Relationship between Perceived Benefits and Social Influence towards Self-Disclosure and Behavioral Intention in Web 2.0

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Abstract

The data gathering was conducted from September 2011 until October 2011 using Google document online survey. A total of 201 university students which comprises respondents from two faculties, Labuan School of International Business and Finance (LSIBF) and Labuan School of Informatics Science (LSIS) participated in the online survey. The main objective of the research is to explore the relationship between performance expectancy, effort expectancy and social influence towards behavioral intention as well as self-disclosure intention in Web 2.0. One of the key findings in this area of research was although an innovation or technology tool may be useful and ease to use, users may not be able to see the relevant of exposing private information about themselves to an unknown person online or even to the service provider. Furthermore, the analysis also revealed that social influence has a significant effect on self-disclosure intention. Another key finding proposed that the dimension of perceived benefits (combination of two original dimensions namely performance expectancy and effort expectancy) be used to understand users perception on Web 2.0.
Keywords: Web 2.0, Social Influence, Performance Expectancy, Effort Expectancy, Self-Disclosure.

Introduction

The term Web 2.0 technology which been introduced by Tim O'Reilly (O'Reilly, 2005) has emerge and gain popularity in the mainstream media. The explosive growth of blogs, wikis, social networking sites (SNS) and other online communities has transformed the Web from static to more interactive medium. This technology has given an impact to the societies as they have change on how they communicate with others through online as well as doing their daily task. The newspapers company began to lose subscribers to news blogs, encyclopedia companies are changing the way they operate because of the online Wikipedia (Hendler, 2008). Even user who is not an internet savvy also starting to talk about Blogspot, Wordpress, Flickr, YouTube, Friendster and Facebook.

This Web 2.0 phenomenon is also occurring in Malaysia as most of the undergraduate students nowadays have registered their own SNS account such as Friendster, Facebook and MySpace as well as blog account such as Blogger.com and Wordpress.com. Students are also using YouTube to find or share video via online meaning communication with anyone anywhere around the world is possible without the constraint of distance and cost factors. The main objective of the research is to explore the relationship between performance expectancy, effort expectancy and social influence towards behavioral intention and self-disclosure intention towards Web 2.0 among university students. The paper starts with a brief introduction about Web 2.0, followed by the literature review, methodology, modified framework, analysis of data, discussion and conclusion sections.

Literature review

Web 2.0

Web 2.0 was coined in 2004 by Tim O'Reilly during a brainstorming session conference hosted by O'Reilly and MediaLive International (O'Reilly, 2005). During the conference it is suggested that this new social Internet defines the Web as a platform, user control the data, and considers core competencies to include the delivery of services, an architecture of participation, scalability, data remix and repurposing as well as harnessing a collective intelligence (O'Reilly, 2005). In general, Web 2.0 can be defined as the following three basic social platforms: (1) Social Networking: These tools commonly allow individuals to connect and share information with others based on common interests or goals. This category consists of tools such as MySpace, Facebook, LinkedIn, Friendster and Plaxo. (2) Social Publishing: Social publishing which represents tools and technologies whereby individuals create and share various forms of media. These tools allow individuals to tag, bookmark, search, and validate content they find on the Web. This category consists of tools such as YouTube, Flickr, Digg, Photobucket, Myphotoalbum and CiteULike. (3) Social Collaboration: These tools allow individuals to collaborate on Internet content creation, share opinions and knowledge, and participate in conversational communication. This category consists of tools such as Wikipedia, Confluence, Blogger, LiveJournal, Wordpress, Typepad.

Boyd and Ellison (2008) define Social Networking Site (SNS) as a Web-based service that allows individuals to: (1) construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system; (2) articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection; and (3) view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system. In general, SNSs usually offer the same basic functionalities: create user profile, network of friends listing; user can browse other person profile, private messaging, discussion forums, events management, blogging, commenting, and media uploading (Breslin and Decker 2007). It is predicted that SNSs might seamlessly integrate

our daily activities, including entertainment and shopping, and as a platform for online living (Wan et al. 2008). Online advertisers also see emerging opportunities with such systems that could provide a more effective advertising model than search-based advertising.

