). After the existence of technologies, the term has been upgrade to eWOM, where customers communicate and transfer information about company's products or services through online platform such as social media (Hu, Ha, Mo, & Xu, 2014). The influence of eWOM toward consumers' purchase intention are depends on both the consumers and the information on the social media platform (Erkan & Evans, 2016). eWOM message can affect the consumers' perception on the usefulness of the information and it subsequent adaptation due to its source credibility and argument quality (Tien, Rivas, & Liao, 2019).

The usefulness of the information on social media platform play a crucial part in the consumers' purchase intention, which it is a perception where a person believes that by referring to useful information, it will enhance her or his performance in decision making (Erkan & Evans, 2016). It also refer to the consumers who are drawn to improve their shopping experience, where perceived usefulness contributes to the enhanced shopping experiences and purchase intention of the consumers (Gurney, Eveland, & Guzman, 2019). However, as for some consumers, they tend to find information regarding the products' value and quality that they want to purchase through social media, and they are known as value conscious customers. The more the information of the value and product's quality they can find on social media, the greater the influence toward their purchase intention.

This is because, for some consumers, they focused more on the quality and value of the product that they want to purchase, and the information that they found on social media are likely able to influence their purchase intention. Value consciousness can be referred to the consumers who tend to pay more attention to the value and the products' quality that they want to purchase despite the price offered to them. The value conscious consumers are tend to be concerned toward both the low price and the quality of the products (Ismail, 2017). This type of consumers usually tend to use social media as a platform for them to find information and purchase product for the lowest with many benefits in terms of value and quality (Khan, 2019).

The factors of social media like eWOM, perceived usefulness, and value consciousness are some of the

important hints for businesses to acknowledge the importance of social media as a platform for them to market and provide information about their products or services. The one-way traditional marketing methods may not be that useful in this technological era because of the social interactivities on social media platform. A business which successfully sets up their presence on social media is not the end, but just the beginning of the modernization in this technological era. This is because, businesses need to constantly engage on social media with postings and reviews that capture the heart of the users, and providing up-to-date information. Thus it will eventually make consumers to have the intention to buy the products or services.

Most consumers use social media to seek information about the products' price, functionality and features (Ifinedo, 2016). They no longer need to go to physical stores to search and compare products as social media has reshaped the way they purchase products. Yet, not all businesses seem to be comfortable in using a platform where the consumers can speak freely with each other, because the businesses has less control over the information that are available in the social media (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). However, as for nowadays people lifestyle, the social media have changed how consumers and marketers communicate because social media gives consumers a voice, and allows them to interact and share their experiences with any person anywhere in the world (Alfeel & Ansari, 2019; Pütter, 2017; Toor et al., 2017). As for university students, this changes has made their daily life become more flexible because they can save their time as there are no restrictions on using social media at anytime and anywhere as long as it is appropriate for them to use it (Laksamana, 2018). However, there are still not many research that shows how much the social media has influenced the consumers' purchase intention. Therefore, this research will discuss the influence of social media towards consumers' purchase intention.

One of the factors that could be related to consumers' purchase intention through social media is eWOM which enable consumers to exchange the information of product-related opinions and experiences with their acquaintances, other consumers with same interests, and even the brand managers, almost without limitation (Tien et al., 2019). Although online reviews by the customers have proved to be an effective eWOM in marketing, researchers believe that eWOM on various social media platforms also plays an important role (Hu et al., 2014). However, the mechanism by which eWOM transfers information from customer to customer (C2C) over social media remained unclear (Erkan & Evans, 2016). Direct eWOM from

customer to customer can change the customer preferences and purchase intention. The research on the links between eWOM on social media and consumers' purchase intentions remained unclear. Thus, further investigation of related outcomes are needed.

The second factor that could be related is perceived usefulness, where the social media is known as a useful technology platform for customers around the world to share information which might be useful to others since there are no limitation on using social media. Perceived usefulness play an important role in social media and it is likely to have a positive influence on the consumers' purchase intention (Hajli, 2014). This is because, most customers find that the information that they found on social media tend to be useful for them in making a decision. Perceived usefulness is an important factor that determines consumers' purchase intention and it cannot be ignored. However, there are still an argument on either the perceived usefulness really influenced the consumer's purchase intention or not (Athapaththu & Kulathunga, 2018). Therefore, this study will be conducted in order to show the link between perceived usefulness of information on social media towards the consumers' purchase intention.

