

Technology intimacy: The extend of Malaysian generation Z dependency on technology

Mohd Noor Azman Othman* & Mas Anom Abdul Rashid

Kolej Universiti Poly-Tech MARA

Abstract

Gen Z, technology and gadgets are inseparable. There are 356 million of them and the number is growing. Gen Z is the most information intensive generation of all time thus far. Being a generation that is technological inclined, they discover their self- identity, the exploration of the world, friendship establishment, learning and playing processes with technology. Their characteristics are widely anticipated as the main game changer in the near future. This include all aspects of our daily lives. By the year 2020, they will make up 40% of the world's consumers demographic and this has signalled the needs to meet the different requirements for a new breed of consumers. 79% of them are found to be too dependent on electronic gadgets as they showed symptoms of emotional distress when kept away from their gadgets. As a result, an assumption has been made that they are technology dependent and thereby dictate the direction of future technological advancement and future working culture. Survey conducted in the western countries show the possibility of such event taking place in the near future, and the need to find proactive measures to deal with this generation. Based on the statement of this study, it is carried out with the objectives to gauge the extent of the dependency of Malaysian Gen Z college students on technology and gadgets. This is done on the pretext of projecting the necessary action to be taken in the future since this phenomenon does not only take place in the western countries but also in Malaysia as it is going to be a global phenomenon. Specific aims are focused on how these students identify themselves, connect to the world, elaborate on their recreational activities and learn. It is found that these students are very much technological inclined in almost all these elements being studied. These findings conformed to the universal research finding carried out in explaining the behaviour of the Gen Z.

Keywords *Gen Z, Behavior, Dependent, Dictate*

1. Introduction

Technology evolution has a vast impact on our lives. With the evolution of our human generation from baby boomers, to Gen X, Gen Y and today Gen Z, so does technology; from the binary card usage to the wired internet, then to wireless internet, to broadbands with various speeds and finally artificial intelligence and virtual intelligence. The impact of technology is not only on adults but it has also influenced babies who grow up to be teenagers and soon-to-be adults of the future. The teenagers today still go through puberty, adolescence and everything that is associated with personal and relational day-to-day dramas which goes along with that. And so do their basic desires, needs and all the questions being asked were never changed.

Generation Z are so engrossed with technology because they were born during the digital world. Giunta (2017) described that they are also referred as Digital Natives by people and they are also dependent on their technology. He also stated that being born during the digital time, generation Z are more tech-savvy and they believed that computer technology is a common place as they do not have any memory of pre-Internet history. He further stated that generation