The literature review section will discuss about constructs tested in this research namely social influence, behavioral intention, performance expectancy (perceived usefulness), effort expectancy (perceived ease of use), and self-disclosure intention. Figure 1.0 is the proposed research framework for this study.

Figure 1: Proposed Research Framework
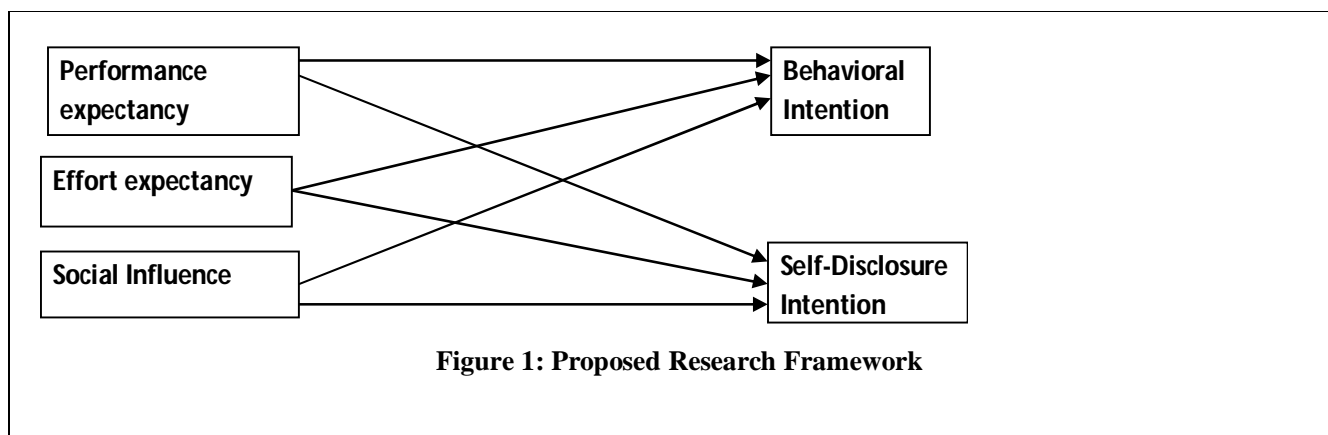
Social Influence and Behavioural Intention

According to the theory of reasoned action (TRA), a person's intention is a function of two basic determinants, one personal in nature and the other reflecting social influence. The personal factor is the individual's positive or negative evaluation of performing the behaviour; this factor is termed *attitude toward the behaviour* (Ajzen and Fishbein 1980). The second determinant of intention is the person's perception of the social pressure put on him/her to perform or not to perform the behaviour in question. Since it deals with perceived prescriptions, this factor is termed *subjective norm* (Ajzen and Fishbein 1980). The theory also states that attitudes are a function of beliefs where a person who believes that performing a given behaviour will lead to mostly positive outcomes, will hold a favourable attitude toward performing the behaviour, while a person who believes that performing the behaviour will lead to mostly negative outcomes will hold an unfavourable attitude. The beliefs that underlie a person's attitude toward the behaviour are termed *behavioural beliefs* (Ajzen and Fishbein 1980). Subjective norms are also a function of beliefs that specific individuals or groups have about whether they should or should not perform the behaviour. These beliefs underlying a person's subjective norm are termed *normative beliefs*. A person who believes that most referents with whom she/he is motivated to comply think they should perform the behaviour will perceive social pressure to do so (Ajzen and Fishbein 1980). As a general theory, TRA is useful to understanding the formation of favourable or unfavourable attitudes towards the intended behaviour.