The third factor of social media that might influence consumers' purchase intention is value consciousness. Consumers use social media to find information about desired products with the better prices and the best value for money, and they are known as value conscious consumers (Khan, 2019). They are more likely use social media to purchase the best products that they can found on the platform after making comparison between the similar products. However, not all consumers believe that acquiring goods is a driver of happiness and signals of social status (Ismail, 2017). This is because, frugal consumers like university students are more value conscious as they carefully use resources to avoid waste and as for them it can brings a number of significant benefits such as saving money by enabling them to achieve lowest price, identifying the right products to satisfy their needs and compare other prices from different brands. university students are known as frugal consumers because they did not have their own income, and usually their parents provide pocket money. Thus, they need to be wise when they use their money. The research on the impact of value consciousness toward consumers purchase intention through social media still remain unclear (Riorini, 2018). Therefore, this research will provide more knowledge regarding the relationship between the value consciousness and consumers' purchase intention.

In order to gain information about the consumers' purchase intention through social media among public university students in Malaysia, it is important to understand the factors of social media that influence their purchase intention, and to recognise why they use social media as a platform to purchase the product that they intended to buy. There are many research that has been conducted in the recent years on this topic but the research on the consumers' purchase intention through social media especially in Malaysia are still limited. Therefore, the purpose of this research is to help the researchers and marketers to understand better about the consumers' purchase intention through social media, especially among the public university students in Malaysia in terms of eWOM, perceived usefulness, and value consciousness as the factors of social media that influence the consumers' purchase intention. The specific research questions are: Does the electronic word of mouth influence the consumers' purchase intention? Is there any relationship between perceived usefulness of social media and consumers' purchase intention? Does the value consciousness on social media influence consumers' purchase intention? And which social media factor gives a greater influence on consumers' purchase intention.

This paper is organized into 5 sections. The first is the introduction followed by literature review in the second section. The third section is on methodology while the fourth section presents the findings. And the fifth and last section bring the paper to a conclusion.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Uses and Gratification Theory

Uses and Gratification Theory (UGT), is a theory developed and introduced by Katz, Blumler, and Gurevitch (1973) in order to explain the relationships that were formed between the media and its audience, and how the active audience utilise the media to fulfil their needs and desires (Katz, Gurevitch, & Haas, 1973). UGT accentuates the motives and gratifications drive audience's actions in relation to the social media (Katz, 1959; Musa, Azmi, & Ismail, 2015). Social media users have the advantage and freedom to actively seek for information and communicate with others in order to satisfy their needs (Ifinedo, 2016; Katz, Gurevitch, & Haas, 1973). Recent researches has used UGT in order to study the needs and gratifications in the context of social media technology (Ifinedo, 2016). UGT is a useful theoretical framework for studying students' purchase intention through social media because nowadays students are more engage with social

media in their daily life including to satisfy their needs (Ifinedo, 2016; Karimi, Khodabandelou, Ehsani, & Ahmad, 2014). With the rise of social media such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and WhatsApp, students have become constantly connected and capable of interacting with one another through these platform (Karimi et al., 2014). For this research, UGT is used to shows how the consumers' utilise the social media in finding information in terms of eWOM, perceived usefulness, and value consciousness in order to fulfil their intention to purchase products.

Katz (1959) has indicated five categories of uses and gratifications needs that result in people' use of social media, where it includes functions of cognitive, affective, social integrative, personal integrative, and tension release (Katz et al., 1973). Cognitive needs are related to acquiring information for knowledge or a better understanding. Affective needs are related to aesthetic, pleasurable, and emotional experiences. Social-integrative needs are related to contact or communication with family, friends, and others. Personal-integrative needs are related to individuals' desire to be more credible and confident of their decision. Tension-release needs are related to escape from tension and stress (Ifinedo, 2016; Karimi, Khodabandelou, Ehsani, & Ahmad, 2014; Katz, 1959; Katz et al., 1973; Musa et al., 2015). As for this research, the cognitive, affective, social-integrative, and personal-integrative needs were used to relate the influence of social media with the consumers' purchase intention. Since the tension-release needs is not relevant to this research, it will not be explained in this research. In summary, this research view the consumers' purchase intention through social media from three dimensions which are eWOM, perceived usefulness, and value consciousness.

