



Empowering Malaysian Youth

UNDERSTANDING THE ANXIETIES AND DESIRES OF MALAYSIAN YOUTH



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Malaysian Institute for Research in Youth Development as a national research center that studies and researches various streams and development of youth and its relevance towards the changes that occur at the national, regional and international levels. Youth Research implement various research programs, organize conferences, workshops. Lectures and seminars; publish journals, pamphlets regarding research finding; establish training and research programs; prepare and facilitate various facilities that include a resources library and data regarding youth development, in order to achieve its objectives.

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Researchers:

Malaysian Institute For Research in Youth Development
MarkPlus & Co Consultancy Sdn.Bhd

Editor:

Mohd Aizuddin Bin Azimi

Malaysian Institute For Research in Youth Development
Ministry of Youth and Sports, Malaysia
No 27. Persiaran Perdana,
KBS Tower, Lot 4GA, Presint 4,
Federal Government Administrative Centre
62570 Putrajaya,
Malaysia
Tel:+603-8871 3705
Fax:+03-8871 3342
info@ippbm.gov.my
web:www.ippbm.com.my



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FOREWORD

**MINISTER OF
YOUTH AND
SPORTS MALAYSIA**

First of all, I would like to congratulate IPPBM and MarkPlus for their effort in making this publication a success. I believe that understanding Malaysian youth segment is a very crucial element for our nation building.

Each generation has its own challenges and the youth for each generation must do their best to take this country forward. This was proved by previous generations in which they were able to take Malaysia through independence till today and will be an example for our younger generation whom we hope will be able to bring Malaysia to an even brighter future.

Throughout history, young people have been very influential in creating an impact on social and political advancement. Our youth today will be the leaders of tomorrow. It is important to remember that their achievement will be determined by our action today. It is the sacred duty for current generation to make sure that our youth will be well prepared when the time comes.

For this reason, it is important for Malaysians in both public and private sectors to understand the Malaysian youth market segment. 'Understanding The Anxieties and Desires of Malaysian Youth' hopes to bridge the gap between the general public perception on youth with youth development theories and practices. Not only to enhance our understanding of the segment, this book will subsequently provide insights and guidance for us to work together to ensure that our youth potential are fully harnessed in line with opportunity provided.

With a continuous guidance and engagement, I wish to see our youth moving forward with a positive impact and bring our beloved country along without leaving our courtesy.

"1 BELIA 1 MALAYSIA"

Thank you

YB. DATO' SRI AHMAD SHABERY CHEEK
MINISTER OF YOUTH AND SPORTS, MALAYSIA

FOREWORD

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER OF IPPBM



The development and well-being of youth is our common responsibility – all of us as a united 1 Malaysia. The burden of ensuring our youth's current and future success cannot rest solely on the Malaysian government alone. It needs to be the common concern of civil society and the private sector as well.

Having a well-educated and productive youth will benefit everybody. It will allow our country to become richer and more successful. It will allow our nation to advance to a higher level. It is something important that we all should strive to develop together as a nation.

At Ministry of Youth and Sports, we have various youth development activities to develop and engage our youth. To ensure that these youth programs are effective, we believe that it is crucial to monitor the needs, wants, anxieties and desires of youth in Malaysia. For this reason, we have established IPPBM as the youth research arm of Ministry of Youth and Sports. To this end, IPPBM has taken the initiative to ensure that data on youth is always available, accurate and up-to-date.

Following the success of The Anxieties & Desires research in understanding the needs, wants, expectations, consumption and media patterns of youth in Indonesia, the ministry is inspired to conduct the same research for the Malaysian Youth. The survey aims to compliment the ministry's initiative in successfully attracting 2 million gathering to celebrate the annual National Youth Day Celebration this year.

This latest publication of Youth Anxieties and Desires, which is a collaborative effort between IPPBM and MarkPlus.Inc is the latest initiative to ensure that the most updated information on Malaysian youth is properly collected, analyzed and disseminated for the use of all youth stakeholders in the public sector, private sector and general civil society.

We hope that with the publishing of this book, a better understanding of our youth can be gained in which the information can help all stakeholders to better engage our youth and make them to be the best that they can be.

"1 BELIA 1 MALAYSIA"

Thank you

DR. WASITAH BT HJ. MOHD YUSOF
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
MALAYSIAN INSTITUTE FOR RESEARCH IN YOUTH DEVELOPMENT
MINISTRY OF YOUTH AND SPORTS



INTRODUCTION: ABOUT THIS BOOK

THE (MIS)UNDERSTANDING OF YOUTH

If there is one thing that is true about youth – it is that they are and have always been difficult to understand. They are a unique group with their own way of thinking, acting, and even speaking. There is a generational gap that acts as a real barrier for older generations to truly understand their younger counterparts.

As a result, youth are often the object of other people's perceptions, ideas, and decision making. Whether in the public sector or in the private sector, youth are almost always at the receiving end of decisions that are made on their behalf. Youth are rarely involved in the decision making process. Too often they are not even given the opportunity to share their opinions. They are just simply too young and too junior to have a say in anything!