Performance Expectancy (Perceived Usefulness) and Effort Expectancy (Perceived Ease of Use)

Both of the above constructs are represented well in the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) which was introduced by Davis (1989) for modelling user acceptance of information systems. A key purpose of TAM is to provide a basis for tracing the impact of external factors on internal beliefs,

attitudes, and intentions (Davis 1989). The author further indicated that Information Systems (IS) investigators have suggested intention models from social psychology as a potential theoretical foundation for research on determinants of user behaviour. TAM portrays two particular beliefs, perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use. Davis (1989) further suggested that perceived usefulness (U) is defined as the prospective user's subjective probability that using a specific application system will increase his or her job performance within an organizational context. Perceived ease of use (EOU) refers to the degree to which the prospective users expect the target system to be free of effort. Davis (1996) stated that an individual's perception of a particular system's ease of use is anchored to her or his general computer self-efficacy at all times, and objective usability has an impact on ease of use perceptions about a specific system, only after direct experience of the system. However, TAM's ability to explain the adoption of various forms of technology is limited (Venkatesh and Davis 2000). Although TAM has been used to explain technology acceptance by consumers, Hung (2003) argued that the ability of TAM to explain the acceptance of information technology is no better than expectations.

Self-disclosure intention (Privacy and security)

Privacy concerns existed before the rise of new communication technologies (Galanxhi and Nah 2006). Laudon and Traver (2007, p.508) define privacy as, "the moral right of individuals to be left alone, free from surveillance or interference from other individuals or organisations, including the state".

However, according to Wang, Lee and Wang (1998), when associated with consumer activities taking place in the arena of the electronic market, privacy usually refers to personal information, and the invasion of privacy is usually interpreted as the unauthorized collection, disclosure, or other use of personal information as a direct result of electronic commerce transactions. Wang et al. (1998) further reported that the most crucial issue that Internet users have identified is fear and distrust regarding the loss of personal privacy while using the Internet. Based on the above explanation, loss of privacy and violation of privacy when using Web 2.0 refers more to informational privacy. This type of data includes demographic information, consumption habits, health information, interests, communications, movement, and biometric information which is the heart of the construction of individual identities (Purdam et al. 2004). Foxman and Kilcoyne (1993) stressed that consumers often unknowingly provide personal information to many sources that will use it for unknown purposes. Therefore, the grey area between privacy of personal information and the level of self-disclosure one is ready to provide to the service providers needs to be better understood by all parties involved.

Methodology

Questionnaire for this research was developed based on established measurement pertaining to social influence (Ajzen and Fishbein 1980), behavioural intention (Ajzen and Fishbein 1980), performance expectancy (perceived usefulness) (Davis 1989), effort expectancy (perceived ease of use) (Davis 1989), and self-disclosure intention (Cho 2006).

The survey was conducted in Labuan International Campus, Malaysia. To attract respondents to participate in the online survey using Google document, two prize monies of RM50.00 was awarded to two respondents who were selected randomly using respondents email. There were 18 items in the questionnaire and at the end of the survey period a total of 201 questionnaires were received but 31 questionnaires were incomplete and only 170 were usable for this research.

Modified Research Framework

The conceptual model for this study was later modified based on the items grouped under the factor analysis to guide the hypotheses testing of the model. Based on Figure 2.0, two main dependent variables are behavioral intention and self-disclosure intention. There are two independent variables in the modified research framework which comprise of perceived benefits and social influence. Perceived benefit is a factor which combines two original dimensions (performance expectancy and effort expectancy). As explained earlier other names for both dimensions are perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use respectively. Earlier research have also encounter with this merger of two dimensions and suggested that ease of use is an important, yet elusive concept. Keil, Beranek and Konsynski (1995) explained that ease of use is a concept that is hard to pin down and vague to be fully understand and further added that the relationship between ease of use and perceived usefulness in determining users' acceptance of information system is unclear indicating confusion as one reason that currently exist between researchers and practitioners regarding the nature of relationship between usefulness and ease of use and the relative importance in relation to its interpretation. Another reason to term the new factor as perceived benefits, because it reflects that usefulness of a technology is a more chosen benefit towards the potential user as compared to ease of use. The concept of perceived ease of use may no longer be a strong predictor of intention to use information technology gadget (iPhones, Tablets, etc.) and other platforms (email and SNS) compared to 20 years ago because the world's population in general are getting exposed to new technologies every day. The experience of using existing technology may be embedded as personal experiences that can apply in other platform of information technology because user may be familiarize with the requirement of a platform.