2.2 Consumers' Purchase Intention

Intention is the behaviour that motivates a person sense to perform behaviour, while purchase intention is a combination of consumers' interest in purchasing and possibility of buying a product (Khan, 2019). The purchase intention has been used broadly as a focal construct in order to indicate the consumers' buying behaviour in the market research (Liew & Falahat, 2019). Various studies have been conducted on the social media and its effect on consumer behaviour especially the purchase intention (Alfeel & Ansari, 2019). Past research found that social media has a positive impact on every step of consumer's purchasing decision process to different extent regarding food retailer shops (Alfeel & Ansari, 2019). There is also research on how travel agencies use social media to increase customer satisfaction as well as influence the consumers' purchase decision (Alfeel & Ansari,

2019). The exchange of information, feedback, and ratings on social media platform has led to the willingness to purchase the product or service (Hajli, 2014).

With the constant buying decisions and numerous options in the market, consumers have to cope with information overload (Laksamana, 2018). Consumers will seek for information before they make purchase intention. This shows that consumers have a cognitive needs based on the UGT, where consumers tend to acquiring information about the product they want to purchase. Besides, some studies has indicated that eWOM messages are important, whereby consumers can obtain information about value and quality of the product or service before making decision (Lin et al., 2013; Poturak & Softic, 2019; Riorini, 2018). Moreover, information's credibility, quality and usefulness also has an influence toward consumers' purchase intention (Hajli, 2014). In recent research also found that product's quality and value will affect the consumers' purchase intention (Toor et al., 2017).

Most of previous researchers used Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) in conducting their research, where it indicate that individual's behavioural intention is affected by the perceived attitude toward the behaviour, the subjective norm, and the perception of social pressures from the people surrounding them (Zhang, Chen, Wu, Zhang, & Song, 2018). However, with the technological advancement, that theory might be not enough to explain the influence of social media towards the consumers' purchase intention. Therefore, this study used UGT to explain the relationship between social media and consumers' purchase intention.

2.3 Electronic Word of Mouth (eWOM)

eWOM is derived from WOM, where WOM is widely considered as a powerful influence in consumer marketplace, especially on consumers' information search and subsequent decision making (Lin et al., 2013). eWOM is defined as the exchange of opinion, posting of reviews, comments, and critiques on the digital platform such as social media (Almana & Mirza, 2013). It also defined as the dynamic and ongoing information exchange process between former, actual, and potential customer regarding products, services, or even company, which is available on the social media (Poturak & Softic, 2019). eWOM has become as an important source of reference for many consumers before they make decision to buy anything due to the useful review and product usage experience shared by the online user that influence their behaviour (Lin et al., 2013).

Recent study shows that eWOM message can affect consumers' perception toward the usefulness of the information and its subsequent adaptation due to its source credibility and argument quality (Tien et al., 2019). The results indicated that persuasiveness and informativeness are crucial factors in the eyes of eWOM receivers when the latter are used to assess the usefulness of the eWOM messages obtained via consumer-to-consumer interaction in social media. Previous research also indicated that eWOM has the better advantage over WOM because both consumers and marketers can post visual elements such as pictures, and videos that give other consumers an opportunity to understand better about the information, and in turn it will help them to make better decisions (Erkan & Evans, 2016). When it comes to choosing which products to buy on Facebook, consumers by far rely on the comments and reviews section which it will help them in making decision (Hu et al., 2014).

