TO SHARE OR NOT? FACTORS INFLUENCING WORD OF MOUTH COMMUNICATION

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ABSTRACT

In the consumer market, loyalty is an essential goal and a key element for a company to build a long-term sustainability and growth. Loyal consumers are more willing to make recommendations, advice and suggestions about a firms products to their friends or relatives through Word of Mouth (WOM) communication. In this relation, 90% of the advertising is viewed by consumers as non-credible while 90% of word of mouth communicated is treated as credible (Lee, Mullen and Fraedrich, 2011). The objective of this study is to determine the factors influencing word of mouth (WOM) communication among mobile phone users. Five factors which are Perceived Value, Perceived Quality, Customer Satisfaction, Brand Love and Brand Trust are examined to determine whether these factors influenced word of mouth communication. This study was conducted among 393 respondents from Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM), Sintok Kedah. The methods used to analyse the data are Reliability test, Descriptive Analysis, ANOVA, Independent Sample T-Test, Pearson Correlation Analysis and Multiple Regression Analysis. The findings indicated that all these five factors have a strong positive relationship with Word of Mouth communication. The results also showed that Brand Love had the strongest significant positive relationship with Word of Mouth communication with correlation value of 0.802, followed by Brand Trust with correlation value of 0.793. In addition, Pearson correlation analysis results showed that Brand Trust and Brand Love are factors that strongly influenced Word of Mouth communication. This study provides an understanding of the factors that drives word of mouth communication by a consumer. Word of mouth can be a main potential source for business to grow and hence it is very important for marketers to understand it.

Keywords: Perceived value, Perceived quality, Brand love, Brand trust, Word of Mouth Communication.

1. INTRODUCTION

In the consumer market, loyalty is an essential goal and also is a key element for a company to build a long-term sustainability and growth since loyal consumers is more willingness to make recommendations, advice and suggestions. This loyalty action is better known as word of mouth (WOM) communication (Taghizadeh, Taghipourian and Khazaei, 2013). Katz and Lazarsfeld (1955) suggested that the traditional method of marketing tools such as personal selling, printed advertising and radio advertising are losing their effectiveness to persuade consumers. In this relation, 90% of the advertising is viewed by consumers as non-credible while 90% of word of mouth communicated is treated as credible (Lee Thomas, Mullen and Fraedrich, 2011). Correspondingly, Arndt (1967) also supported that "people's recommendations" were three times effectively than advertising in terms of encouraging people to purchase and influenced their consumption decision and product evaluations. In fact, consumer would like to exchange information and experience with each other in favor to influence each other's attitude and behaviors. This creates threats between companies-customer communication channels (Blazevic et al., 2013). Hence, word of mouth communication is an opportunity and a powerful tool to influence consumers' attitudes and behaviors when they are in the purchase decision process and consumer choice (Mazzarol, Sweeney and Soutar, 2007). Studies related to word of mouth in the local context is considered relatively small as compared to studies conducted in the western countries. Although many of these investigations are focused on the antecedents of word of mouth, but literature showed that little attention are focused on the antecedents of word of mouth when taking into account word of mouth as an important construct (Arndt, 1967; Anderson,

1998; Mazzarol et al., 2007). Besides, there still exists a gap in examining the bivariate relationship between word of mouth communication and factors such as perceived value, perceived quality, customer satisfaction, brand trust (Matos and Rossi, 2008) and brand love (Ahuvia, 2005) in the Malaysian context.