Based on the above explanation, the first (H1) hypothesis examines whether there is a positive influence of perceived benefits on behavioral intention. Hypothesis 2 (H2) posited that there is a significant effect of social influence on behavioral intention. Hypothesis 3 (H3) examined whether there is significant influence of perceived benefits on self-disclosure intention and Hypothesis 4 (H4) evaluates whether there is significant effect of social influence on self-disclosure intention (refer to Figure 2.0).

Figure 2.0 Modified Research Framework
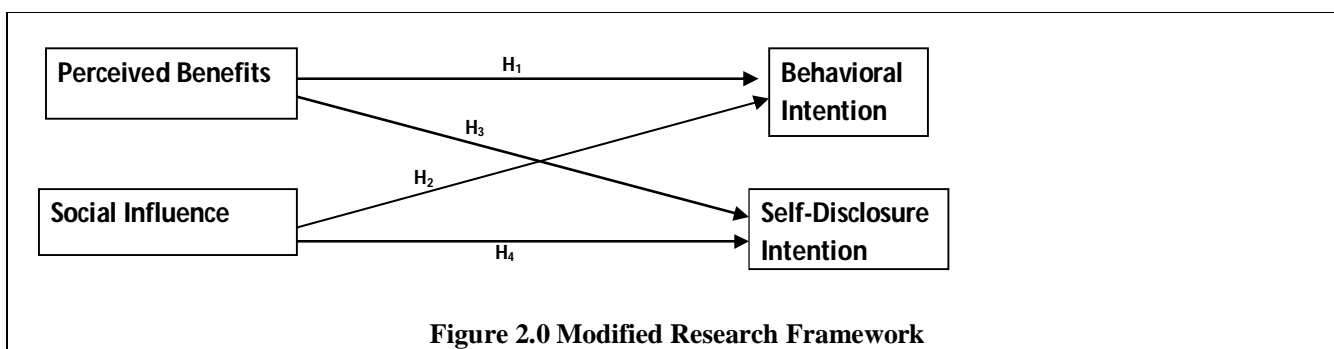
Analysis of data

Data in this study were analyzed using SPSS V16. Statistical tools used were frequencies analysis, factor analysis, reliability analysis, correlation analysis and regression analysis.

Profile of the respondents

Majority of the respondents were female (64.1%) and approximately 57.7% of the respondents indicated the Malaysia Higher Education Certificate as their highest education level. Respondent were also asked to indicate weekly hours they spent surfing the internet and majority of the respondents (26.5%) stated they spent six to 10 hours per week surfing the internet. Respondents

were also asked about their years of experience in using Web 2.0 tools and majority (37.1%) of the respondents have more than four years of using Web 2.0. Since the campus is equipped with wireless connection, 72% of the respondent access Web 2.0 tools from their hostel and 15.3% indicated they access from the library, computer labs and cyber café.

Factor Analysis of the studied constructs

The proposed research framework (Figure 2.0) was modified based on the factors developed in this study. The factor analysis for the perceived usefulness and ease of use variables produced only one factor that had an eigenvalue of 6.51 and explained 72.36% of the total variance. Therefore, it was labeled as perceived benefits. The Kaiser-Meyer-Oklin (KMO) value was 0.92, and the Bartlett's test of sphericity was significant at 0.00. The communalities of the nine variables ranged from 0.62 to 0.84 and factor loadings of the variables ranged from 0.79 to 0.92. Appendix A displays the factor loadings of the items measuring perceived benefits.

As shown in Table 2, the factor analysis of the social influence variables only extracted one factor that had an eigenvalue of 2.30 and accounted for 76.72% of the total variance. The KMO value was 0.69, and the Bartlett's test of sphericity was significant at 0.00. The communalities of the 3 variables ranged from 0.70 to 0.84 and factor loadings of the variables ranged from 0.84 to 0.92. The factor analysis of behavioral intention generated one factors with eigenvalues of 2.62, which explained 87.33% of the total variance (see Table 4). The KMO value was .765 and Bartlett Test of Sphericity was significant at 0.00. The communalities of the 3 variables ranged from 0.87 to 0.88 and factor loadings of the variables ranged from 0.93 to 0.94.