eWOM can be described as a type of communication that provides information to consumers about products and services through the social media. Consumers can search for market-generated information and as well consumer-generated information for the product they intend to buy (Hu et al., 2014). Both of the statements indicate that consumers have social-integrative and cognitive needs based on the UGT. This is because consumers tend to communicate with each other in order to gain information that might be helpful for them in making decision on purchasing a product. When customers review product information and recommend it to others, based on prior experience or knowledge about the product from social media marketing, this could boost purchase intentions and motivate them to buy (Khan, 2019). Therefore, this research assumes that eWOM might have positive influence towards the consumers' purchase intention through social media.

eWOM generates a greater effect on consumers' purchase intentions because the social media users are sharing their information, knowledge or experiences that others viewed as unbiased and trustworthy information (Almana & Mirza, 2013). It also refers to any attempt by former, actual or potential consumers to highlight the positive or negative information regarding the product that they want to purchase (Lin et al., 2013). Consumers need reference to strengthen their confidence to reduce the feeling of making mistake or risk while shopping, and online information or eWOM represent the product popularity and importance. Thus, the hypothesis suggested that eWOM will have a significant influence on consumers' purchase intention.

H₀: Electronic word of mouth will not have a significant influence on the consumers' purchase intention through social media.

H₁: Electronic word of mouth will have a significant positive influence on the consumers' purchase intention through social media.

2.4 Perceived Usefulness

Liew and Falahat (2019) indicated that consumers recognise the application that they used as useful if the application is able to perform tasks in an effective way. Perceived usefulness is also defined as the usefulness of information that people acquired from any media they used (Tien, Rivas, & Liao, 2019). Perceived usefulness is considered as a main predictor of social media in influencing the consumers' purchase intention (Erkan & Evans, 2016). This is because people tend to engage with the information when they think it is useful. Particularly in social media, people encounter a great amount of information that will be useful for them in making decision (Gurney et al., 2019). Therefore, it might have greater influence on consumers' purchase intention when they find the information in social media is useful. When consumers want to make judgments or decision, they tend to seek information from various social media platform in order to reduce uncertainty about credibility (Athapaththu & Kulathunga, 2018). Higher-quality information contribute to greater perceived usefulness, where the relevance and comprehensiveness of information in a message will influence the consumers' purchase intention (Zhang et al., 2018).

There are several recent research findings which show that perceived usefulness directly influences purchase intention in the social media context. Previous studies shows that consumers are drawn to improve their purchase decision by taking advantage of the overall useful information that they found on social media (Gurney et al., 2019). Furthermore, previous studies have noted that relevance, timeliness and comprehensiveness are primary features of information has positively affect consumer perceptions of usefulness (Tien et al., 2019). The findings in Liew & Falahat (2019) research revealed that there is a significant direct relationship between perceived usefulness and purchase intention of business-to-consumer in online shopping context. Previous studies also show a positive relationship between perceived usefulness and purchase intention by examining the online consumers' intention to make unplanned purchases.

Many of previous researchers use Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) as the theoretical model to explain the relationship between perceived usefulness of social media and consumers' purchase

intention (Hajli, 2014). However, in this research, UGT is used to explain the relationship between both variables. This is because, the consumers is believed to satisfy their cognitive, affective, and personal-integrative needs by acquiring useful information on social media before they make purchase decision. Cognitive needs can be explain by how the consumers' use social media to gain useful information about the product or service, while affective needs can be explain by how the feel after they found the useful information. And lastly, personal-integrative needs can be explain by how the information can influence their purchase intention, such as they are feeling more confident with the decision that they make. Perceived usefulness in this research relates to the extent to which consumers believe that using social media and the information acquired on the platforms will help them to perform better in decision making.

Research shows that perceived usefulness affects consumers' purchase intention through social media (Athapaththu & Kulathunga, 2018; Hajli, 2014). Perceived usefulness was used to measure consumes' purchase decision based on the valuation of the current updated information on social media (Liew & Falahat, 2019). There are direct relationship between perceived usefulness and consumers' purchase intention of business-to-consumers online shopper in Indian context (Athapaththu & Kulathunga, 2018). The usefulness of either it is positive or negative information will likely have influence to the consumers purchase intention. Some of the result from past research also show that there is a positive relationship between perceived usefulness and consumers' purchase intention in social media context, by examining the consumers' intention to make unplanned purchase from social media context. Perceived usefulness play an important role in social media and it is likely to have a positive impact on the consumers' purchase intention. Hence, this research has come out with the hypothesis as follow:

H₀: Perceived usefulness through social media will not have an influence towards the consumers' purchase intention.