2. Literature review

2.1 Word of Mouth (WOM)

In the marketing context, the term of word of mouth communication is used to explain the verbal communications among groups, for example family unit and friends and the existing or potential consumers which either in positively or negatively way (Ennew et al., 2000). Besides, Arndt (1967) and Singh (1990) defined word of mouth communication as a verbal, informal, individual-to-individual conversation between a receiver and a perceived communicator concerning an evaluation regarding brand, product or service offered by an organization. WOM is a powerful tool that shape consumers' attitudes and purcahse behavior especially in behaviours related to product adoption as compared to other type of advertising (Trusov et al., 2009). However, due to the internet, the communication environment in which WOM disseminates has been unalterably changed (Kozinets et al., 2010). Word of mouth communication is an old device that are able to develop, express and spread some of opinions about products, brands, and services offered by markets (Lau and Ng, 2001). Maru, Cermak and Prince (1994) suggested that word of mouth communication is an activity that involve of sharing notion, thoughts, and information among customers from their personal incidents and experience. In addition, word of mouth communication represents a highly trusted external source of information for consumers to use in evaluating the organization, products, services and brand (Saha and Theingi, 2009). Consequently, word of mouth communication is regarded as the most credible and powerful technique of communication than other source of communication such as printed information (Gremler, Gwinner and Brown, 2001). WOM no longer takes place in the exclusive context of face-to-face settings, involving one source and one recipient. Rather, it now increasingly occurs in the more transparent public domain of online social networks (Ho and Dempsey, 2010). This shows how the important and powerful word of mouth communication in influencing consumers attitude and purchasing behavior.

2.2 Perceived Value

The term of value defined as a judgment and evaluation of a customer's preference about product attributes, attribute performance and consequences (Wondruff, 1997). Consumer will always consider the extent to which they are received is "value and worthy for money". Apart from that, Zeithaml (1988) and Cronin, Brady and Hult (2000) defined perceived value is a consumers' evaluation of the benefit of a product derived from their judgment on perceptions what is received and given. Received components (benefits) of perceived value include intrinsic attributes such as how the product makes consumers feel (quality) while extrinsic attributes such as reputation and brand image of the product or service. In contrast, Dodds, Monroe and Grewal (1991) and Cronin et al., (2000) defined the given components (sacrifices) include monetary (prices) and non-monetary (time, energy and effort) considerations. Hence, a firm must either increase customers' benefits such as quality and/or reduce their sacrifice in time or effort when consumers purchase or acquire products. In addition, the firm also should offer this value in a unique and exclusive way to build a competitive advantage and in turn enhance their viability (Li et al., 2009). Researchers found that there is a relationship between perceived value and word of mouth communication in previous studies (Hartline and Jones, 1996; Gruen, Osmonbekov and Czaplewski, 2006; McKee, Simmers and Licata, 2006; Hansen, Samuelsen and Silseth, 2008; Yasvari et al., 2012).

2.3 Perceived Quality

Perceived quality has been defined as consumer's judgment about a product or service overall excellent or superiority while evaluating the products or services (Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry, 1985; Zeithaml et al., 1996). Similarly, Parasuraman et al., (1985) define perceived quality as customers' assessments of the whole

service quality and are determined by the difference between consumer's real service performance and the expectations. Zeithaml (1988) defined the perceived quality as the judgment about an individual or a superiority service's by consumers'. Furthermore, consumers will base on the assortment of information signal such as intrinsic or extrinsic cues when criticizing product quality or determine characteristics of service. Performance, features, durability, conformance and serviceability is an intrinsic cue in the physical uniqueness of product. In contrast, external attributes such as pricing, name of brand, brand image, retail store image and company reputation are extrinsic cues to review quality of product or service (Zeithaml, Berry and Parasuraman, 1988). Earlier studies have indicated that there is a relationship between perceived quality and word of mouth communication (Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry, 1988; Zeithaml et al., 1996; Bloemer, Ruyter and Wetzels, 1999; Bitner, 1990; Dabholkar et al., 1995). Hence, it shows that the superior the service quality, the more positive word of mouth communication formed by consumers.

2.4 Customer Satisfaction

In the field of marketing, satisfaction of customers is a salient consequence for a firm (Oliver, 1997). The customer is satisfied when brand, product and service exceeds or meets consumer needs and expectation (Zeithaml et al., 1996). Customer satisfaction is achieved when the firms meet or go beyond the standard of advantages and benefits (Gruen, 1995; Churchill and Surprenant, 1982). In addition, customer satisfaction is identified as the response of a consumer on pleasurable to accomplishment of individual needs, wants and desires (Oliver, 1997). Besides, it is a judgment that the feature of the product or service (intrinsic), or the product or service itself (extrinsic) is present at a level of consumption-related fulfillment which consist of the levels of under or over fulfillment (Oliver, 1997). Oliver (1980) defined customer satisfaction as the evaluation of a feeling when the sensation surrounding disconfirmed expectation that association with prior feeling about the consumer experience. Therefore, the higher the satisfaction of consumers, the higher will be expectation of consumers to spread positive word of mouth. This means that satisfied consumers will engage in more word of mouth communication (Oliver, 1980; Soderlund, 1998; Mangold and Miller, 1999; Ranaweera and Prabhu, 2003; Babin et al., 2005; Brown et al., 2005 and Cengiz and Yayla, 2007)