The factor analysis for the self-disclosure intention variables also produced only one factor that had an eigenvalue of 2.49 and explained 82.95% of the total variance. The KMO value was 0.75, and the Bartlett's test of sphericity was significant at 0.00. The communalities of the 3 variables ranged from 0.82 to 0.84 and factor loadings of the variables ranged from 0.90 to 0.92.

Table 2
Summary of Factor Analysis, Reliability Analysis, Means and Standard Deviations of the Study Constructs

Constructs	No of Items	KMO	Bartlett's test	Factor Loadings	Eigen-values	% Variance explained	C'bach's alpha	Mean	Std. Dev.
Perceived Benefits	9	0.92	1528.13**	0.79 - 0.92	6.51	72.36	.95	4.06	.70
Social Influence	3	0.69	227.69**	0.84 - 0.92	2.30	76.72	.85	3.79	.85
Behavioral Intention	3	0.77	395.27**	0.93 - 0.94	2.62	87.33	.93	4.06	.78
Self-Disclosure Intention	3	0.75	304.19**	0.90 - 0.92	2.49	82.95	.90	2.92	1.05

Note: All items used a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree or 1= very unlikely and 5= very likely)

Reliability analysis and Descriptive Analysis

The Cronbach's alpha value for each of the studied constructs i.e. perceived benefits, social influence, behavioral intention and self-disclosure intention are ranged from .85 to .95, which are considered reliable. Results show that the mean scores for each of the studied constructs varied from 2.92 to 4.06 and the standard deviation for these constructs ranged from 0.70 to 1.05 (see Table 2). All of the items were measured using a five-point Likert scale anchored by 1 (strongly disagree or very unlikely) to 5 (strongly agree or very likely).

Correlation analysis

As shown in Table 3, the results indicate that both perceived benefits (r=.867, p < 0.01) and social influence (r=.682, p < 0.01) were highly and positively correlated with behavioral intention. Social influence has a moderate positive correlation with self-disclosure intention (r = .322, p < 0.01). However, self-disclosure intention is not correlated with behavioral intention.

Table 3
Pearson Correlations Matrix of Study Variables (N=170)

	Constructs	Perceived Benefits	Social Influence	Self-disclosure Intention	Behavioral Intention
1	Perceived Benefits	1			
2	Social Influence	.701**	1		
3	Self-disclosure Intention	.145	.322**	1	
4	Behavioral Intention	.867**	.682**	.143	1

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

Hypotheses Testing

Multi regression analysis was used to test all the hypotheses proposed in this study. The first (H1) hypothesis examined whether there is a positive influence of perceived benefits on behavioral intention. Results in Table 4 indicated that 81.5% variances in behavioral intention can be explained by perceived benefits of the using Web 2.0 (R^2 = .815, ß = 0.903, p < 0.01). Therefore, H1 is supported.

Table 4
Regression Analysis of Perceived Benefits with Behavioral Intention

Dependent Variable	Independent Variable	Std. Coefficient Beta (β)
Behavioral Intention	Perceived Benefits	.903**
	R^2	.815
	Adjust R^2	.813
	Sig. F	720.34**

Note: Significant levels: **p < 0.01, *p < 0.05

Table 5
Regression Analysis of Social Influence with Behavioral Intention

Dependent Variable	Independent Variable	Std. Coefficient Beta (β)
Behavioral Intention	Social Influence	.682**
	R^2	.465
	Adjust R^2	.461
	Sig. F	145.75**

Note: Significant levels: **p < 0.01, *p < 0.05

Hypothesis 2 (H2) posited that there is a significant effect of social influence on behavioral intention. The results in Table 5 revealed that 46.5% of the total variances in behavioral was explained by social influence (R^2 = .465, ß = 0.682, $p < 0.01$). This indicates that H2 is supported.

Table 6

Regression Analysis of Perceived Benefits with Self disclosure intention

Dependent Variable	Independent Variables	Std.Coefficient Beta (β)
Self Disclosure Intention		
	Perceived Benefits	.145
	R^2	
	.021	
	Adjust R^2	
	.015	
	Sig. F	
	3.60	

Note: Significant levels: **$p < 0.01$, *$p < 0.05$

As for the testing of H3, results in Table 6 show no significant influence of perceived benefits on self-disclosure intention (R^2 =.021, ß = 0.145, $p > 0.05$). Therefore, H3 is not supported.