H₂: Perceived usefulness through social media will positively influence the consumers' purchase intention.

2.5 Value Consciousness

Value consciousness is defined as a concern of consumers for paying low prices, that subject to some quality constraint (Dutta & Biswas, 2005; Khan, 2019; Riorini, 2018). Consumers with high value consciousness are more likely to be motivated to enhance their purchase decision compared to consumers with low value consciousness (Dutta &

Biswas, 2005). Not all consumers believe that acquiring goods is a driver of happiness and signals of social status, and this type of consumers are known as value conscious consumers, where they carefully use resources and avoid waste (Ismail, 2017). Value conscious consumers are tend to be concerned equally about both of the low prices and product's quality. This type of consumers are more likely to use social media platforms to find information about the lowest price product which will benefits them in saving money (Ismail, 2017; Khan, 2019). The information found on social media can help them in identifying the right product to satisfy their needs and desires, and thus it will affect the consumers' purchase intention.

Past studies found that value consciousness to be related to the involvement, product information, and price information (Pillai & Kumar, 2012). Value consciousness has also been found to be moderate on the effect of low price guarantee on consumer's purchase intention, where the effect become stronger when the value consciousness is higher (Dutta & Biswas, 2005). In Rakesh & Khare (2012) research, value consciousness in online shopping is related to the consumers' purchase intention in India. Previous research also stated that consumers who looking for a balance between price and quality were more positively and significantly affected the consumers' purchase intention (Riorini, 2018). The results in Ismail (2017) research indicate that there is a positive influence of information on social media in term of value consciousness toward consumers' purchase intention.

As for this research, UGT will be used to explain the relationship between value consciousness and consumers' purchase intention. University students is known as the value conscious consumers because they tend to use social media to find information and compare both the price and value of similar products before they purchase it to satisfy their personal-integrative needs. This is because they have the tendency of buying a product with similar value at a cheaper price since they are still a student and cannot afford to purchase expensive products on their own. Therefore, this study assumes that value consciousness will influence the consumers' purchase intention through social media.

Value consciousness has been conceptualized as the concern for paying the low prices which are subject to some quality constraints (Pillai & Kumar, 2012). The effect of value consciousness on social media to consumers' purchase intention happen when there are many similar products that the consumers want to purchase. When this situation happen, consumers usually will differentiate the products based on prices, quality, and promotion offered (Rakesh & Khare, 2012). Consistent with this definition, value

is the quality of the product that consumers get for the price that they paid, which interpreted the meaning of value used by many customers when they want to purchase a product through social media (Khan, 2019). Therefore, the hypothesis of this research suggest that value consciousness have a positive effect toward consumers' purchase intention through social media.

H₀: Value consciousness will not have a significant influence towards consumers' purchase intention.

H₃: Value consciousness will have a positive influence towards consumers' purchase intention.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

Quantitative research method was used in this study using survey questionnaires. The questionnaires were created using Google Form, an internet-mediated questionnaires that are widely accessible through internet connectivity on various types of electronic devices at anytime and anywhere. The survey were easily distributed to the targeted respondents through the Uniform Resource Locator (URL) link of the Google Form. The questionnaire completed by the respondents and their participation were purely voluntary.

The population of this study are the public university students in Malaysia. The total population is 552,702 students (Educational Data Sector, 2019). Due to the large size of population, this research needed to use a sample because it is impossible to either collect or analyse all the data available from the population because of the restrictions of time, money and access. Thus, this research selected a sample size of 384 respondents who are students from various public universities across Malaysia.

The variables were measured on 5-point Likert-type scale (1-Strongly disagree to 5-Strongly agree). eWOM has 5 items adopted and adapted from Almana & Mirza (2013) and Lin et. al. (2013), perceived usefulness has 5 items (Athapaththu & Kulathunga, 2018, Liew & Falahat, 2019), value consciousness has 5 items (Rakesh & Khare, 2012) and purchase intention also 5 items (Duffet, 2015, Lin et al., 2013). This study used the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 26 to analyse the collected data.