Alas, a chronic misunderstanding of youth occurs. The lack of understanding of Malaysian youth needs, wants, anxieties and desires is a real problem with real implications to society. Better government programs and public sector

initiatives could be developed if there is a better understanding of what youth need and want out of their lives as well as dig deeper to comprehend youth anxiety and desires.

This book attempts to address the lack of understanding of youth. It is one of a series of books, articles and publications by IPPBM that is meant to provide a comprehensive portrait of our younger generation. This book uses a combination of available data on youth with the results of a study on Youth Anxiety and Desire done by surveying real Malaysian youths about their demographics, psychographics, lifestyle, attitudes, behavior, and overall priorities in life.

WHY FOCUS ON YOUTH?

Our youth are a crucial part of Malaysian society. They play an important role in our society today. And with the changes in Malaysia's demographic and technological landscape, they are going to play an even more important role in the future.

In a world that is increasingly becoming more egalitarian and horizontal (or as Thomas Friedman might say, a world that is becoming more “flat”) and where the role of information technology is fast changing the way we live, there are specific segments in society that have become more important.

Specifically, we believe that youth (together with women and netizen) will play a dominant role and serve an important function in the market. This is because youth will shift the role of the seniors, women will be heard more often and play a very active role in various fields, which would of course shift the power of men, while Netizen as “Internet citizens” will grow to be a tremendous influence, defeating the influence of the citizens who are boxed by the constraints of age and mindset.

In particular, because of its size and contributions to society, our youth will be an increasingly important segment for government policy makers, business decision makers, and civil society leaders to consider.

Youth, according to Wikipedia, “is the period between childhood and adulthood, described as the period of physical and psychological development from the onset of puberty to maturity and early adulthood.” On the other hand, youth is often associated with certain inherent traits of young people, therefore, we often hear the term of young at heart, although this statement is intended for someone who is a “senior”.

Most other definitions of youth define the term based on age. The United Nations General Assembly version defines the youth age between 15 to 24 years, while the Commonwealth Youth Program, restricts the age of youth between 15 to 29 years.

In Malaysia, youth can be defined as someone aged between 15 to 40 years. This is based on the consideration that the group age of 31 - 40 years are still in a transition age to adulthood in which its youthfulness characteristics are still visible.

Youth are a very important segment of Malaysian society. Based on the Department of Statistics

data, the numbers of the Malaysian people between the ages of 15 to 39 years have reached more than 12.4 million. This means that over 40% Malaysia’s populations are youth!

This makes youth as an important political constituency for our leaders in government to consider. It also put youth into a fairly large niche market for companies to target.

In addition to the large market size, the youth’s unique forward-looking and change-oriented character makes the Youth market more attractive to be considered. It is often said that youth are drivers of change. This is because their personalities tend to be more open to trying something new compared to adults.

Youth were the initiators of change in many countries – including recently in many Arab countries. The Arab Spring was driven by youth who demanded and led the drive for change in their societies.

Youth are also initiators of change in the marketplace. This can be seen from how every latest trend in a society is usually first created and/or popularized by youth and only then will be followed by other (older) age group.

OBJECTIVE OF THIS BOOK

This book is an attempt to help readers to understand the world of youth. Readers will be invited to explore the values and behaviors of the younger generation of Malaysians, to understand the dynamics of the youth market, and analyze their significance.

Specifically, we hope that this book will help government officials , businessmen, civil society leaders as well as anybody to better understand our younger generation at the behavior level (lifestyle and consumption), the emotional level (i.e., needs and wants) as well as the psychological level (i.e., anxieties and desires).

As such, it should be noted that this book is a descriptive book. Its main goal is to describe and provide an understanding about Malaysian youth.



It is not a book on policies or programs (indeed the book does not in any way prescribe or recommend any particular program or policy).

CONTENT OF THIS BOOK

In order to provide the information and insight on the youth of Malaysia, this book has been made rich with statistics and analysis of youth behavior which provides insights on the demographics, psychographics, lifestyle behavior, consumption behavior and priorities of youth in Malaysia based on the results of research of youth in Malaysia. The information in this book also provides a comprehensive profile of key insights on social and technological trends that affect Malaysia's younger generation.

The book consists of seven distinct chapters. Each chapter discusses a different aspect of youth.

Chapter One contains an analysis of the demographic and technological changes affecting Malaysia. In this chapter, we will discuss the emerging importance of Malaysia's economy and society. Chapter Two will discuss on Youth contribution to Malaysian society. The profiles of several key youth role models will be highlighted as case studies on how Malaysian Youth are making their mark in the world and contributing to Malaysian society.

Chapter Three will discuss on youth consumption patterns – specifically about their income levels and their spending. We will also review several key areas of spending for youth, for products like consumer goods, education, apparels, transportation, electronics, and financial services. Chapter Four will discuss on youth lifestyle. The chapter offers statistics and observations of how youth spend their time studying, working and engaging in leisure activities. Chapter Five will discuss youth psychology and their life priorities. Specifically, we will discuss about youth needs, wants, expectations, perceptions, anxieties and desires.