2.5 Brand Love

Brand love is a marketplace phenomenon that refers to a strong or passionate emotion that consumers experience in relation to a specific brand (Shimp and Madden, 1988; Carroll and Ahuvia, 2006). Brand love as the degree of passionate emotional attachment that a satisfied consumer has for a particular brand name (Carroll and Ahuvia, 2006). Ahuvia (2005) also proposes that a consumer will fall in love with the brand if it achieved a high real and desired standard of integration of customer expectation. In addition, consumer love of a brand is based on the perceptions of brand such as its excellent performance, design and truthfulness as long as the brands or products are worth for the money and having an excellent and important feature (Batra, Ahuvia and Bagozzi, 2012). Therefore, consumers will fall in love with the objects when they feel excitement and provide a great value and having a similar view of the objects. Carroll and Ahuvia (2006) have shown that there is positive connection between brand love and word of mouth for a particular brand in the eyes of the consumers.

2.6 Brand Trust

Brand trust is defined as the willingness of the average consumer to rely on the ability of the brand to perform its stated function (Chaudhuri and Holbrook, 2001). Morgan and Hunt (1994) and Rotter (1967) interpret that trust exists when one party has confidence in an exchange partner's reliability and integrity. According to Anderson and Narus (1990) and Chaudhuri and Holbrook (2001) determine that consumers not merely recognize that brand is worthy of trust but also think that it is safe, honest and dependable consumption scenario which is a significant link with brand trust. Alam and Yasin (2010) described brand trust as an individual willingness to rely on a brand and they are willing to maintain a durable relationship with that particular brand, products or

services. Mak, Kam and Tong (2011) demonstrated that there is positive significant and direct effect between brand trust and consumers' word of mouth communication. Similarly, Alam and Yasin (2010) found a stronger relation between brand trust and word of mouth communication.

3. OBJECTIVES OF THIS STUDY

3.1 MAIN OBJECTIVE:

To determine the factors influencing word of mouth communication among mobile phone users.

3.2 SPECIFIC OF OBJECTIVES

1. To determine the significant difference in word of mouth communication between genders among mobile phone users.
2. To determine the significant difference in word of mouth communication between age group, ethnic group, religion, level of education and the brand preference among mobile phone users.
3. To determine the relationship between the independent variables (perceived value, perceived quality, customer satisfaction, brand love and brand trust) and word of mouth communication.
4. To determine the influence between the independent variables (perceived value, perceived quality, customer satisfaction, brand love, brand trust) towards word of mouth communication.

3.3 Hypothesis of the study

H1: There is a significant difference in word of mouth communication between genders among mobile phone users.

H2: There is a significant difference between word of mouth communication and age group (H2a), ethnic group (H2b), religion (H2c), level of education (H2d), and brand preference (H2e) among mobile phone users.

H3: There is a significant relationship between perceived value (H3a), perceived quality (H3b), customer satisfaction (H3c), brand love (H3d), and brand trust (H3e) on word of mouth communication among mobile phone users.

H4: There is a significant influence between perceived value (H4a), perceived quality (H4b), customer satisfaction (H4c), brand love (H4d), and brand trust (H4e) on word of mouth communication among mobile phone users.

3.4 PILOT TEST

A pilot study was conducted in order to establish the reliability scale items in research measurement instrumentation before the collection of the main empirical study. A pilot test was performed among young adults in Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM). Fifty individuals were picked to participate in this pilot test. The scale used was a Likert-type six-point scale ranging from 1 (extremely disagree) to 6 (extremely agree). The results of the pilot test showed that the Cronbach's alpha for perceived value was 0.898, perceived quality 0.879, customer satisfaction 0.937, brand love 0.958, brand trust 0.316 and word of mouth 0.959. It indicates that one of the independent variable, brand trust, the Cronbach Alpha value was low (below than 0.7) which is 0.316. According to Pallant (2005), the researcher may require to remove some items in the dimension to improve the alpha value. Hence, after removing the item, the alpha level for this dimension was improved to 0.918.