4.0 RESULTS & DISCUSSION

Reliability analysis was conducted on each of the variables for its consistency. The result shows that the Cronbach's Alpha for eWOM is 0.686, while for perceived usefulness is 0.759. As for value consciousness, the results is 0.778, and lastly for purchase intention is 0.725. From the results, only eWOM does not exceed the good range which is in

between 0.7 to 0.8. Based on the Cronbach's Alpha Range, the eWOM rating is on the moderate range where the value of the results is in between 0.6 to 0.7. Other variables satisfied the Cronbach's Alpha reliability test at the good range

The Pearson correlation analysis was used to measure the strength of the relationship between variables. The results showed that there is a positive correlation between eWOM and purchase intention with the value of 0.518 and significant value of 0.000 where $p < 0.01$. Moreover, there is also a positive correlation between perceived usefulness and purchase intention with the value of 0.631 and significant value of 0.000, where $p < 0.01$. Lastly, there is also positive correlation between value consciousness and purchase intention with value of 0.437 and significant value of 0.000, where $p < 0.01$. Therefore, the results in the Pearson Correlation Analysis indicate that all the independent variables has a positive correlation with the dependent variable.

To determine the influence of eWOM, perceived usefulness and value consciousness on purchase intention, multiple regression analysis was performed. Three hypotheses were suggested and results analysed. The F-statistics ($F = 105.108$) was significant at 1 percent level (Sig. $F < 0.01$), thus confirming the fitness for the model. The value of R Square is 0.453, which indicated that 45.3% of the dependent variable, which is purchase intention can be explained by the independent variables, which are eWOM, perceived usefulness, and value consciousness. The remaining 54.7% of the dependent variable can be explained by other variables that were not used in this research.

H1: Electronic word of mouth have a significant positive influence on the consumers' purchase intention

The results corroborated that eWOM significantly influenced the purchase intention ($\beta_1 = 0.241$; t -value = 5.087; $p < 0.01$). Thus, H1 is accepted, signifying that eWOM affect the purchase intention. The result is consistent with that of Khan (2019), Almana and Mirza (2013), and Lin et al. (2013).

H2: Perceived usefulness will positively influence the consumers' purchase intention.

Next, H2 substantiated that perceived usefulness significantly influenced the purchase intention ($\beta_2 = 0.454$; t -value = 9.665; $p > 0.01$). Hence, H2 is accepted, signifying that the perceived usefulness affect the purchase intention. This results is consistent with the findings of Liew and Falahat (2019), Athapaththu and Kulathunga (2018), and Hajli (2013).

H3: Value consciousness will have a positive influence towards consumers' purchase intention.

The results for H3 indicated that value consciousness was significantly affected the purchase intention ($\beta_3 = 0.094$; $t\text{-value} = 2.084$; $p < 0.05$). Thus, H3 is supported. The significant relation between the value consciousness and purchase intention has been confirmed. The result for this finding is consistent with the findings in the research of Riorini (2018), and Pillai and Kumar (2012).

Beta coefficient explained the change in dependent variable for each component change in the independent variable (Hair, 2007). From the results obtained, perceived usefulness has the highest beta coefficient which was 0.454. Then, followed by eWOM with the beta coefficient of 0.241 which was the second highest. This showed that perceived usefulness influenced the purchase intention the most followed by eWOM. The lowest beta coefficient is value consciousness which was 0.094 which indicated that value consciousness has the least influence on purchase intention.

