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THE CHOICE OF SMARTPHONES AMONG YOUNG GENERATION

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Abstract

This paper reviews the choice of smartphones among young generation in Malaysia. This is because smartphones have become important items to have especially among young generation. This study suggests various factors that can influence purchasing intention of smartphones such as brand name, features and so on. Among the popular brands of smartphones in the market are Apple, Samsung, Huawei, Vivo, Xiaomi and Oppo. There are also other factors that can influence people to buy smartphones. Therefore, this paper aims to review the antecedents of smartphones' purchasing intention so that it can provides more understanding on the factors that lead to the purchasing intention among young generation.

Keywords: Purchasing Intention, Smartphone, Brand

Introduction

Smartphone technology is a fast-growing technology development industry that has many competitors in the market. There are many advanced features of smartphones that can be useful for users similar to computer and communication system such as high-speed data and network communication features, capturing and editing photo and video, attractive and exclusive design as well as good processing abilities (Ashraf, 2018). Nowadays, smartphones are considered important devices among young generation since it provides many applications by connecting to the internet such as online services and social media (e.g; Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp) that are easy to use and can obtain fast feedback (Azira *et. al*, 2015).

According to Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission (MCMC), smartphone penetration rates in Malaysia grew by 2.1% from 75.9% in 2017 to 78.0% in 2018. Based on handphone survey report from MCMC (2018), the group of people aged 20-34 years old was the highest group of smartphone users in Malaysia with the percentage of 87%, followed by young generation aged below 20 years old at 86.3% and people aged 35-49 years old, stated 74.9% users. These findings showed that young generations especially with age below 20 was recorded as majority of smartphone users in Malaysia.

Definition Of Term

Purchasing Intention

Purchasing intention can be defined as the amount of consumers' willingness to purchase a product/service, when their intention is high, they are willing to purchase that product/service (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2000). Besides, purchase intention is the process of trying to purchase specific product or services (Dodds *et. al*, 1991). Therefore, smartphone vendors need to have good strategies to attract more consumers to purchase their smartphones.

Factors Influencing The Purchasing Intention Of Smartphone

There are many previous studies regarding purchasing intention of smartphones especially among teenagers. Therefore, it is important to carry out research to identify reasons why these young generations have high intention to purchase the smartphones. Based on previous research done by Ericsson Consumer Lab (2013), it was stated that most of university students are using smartphones. 60% of the students were addicted to their phones, 75% of them sleep next to their phones, 88% texted in the class, 97% use them for social networking and 40% use smartphones to study before test. As a result, there are many brands of smartphones being sold in Malaysia, whereby new models of smartphones are launched to the market from time to time. Therefore, the market players will make sure their smartphones are having up to date features, designs and applications so that they can be the leader in the industry as well as to gain customers' loyalty to the brand.

There are many factors that influence consumers to purchase smartphones namely brand name, price, quality, recreation as well as innovation and so on (Leo *et. al.*, 2005). It is very important for smartphone marketers to identify the specific elements to attract users to buy smartphones. Apart from that, users would buy their smartphones because of its features. According to MCMC report (2018), the top activities of smartphone users were communication (e.g; text messaging and voice note, voice call) recorded 98.1%, next was voice calls (95.4%), taking photos or videos (92.8%), social networking (88.6%), browsing internet (85.1%), watching videos or movies (82.7%) and so on. Therefore, the marketers should ensure that their

smartphones' operating systems are the latest, contain large memory to store videos and pictures, fast processing system and easy to share application with other smartphones' users.

Other than that, smartphone users are looking for the brand that they have had good previous experience using it, trusted brand and so on. When it comes to the brand, Samsung is the most preferred brand in worldwide recorded 21.8%, followed by Huawei and Apple, 17.6% and 14.5% accordingly in year 2019 (Amadeo, 2020). It shows that new brands of smartphones such as Huawei has been taken over Apple, becomes number 2 of global preferred brand among users after Samsung. Meanwhile, from previous research done by Ashraf (2018), stated that price, ease of use and usefulness were no longer important. Through the findings of his research also found that the other factors such as payment options, perceived enjoyment peer and social influence, product design, and product brand were the more influential factors on the decision of Gen-z to purchase smartphones. The similar author further mentioned the factors that influence the purchasing decision of smartphones among Gen z are not consistent from different studies since consumers have different needs and wants.

Conclusion

In conclusion, it is crucial to do more researches on this field especially among young generation. This can give new insights and perspectives of new antecedents that lead to the purchasing intention among smartphone users in Malaysia especially among young generation. Previous researches suggested that smartphones' producers must keep looking on improving characteristics of their phones and develop good image as well as brand that is preferable to young generation consumers (Ashraf, 2018).

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