4. METHODOLOGY

4.1 POPULATION AND SAMPLING

The population for this study was young adults from Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM), Sintok Kedah. Students are seen as suitable respondents in this study since the highest populations of mobile phone users are young adults, which are in the age groups of 20-24, 25-29 and 30-34 years old (Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission, 2012). In this study, the sampling technique applied was random sampling method. According to Sekaran and Bougie (2010) and Roscoe (1975) for a population of 22,000 students at Universiti Utara Malaysia, the sample size should be 377 respondents. However, in this study, a total number of 400 sets of questionnaire had been distributed.

4.2 ITEMS AND MEASUREMENT

The instrument was a survey method and questionnaires in this study. This study scale items were measured using six-point Likert scale which ranging from 1 (extremely disagree) to 6 (extremely agree).

Table 1: Items for Questionnaires

Constructs	Items	Sources and Year
Perceived Value	8	Cronin et al., (2000); Harris and Goode (2004); Molinari et al., (2008).
Perceived Quality	6	Dodds et al., (1991); Molinari et al., (2008).
Customer Satisfaction	6	Oliver (1980); Babin et al., (2005).
Brand Love	7	Carroll and Ahuvia (2006).
Brand Trust	5	Crosby et al., (1990); Hess (1995); Chaudhuri and Holbrook (2001); Kassim and Abdullah (2006).
Word of Mouth	8	Zeithaml et al., (1996); Gremler and Gwinner (2000); Samutachak and Li (2012).

5. FINDINGS

5.1 SURVEY RETURN RATE

Out of 400 questionnaires, 7 responses were invalid or incomplete, therefore only 393 sets of questionnaire were used for the analysis of this study.

5.2 RELIABILITY ANALYSES

Reliability measurement was conducted to examine the reliability and consistency of items or variables in this study. In general, Cronbach's Alpha value less than 0.60 are considered to be poor, the value 0.7 is considered items are acceptable and value over 0.8 is considered good (Sekaran and Bougie, 2010).

Table 2: Reliability Analyses Test Results (Cronbach's Alpha)

Variables	No of Items	Pilot Test	Real Test
Perceived Value	8	0.898	0.933
Perceived Quality	6	0.879	0.891
Customer Satisfaction	6	0.937	0.912
Brand Love	7	0.958	0.955
Brand Trust	5	0.918	0.931
Word of Mouth	8	0.959	0.954

5.3 Characteristics of Respondents:

There are 257 female respondents (65.4%) and 136 male respondents (34.6%) that participated in this study. About 71.8% of the respondents were age between 20-24 years old followed by the age group 25-29 and 30-34 years old, which accounted for 26.5% and 1.8%, respectively. Among these respondents, 222 (56.5%) respondents were Malay, 136 (34.6%) respondents were Chinese, and 19 (4.8%) respondents were India. On the other hand, approximately 80% of the respondents were undergraduate students while 14% of the respondents were Master students and 7% of the respondents were doctoral students.

Table 3: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents (N=393)

Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	136	34.6
Female	257	65.4
Age		
20-24	282	71.8
25-29	104	26.5
30-34	7	1.8
Ethnic		
Malay	222	56.5
Chinese	136	34.6
Indian	19	4.8
Others	16	4.1
Religion		
Muslim	232	59.0
Buddhist	121	30.8
Christian	19	4.8
Hindu	18	4.6
Others	3	0.8
Level of Education		
Bachelor	314	79.9
Master	53	13.5
PhD	26	6.6

5.4 Independent Samples T-Test

In order to achieve Objective 1, independent samples T-test was used to determine whether there is any significant difference exists between word of mouth communication and genders among mobile phone users. The independent samples T-Test showed that there was a significant difference between the word of mouth

communication and genders (t-value = 2.169, p = 0.031) since the value Significant is equal or below than 0.05. Therefore, H1 is accepted.