Table 4.1: ANOVA Test
ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	51.378	3	17.126	105.108	.000 ^b
	Residual	61.917	380	.163		
	Total	113.295	383			

a. Dependent Variable: Purchase Intention

b. Predictors: (Constant), Value Consciousness, Electronic Word of Mouth, Perceived Usefulness

Source: Generated from IBM SPSS Version 26

Table 4.2: Coefficient Correlation Analysis

Variable	Unstandardized Coefficient		Standardized Coefficient	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	.804	.188		4.276	.000
Electronic Word of Mouth (eWOM)	.241	.047	.234	5.087	.000
Perceived Usefulness (PU)	.454	.047	.460	9.665	.000
Value Consciousness (VC)	.094	.045	.095	2.084	.038

Source: Generated from IBM SPSS Version 26

Table 4.3: Summary of Hypothesis

Hypotheses	Sig. (p < 0.05)	Findings
H1: Electronic word of mouth has a significant positive influence on the consumers' purchase intention	0.000	Accept
H2: Perceived usefulness positively influence the consumers' purchase intention.	0.000	Accept
H3: Value consciousness has a positive influence towards consumers' purchase intention.	0.038	Accept

5.0 CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this research was to assess the factors of social media that might influence the consumers' purchase intention among the public university students in Malaysia. There were three hypotheses that has been proposed in this research, and all the hypotheses were found to be supported, based on the results from the data analysed.

. Brand loyalty is important for an organization to ensure that its product is kept in the minds of consumers and prevent the customers from switching to other brands (Mansori, 2016).

Moreover, this research can benefit the marketers in order to come up with their marketing strategies in order to attract more customers since nowadays consumers has shift from the traditional media to the social media for day to day information about a product that they want to purchase. Thus, the marketers can seize this opportunities to explore and use the social media to promote their products on various platforms that exist. This is because, social media is a platform where both consumers and business can communicate and also provide information or review about the product. The information that created through social media played

a significant role in influencing other consumers in making decision either to buy the product or not. Consequently, this research has produced interesting findings on consumers' purchase intention. The analysis revealed that eWOM, perceived usefulness and value consciousness significantly affects purchase intention of the customers. Furthermore, perceived usefulness exerts the greatest influence on purchase intention while value consciousness the least. Therefore, the results showed that perceived usefulness, eWOM and value consciousness are critical in motivating purchase intention among customers.

5.1 Electronic Word of Mouth and Consumers' Purchase Intention

The result in Chapter 4 has indicated that eWOM has a positive influence towards the consumers' purchase intention through social media with the Beta value of 0.234 and significant value of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$). The result in this research is consistent with the result in the research of Khan (2019), Almana and Mirza (2013), and Lin et al. (2013). The studies indicated that the eWOM messages in the social media platforms will influence other consumers who received the information, and motivated them to either buy the product or not (Khan, 2019). Based on Almana and Mirza (2013), the researchers found that most of the consumers will read the online reviews and comments of the product before they buy it. Most of the consumers tend to refer other consumers' opinion and review for the product, and often search for information of the product on social media when they feel uncertain with the product that they want to buy (Lin et al., 2013). The results have indicated that eWOM has a relatively strong influence towards the consumers' purchase intention through social media. The information of eWOM on social media platforms can help the consumers to be more confident with their purchase intention. Consumers also tend to refer other person's comments or reviews to understand better about the product before they make the decision.

5.2 Perceived Usefulness and Consumers' Purchase Intention

The finding for the second hypothesis in this research shows that perceived usefulness has the highest positive influence towards the consumers' purchase intention, with the results of 0.460 for Beta value and significant value of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$). This result is consistent with the findings in the research of Liew and Falahat (2019), Athapaththu and Kulathunga (2018), and Hajli (2013). Based on Liew and Falahat (2019), the researchers stated that consumers will likely participate in a buying decision when they perceived that the social media

is beneficial to them and the information in the platforms are useful. There is a direct relationship between perceived usefulness and consumers' purchase intention through the social media platforms (Athapaththu & Kulathunga, 2018; Hajli, 2014). The results show that when participants experience a high level of information quality or platform quality, they are more likely to buy the product through social media. The coefficient results in this research can be considered to be relatively high compared to the research by Athapaththu and Kulathunga (2018) which have the coefficient value of 0.28. The difference in the coefficient value could be due to the difference in the nature of the category that has been studied. The result also indicated that the consumers are more technologically savvy and they are able to adapt to the business marketing easily, as well as toward the rapid changes in the social media platforms.