Table 7

Regression Analysis of Social Influence with Self Disclosure intention

Dependent Variable	Independent Variables	Std. Coefficient Beta (β)
Self Disclosure Intention		
	Social Influence	.322**
	R^2	
	.104	
	Adjust R^2	
	.098	
	Sig.F	
	19.45**	

Note: Significant levels: **$p < 0.01$, *$p < 0.05$

The fourth hypothesis (H4) was to evaluate whether there is significant effect of social influence on self-disclosure intention. Results in Table 7 indicated that 10.4% of the variances in self-disclosure intention was explained by social influence (R^2 = .104, ß = 0.322, $p < 0.01$). Therefore, H4 is supported.

Discussion

Based on the regression analysis, only one of the four hypotheses was not supported namely there is no significant influence of perceived benefits on self-disclosure intention (H3). As explained in the literature, one of the most crucial issues that Internet users have identified is fear and distrust

regarding the loss of personal privacy while using the Internet (Wang et al. 1998). Although an innovation or technology tool may be useful and ease to use, users may not be able see the relevant of exposing private information about themselves to a service provider. An example would be a regular information technology user who has an active Facebook account gets invited to play a free game via his Facebook friends. He click on the invitation and a pop-up screen comes up requesting the user to give permission to the Website that owns the game to have access to his Facebook account (list of friends, pictures, music, videos etc.) before he is allowed to download the game. He feels that it is not worth to share his information with the service provider and he rather not play the game if it requires him to give permission to the service provider to have access to his personal and private information. Information privacy data includes demographic information, consumption habits, health information, interests, communications, movement, and biometric information which are the heart of the construction of individual identities (Purdam et al. 2004). With more exposure and experience in using IT platforms, users are more aware and familiar with the possibilities of exposing their personal information to many sources that will use it for unknown purposes. This may be one reason why there is no relationship between perceived benefit and self-disclosure intention.

However, in this study, perceived benefit have a positive influence on behavioral intention to use Web 2.0 tools. In terms of strength of relationship, this construct is seen as a major predictor ($R^2 = .815$) indicating that 81.5% variances in behavioral intention can be explained by perceived benefits of the using Web 2.0. Rogers' (1983) innovation-decision process model can be used to explain this relationship because consumers' decision intentions are developed based on the influence of the perceived innovation characteristics (e.g. relative advantages, compatibility, complexity, and trialability) related to the innovation. As mentioned earlier, the perceived benefit construct is a combination of two original dimensions namely performance expectancy and effort expectancy. Both dimension are present in Rogers' (1983) innovation characteristics (compatibility and complexity, respectively).

The results also indicated that there is a significant effect of social influence on behavioral intention and 46.5% of the total variances in behavioral was explained by social influence ($R^2 = .465$, ß = 0.682, p < 0.01 (refer to Table 5). This result supports Ajzen and Fishbein (1980) explanation about a person's perception of social pressure put on an individual to perform or not to perform the behaviour in question. An example of this situation may arise when students are required to discuss about an assignment due the next day. Members of the group are not staying in the same zip code, therefore, one solution is to have the discussion via Web 2.0 (i.e. Facebook). Even if a member of the group do not own a computer, on the designated time, he/she will try to log on using alternative resources (borrow a computer or cyber café) to participate in the discussion. The final hypothesis was also found to have a significant effect of social influence on self-disclosure intention. However, the strength of relationship is weak ($R^2 = .104$, ß = 0.322, p < 0.01). Peer pressure may have some influence on self-discloser because of the need to have the same environment to share, and discuss various subject matters.

Conclusion

This exploratory study was conducted to expand our current understanding of behavioral intention and self-disclosure towards Web 2.0. Students are no longer bound by geographical separation, with Web 2.0 they are able to communicate, share and collaborate with peoples around the world. Several studies have look into the usage of Web 2.0 among the general public. This study particularly emphasizes to increase the in-depth understanding of Malaysian university students' behaviour towards Web 2.0.