Table 4: Independent Samples T-Test between Genders and Word of Mouth

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means		
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
WOM	Equal variances assumed	3.609	0.058	2.169	391	0.031
	Equal variances not assumed			2.103	252.279	0.036

5.5 ANOVA

In order to achieve Objective 2, one-way ANOVA was used to determine whether there exist any significant difference word of mouth communication between factors such as age groups, ethnic, religion, level of education and the brand preference mobile phone by respondents. Table 5 below shows the result of ANOVA between the age groups and word of mouth communication of the respondents. The ANOVA test showed that there was a significant difference between word of mouth communication and age groups with significant level at 0.013 (F= 4.409, p < 0.05). The Tukey's post hoc test was conducted in order to assess which age group showed the significant difference. The result showed that respondents with age 20-24 and 25-29 years old have a higher tendency to involve in word of mouth communication. Therefore, H2a is accepted. In the Table 6, the ANOVA test showed that there was no significant difference between the ethnic and word of mouth communication with significant level at 0.356 (F= 1.084, p > 0.05). Therefore, H2b is rejected. Similarly, in the Table 7, the ANOVA test showed that there was no significant difference between religion and word of mouth communication with significant level at 0.490 (F= 0.856, p > 0.05). Therefore, H2c is rejected. In the Table 8, the ANOVA test showed that there was a significant difference between the word of mouth communication and level of education with significant level at 0.04 (F= 5.601, p < 0.05). The post hoc test shows that Degree and Master of students have a higher tendency to involve in word of mouth communication. Therefore, H2d is accepted. In the table 9, there was a significant difference between the brand preference and word of mouth communication with significant level at 0.01 (F= 3.694, p < 0.05). Tukey's post hoc test showed that Apple and Samsung brands are the leading player in the mobile phone industry as many respondents are more preferred to recommend. Therefore, H2e is accepted.

Table 5: One-way ANOVA (Age Groups and Word of Mouth) and Post Hoc Test

		Categories			F	p-value
		20-24	**25-29**	**30-34**		
WOM	N	282	104	7	4.409	0.013
	Mean	4.586	4.8413	4.9107		
	S.D.	0.78819	0.77060	0.73850		
Post hoc test						
(I) Age	(J) Age	Mean difference (I-J)				Sig
20-24	25-29	-.25535*				.013
	30-34					
25-29	20-24	.25535*				.013
	30-34					
30-34	20-24	.32472				.525
	25-29					

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Table 6: One-way ANOVA (Ethnic Group and Word of Mouth)

		Categories				F	p-value
		Malay	**Chinese**	**Indian**	**Others**		
WOM	N	222	136	19	16	1.084	0.356
	Mean	4.6931	4.6011	4.8487	4.4609		
	S.D.	0.8138	0.74776	0.91152	0.61019		

Table 7: One-way ANOVA (Religion and Word of Mouth)

		Categories					F	p-value
		Islam	**Christian**	**Buddhist**	**Hindu**	**Others**		
WOM	N	232	19	121	18	3	0.856	0.490
	Mean	4.6886	4.7237	4.5826	4.8125	4.1667		
	S.D.	0.80381	0.86761	0.72986	0.92380	0.72169		

Table 8: One-way ANOVA (Level of Education and Word of Mouth) and Post Hoc Test

		Categories			F	p-value
		Degree	**Master**	**PhD**		
WOM	N	314	53	26	5.601	0.004
	Mean	4.6087	4.9929	4.5913		
	S.D.	0.78173	0.77149	0.78387		

Post hoc test

(I) Level of study	(J) Level of study	Mean difference (I-J)	Sig
Degree	Master	-.38425*	.003
	PhD		
Master	Degree	.38425*	.003
	PhD		
PhD	Degree	-.01733	.993
	Master		

*. The mean different is significant at the 0.05 level.

Table 9: One-way ANOVA (Brand Preference and Word of Mouth) and Post Hoc Test

	N	**Mean**	**S.D.**	**Mean Difference (I-J)**	**Sig**
Apple	88	4.9560	0.72690	.45067*	.000
Samsung	189	4.5053	0.76480	-.45067*	.000
HTC	15	5.0250	0.73527	.06903	1.000
Sony	50	4.6000	0.85863	-.35597	.157
Nokia	26	4.5577	0.71522	-.39827	.289
Lenovo	12	4.8958	0.81679	-.06013	1.000
Blackberry	7	4.6429	0.84603	-.31311	.969
Others	6	4.7192	0.99818	-.22680	.997
F	3.694				
P-value	0.001				

*. The mean different is significant at the 0.05 level.