5.3 Value Consciousness and Consumers' Purchase Intention

The result for the value consciousness in chapter earlier indicated that the value consciousness has a positive influence towards the consumers' purchase intention, where the value for Beta is 0.095, and the significant value is 0.038. The positive beta value in the results of this research indicate that value consciousness has the lowest effect on the purchase intention compared to other independent variables of this research. The value consciousness still affects the purchase intention even though the significant value is low. This is because the significant value of this variable is less than 0.05 ($p < 0.05$). The result for this finding is consistent with the findings in the research of Riorini (2018), and Pillai and Kumar (2012). The researchers indicated that the value consciousness enhances the consumers' confidence in the decision making, and the value conscious consumers will react differently toward the product they want to purchase through social media. (Pillai & Kumar, 2012). Riorini (2018) stated that the consumers' purchase intention was affected by how easy they can find the information of the product they want to buy in the social media platforms, as it can increase the consumers' desire to get the product with the best quality for a cheaper price. The results on this research indicated that the social media platforms facilitate the consumers with the relevant information, especially the information about the products' prices and quality. When consumers purchase products through social media, the value conscious customers are more motivated to buy the product based on the price. If the price of the product is high, they are mostly will reject it and look for another product alternative at a better price.

5.4 Implication of Research

The development of social media has changed how people interact with each other and how businesses use it to market their products. Social media is known as an interactive platform for nowadays users, especially for businesses as they can communicate freely with the consumers and received feedbacks about their products, which will help them to improve their products and the business. With the improvement of the technologies, Malaysian consumers has continued to utilize social media as a platform for them to purchase a product, and improve their purchase intention. The consumers mostly used social media to seek for useful information about the products, experiences and feedbacks from other consumers, and information about the product's price and quality before they make purchase decision.

This research could help marketers in finding the best target consumers and market segment to promote their products and services. This research might also can help marketers in gaining accurate and consistent results that related to the target consumers. It might bring benefits for marketers in order to understand and gain knowledge about the consumers' purchase intention through social media among the public university students. Moreover, it is crucial for marketers to understand the factors of social media that can affect the target consumers' purchase intention.

The results in this research indicated that the factors of social media which are eWOM, perceived usefulness, and value consciousness has demonstrated a relatively positive influence towards the consumers' purchase intention. This research is conducted in order to provide a better understanding and provide a clear explanation for other researchers on the consumers' purchase intention through social media among public university students in Malaysia by considering three factors, which are eWOM, perceived usefulness, and value consciousness that has a positive relationships with the consumer's purchase intention, based on the result in this research.

5.5 Limitation of Research

Almost every research has limitations, including for this research. Although this research has reached its purposes, there were some unavoidable limitations that exist in this research. First, this study was conducted only on public university students across Malaysia. Thus, the results of this research cannot be applied to other students like private university students or primary and secondary school students. Second, the respondents' demographic information should be diverse. But because of the sampling approach used in this research, the respondents are homogeneous. It is important to sample different

types of consumers, such as their level of education, their monthly income, and types of social media they used in their life. Moreover, the measurement of variables constructed in this research might be another limitation. The dependent variable is not explained completely by the independent variables. It is only about 45.3% of the dependent variable, which is consumer's purchase intention can be explained by the independent variables, which are eWOM, perceived usefulness, and value consciousness. The remaining percentage which is 54.7% of the dependent variable were unexplained. Thus, it is possible to have more predictors of consumer's purchase intention through social media so that the undiscovered factors can be explained

5.6 Recommendation for Future Research

In conducting any future research, the researchers can make use of other research approach or strategy so that it is more effective in collecting the data. For example, a structured interview session can be held to obtain the responses from the targeted respondents. By using this approach, any ambiguity in the research can be clarified and solved immediately by the interviewer and the error of questions will be less likely to occur. Another suggestion for the future research is that the selection of sample must be focused on all university students across Malaysia. Future researchers can conduct research on both public university students and private university students in Malaysia in order to get a better results for this similar study. Further study can also focused on a larger sampling, to ensure that the data collected are useable. Factors relating to social media are known to the public university students, as in the case of this research, since they are familiar to these factors, and thus the results in this research shows that all the independent variables significantly affect the dependent variable. Therefore, future studies might can use other factors in social media to investigate the relationship between the others independent variable and the purchase intention.

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