The main result of this study proposed that the dimension of perceived benefits (combination of two original dimensions namely performance expectancy and effort expectancy) be used to understand users perception on Web 2.0. Perceived benefit items (refer to Appendix A) can be seen as the strongest dimension in determining behavioral intention to use Web 2.0. However, there is no significant relationship between perceived benefit and self-disclosure intention suggesting that although Web 2.0 may be useful and ease to use, users may not be able see the relevant of exposing private information to unknown people online as well as to service provider.

One major limitation of this research is it only focuses on four main constructs: perceived benefits, social influence, self-disclosure intention and behavioural intention. The influence of other construct such as cost, enjoyment, and image were not examined, although they might have some influence on determining behavioural intention towards Web 2.0. Second limitation falls on the small sample size, therefore the results must not be generalised. Future studies may want to focus on e-learning 2.0, instead of university students using Web 2.0 merely for enjoyment and entertainment maybe Web 2.0 technology can be used as a platform for constructivism and collaborative learning. What type of subject is appropriate for Web 2.0 tools, what are the transitions involve if the education industry wants to prepare for Web 3.0, what are the basic requirements to engage in Web 2.0 learning and are educators ready to forgo their slides, whiteboards and flip charts for future teaching and learning methods. All those questions need to be answered to cast light on how to fully utilise the capabilities of Web 2.0 tools and make appropriate transition for our future generation.

APPENDIX A

Factor Analysis of Perceived Benefits

	Items	Factor Loadings	Source (Adapted from Venkatesh et al., 2003)
	Perceived Benefits		
1	I find Web 2.0 tools easy to use	**.918**	
2	Using Web 2.0 tools enables me to connect with others more quickly	**.889**	
3	I find it easy to get Web 2.0 tools to accomplish what I want it to do	**.857**	
4	Learning to use Web 2.0 tools is easy for me	**.848**	
5	I find Web 2.0 tools useful in my daily routine	**.847**	
6	My interaction with Web 2.0 tools is clear and understandable	**.846**	
7	Using Web 2.0 tools improves my social networking	**.842**	
8	It is easy for me to become skillful at using Web 2.0 tools	**.815**	
9	Using Web 2.0 makes it easier to engaged in social networking	**.787**	
	Eigenvalue	6.51	
	Total Variance Explained	72.36	
	Measure of Sampling Adequacy	0.92	
	Bartlett's test of Sphericity	1528.13	
	Significant	.00	

APPENDIX B

Factor Analysis of Social Influence

	Items	Factor Loadings	Source (Adapted from Venkatesh et al., 2003)
	Social Influence		
1	People who are important to me think that I should use Web 2.0 tools.	**.916**	
2	People around me think that I should use Web 2.0 tools	**.872**	
3	In general, my institution (University) has supported the use of Web 2.0 tools.	**.838**	
	Eigenvalue	2.30	
	Total Variance Explained	76.72	
	Measure of Sampling Adequacy	.69	
	Bartlett's test of Sphericity	227.69	
	Significant	.00	

APPENDIX C

Factor Analysis of Behavioral Intention

	Items	Factor Loadings	Source (Adapted from Ajzen and Fishbein, 1980)
	Behavioral Intention		
1	I will recommend Web 2.0 tools to others	**.940**	
2	I will frequently use Web 2.0 tools	**.933**	
3	I will continue using Web 2.0 tools in the future.	**.931**	
	Eigenvalue	2.62	
	Total Variance Explained	87.33	
	Measure of Sampling Adequacy	.77	
	Bartlett's test of Sphericity	395.27	
	Significant	.00	

APPENDIX D

Factor Analysis of Self Disclosure Intention

	Items	Factor Loadings	Source (Adapted from Cho, 2006)
	Self-Disclosure Intention		
1	I am willing to be truthful in revealing my personal information to Web 2.0 tools.	**.916**	
2	I am willing to provide my personal information when using Web 2.0 tools.	**.912**	
3	I am willing to disclose even sensitive personal information to Web 2.0 tools	**.904**	
	Eigenvalue	2.49	
	Total Variance Explained	82.95	
	Measure of Sampling Adequacy	.75	
	Bartlett's test of Sphericity	304.19	
	Significant	.000	

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