5.6 Pearson Correlation Coefficient

In order to achieve Objective 3, Pearson correlation analysis was used to determine the relationship between the independent variables such as perceived value, perceived quality, customer satisfaction, brand love and brand trust on word of mouth communication. Mean, standard deviation and correlations of all variables are presented in Table 10. The correlation table indicates that all independent variables were significant relationship with word of mouth communication and there is strongly positive relationship between independent variable and word of mouth communication. Therefore, H3a, 3b, 3c, 3d and 3e is accepted

Table 10: Mean, standard deviation and correlations for all measures

Variables	Mean	S.D.	PV	PQ	CS	BL	BT	WOM
Perceived Value	4.7017	.68177	1.000					
Perceived Quality	4.6421	.67288	0.758**	1.000				
Customer Satisfaction	4.7892	.69571	0.771**	0.810**	1.000			
Brand Love	4.7056	.77297	0.706**	0.743**	0.810**	1.000		
Brand Trust	4.6692	.79584	0.665**	0.748**	0.778**	0.874**	1.000	
Word-of-Mouth	4.6594	.78962	0.699**	0.726**	0.755**	0.802**	0.793**	1.000

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

5.7 Multiple Regressions

In order to achieve Objective 4, multiple regression analysis will be used to investigate whether independent variables could influence towards word of mouth communication. The result of regression analysis, shown in the table, reveals that independent variables have a significant relationship with word of mouth, R=0. 845. The adjusted R2 of this model is 0.714, which indicates that five independent variables had 71.4% of influences on word of mouth communication. The significant F-ratio (F=192.788, P= 0.000) shows that there is a strong relationship between independent variables and dependent variable. The beta coefficient is used to examine the influence of each variable on the dependent variable. According to the table, the variables brand love and brand trust was the most important determine of word of mouth communication; both of variables had the same and highest standardized coefficient value, 0.286. Perceived value, beta = 0.147, perceived quality, 0.105 and customer satisfaction, 0.104. There are four independent variables (perceived value, perceived quality, brand love and brad trust) were significant influenced on word of mouth communication. Thus, hypothesis 4a, 4b, 4d and 4e is accepted. On the other hand, customer satisfaction was not significantly influence word of mouth communication. Therefore, H4c is rejected.

Table 11: Coefficient Model for Word of Mouth

Multiple R	0.845				
R2	0.714				
Adjusted R2	0.710				
Std. Error	0.42535				
F	192.788				
Sig	0.000				
Independent variable	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig

1 (Constant)	0.023	0.162		0.142	0.887
PV	0.170	0.054	0.147	3.165	0.002
PQ	0.123	0.060	0.105	2.053	0.041
CS	0.118	0.065	0.104	1.821	0.069
BL	0.292	0.064	0.286	4.566	0.000
BT	0.284	0.059	0.286	4.835	0.000

6. DISCUSSION

The main objective of this study is to determine the factors that influence word of mouth communication among mobile phone users. The model was empirically tested using tested surveyed data from 393 young adults in Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM). In this study, SPSS 19.0 was used to analyse the data.

H1: There is a significant difference in word of mouth communication and genders

Genders and word of mouth communication was found to be significant, with a t-value of 2.169 and a p-value of 0.031. Previously, Kempf and Palan (2006) research supported that the effect of gender on word of mouth communication. In addition, Garbarino and Strahlievitz (2004) also found support for the significant difference between genders and word of mouth communication.

H2: There is a significant difference in word of mouth communication between age groups, ethnic, religion, level of education and the brand preference

Age group and word of mouth communication was found to be significant, with a t-value of 4.409 and a p-value of 0.013. There are similar finding reported by Munaf et al., (2009) who found age have significant difference word of mouth. In addition, there was no significant difference among ethnic and word of mouth, with a t-value of 1.084 and p-value of 0.356. Similarly, the result of One-way ANOVA also indicates that there was no significant difference between religion on word of mouth, with a t-value of 0.856 and p-value of 0.490. There was a significant difference between level of education on word of mouth, with a t-value of 5.601 and p-value of 0.004. Similarly, there was a significant difference between brand preference on word of mouth communication, with a t-value of 3.694 and p-value of 0.001.

H3: There is a significant relationship between the independent variables (perceived value, perceived quality, customer satisfaction, brand love and brand trust) and word of mouth communication

Perceived value and word of mouth communication was found to be significant, with a p-value of 0.000 and positive value of the Pearson correlation with r = 0.699. The empirical result of this study signifies that there was a strong relationship between perceived value and word of mouth communication. This result agrees with other studies that are well-established in existing literature (Muhammad Ishtiaq Ishaq, 2012; Mohammad Ali Abdolvand and Abdollah Norouzi, 2012). Perceived quality and word of mouth communication was found to be significant, with a p-value of 0.000 and positive value of Pearson correlation, r = 0.726. The result of this study signifies that there was a strong relationship between perceived quality and word of mouth communication. This finding agrees with the study of Molinari et al., (2008), which found that perceived quality is a positive relationship towards word of mouth communication. There was a significant relationship between customer satisfaction and word of mouth communication, with p-value of 0.000 and positive value of Pearson correlation, r = 0.755. The result of this study signifies that there was a strong relationship between customer satisfaction and word of mouth communication. Saha and Theingi (2009) which shows that consumers who were satisfied with the brand mobile phone were more likely to provide word of mouth recommendations to their family and friends. There was a significant relationship between brand love and word of mouth communication, with p-value of 0.000 and positive value of the Pearson correlation with r = 0.802. The result of this study signifies that there was a strong relationship between brand love and word of mouth communication. The results obtained from this study are

similar to other different studies by Ahmed Rageh Ismail and Spinelli (2012). There was a significant relationship between brand trust and word of mouth communication, with p-value of 0.000 and positive value of the Pearson correlation with r = 0.793. The result of this study signifies that there was a strong relationship between brand trust and word of mouth communication. Previous studies made by Deari and Balla (2013) and Gremler et al., (2001) have found that brand trust is a supportive factor on word of mouth communication.

H4: There is a significant influence between the independent variables (perceived value, perceived quality, customer satisfaction, brand love and brand trust) and word of mouth communication

In this study, the result of regression analysis shows that Beta value of perceived value is 0.147, perceived quality is 0.105, customer satisfaction is 0.104, brand love is 0.286 and brand trust is 0.286. Therefore, this regression analysis showed that brand trust and brand love were the strongest predictor on word of mouth communication. Perceived value and word of mouth communication was found to be significant, with a p-value of 0.002. The results of this study showed that there was a significant influence between perceived value and word of mouth communication. This finding agrees with the studies of Hutchinson et al., (2008) and Sun and Qu (2011), which found that perceived value is correlated to word of mouth communication. Perceived quality and word of mouth communication was found to be significant, with a p-value of 0.041. The results of this study showed that there was a significant influence between perceived quality and word of mouth communication. Hutchinson et al., (2008) study found evidence that perceived quality has an influence on word of mouth communication.There was not a significant influence between customer satisfaction and word of mouth communication, with p-value of 0.069. The result was consistent with findings from previous investigations conducted by Jiewanto et al., (2012). There was a significant influence between brand love and word of mouth communication, with p-value of 0.000. This finding agrees with the studies of Loureiro and Kaufmann (2012), which found that brand love was a significant influence of word of mouth communication. There was a significant influence between brand trust and word of mouth communication, with p-value of 0.000. This finding agrees with the studies of Gremler et al., (2001) which show that brand trust was a significant influence toward word of mouth communication.

7. Limitations and suggestions for future research

The study is conducted in Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM). The results of this single location cannot be generalised to represent the entire population of mobile phone users in the Malaysia. In addition, the sample size is considered small. Thus, future research should be conducted on different locations using various respondents' background. Further research is needed to refine and validate the antecedents on word of mouth intention and actual behavior. Besides, it is also suggested that future research should investigate the effect of word of mouth communication on online versus offline word of mouth. Finally, other determinants that are likely to influence on word of mouth communication in different contexts or conversation category should also be added.

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