The final chapter in the book, Chapter Six, will provide a summary of 8 key insights from our Youth Anxiety and Desire study in Malaysia. These keys insights are related with discussions from previous chapters of the book.

SOURCES OF DATA

The information contained in this book is mainly taken from the 2012 Youth Anxiety and Desire Survey, which was done in collaboration between MarkPlus, Inc. and Malaysian Institute for Research in Youth Development (IPPBM).

The research survey was done in May – June 2012 using a combination of face to face and online quantitative surveys. The face-to-face survey was done during the "Hari Belia Negara" 2012 which was attended by over 2 million youths from around the country. The online survey was done using a database of youths collected by Ministry of Youth and Sports Malaysia. In total, 2,500 youths participated in the survey.

Additional data for this book was also taken from IPPBM youth index survey which was last completed in 2011 as well as general economic and demographic statistics of Malaysia taken from Department of Statistics, Malaysia reports.

To add more insight on Malaysian youth, further analysis and observation were also used sporadically throughout the book to enlighten our readers and provide practical insights on how our young generation thinks, feels and behaves.

We hope that this combined data and insight will result in our readers having an exciting reading experience and a comprehensive understanding of Malaysian youth by the end of their reading.

INTENDED CONTRIBUTION

To this end, this book was written with the intention to be useful to its readers individually and to contribute and enrich the discourse on youth in Malaysia.

We hope that by arming our public sector, private sector and civil society leaders with a better and more comprehensive understanding of youth, we hope to see better programs and policies from the public sector and better initiatives and products from the public sector and civil society.

CHAPTER 1: THE RISING IMPORTANCE OF YOUTH

1

CHAPTER 1: THE RISING IMPORTANCE OF YOUTH

WHY ARE YOUTH IMPORTANT

Youth are the backbone of a nation. They play important roles in our society as both a social political force as well as an economic force. Moreover, they are irreplaceable in the special function that they fulfill – as the leaders of tomorrow.

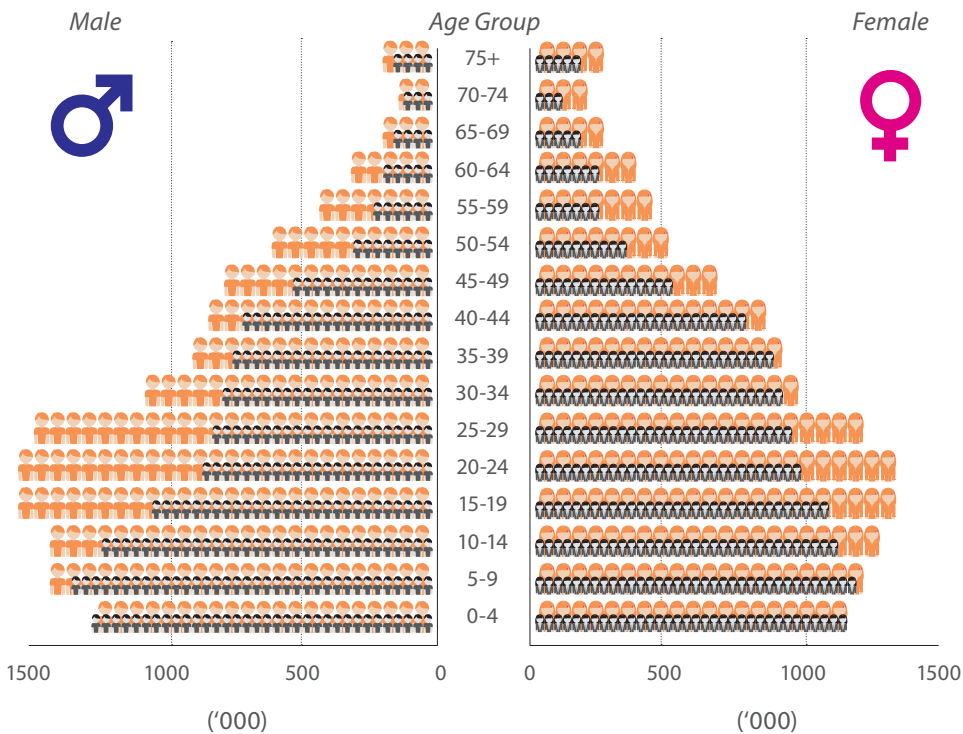
As a social political force, youth are a power to be reckoned with. Too many governments have ignored youth at their own peril, as disaffected youth are the kindle that sparks revolutions and people power movements. Youth are drivers of change in a society. For this reason, youth are a very strategic segment of society.

Not only that, youth are also a potent economic force. With over 12 million people between 15 and 40 in Malaysia – youths are a very important demographic group that makes up over 43.9% of

Malaysia's population and a significant portion of its working age population.

They are the driving force of the country's economy – both as consumers and as workers. Without the considerable contribution by youth to our economy and society, Malaysia would surely be much worse off as it would not only lose workers and consumers, but will also lose the dynamism and vitality that youth bring to the market.

Moreover, youth are also important in shaping the future. When our current leaders retire, we will rely on our youth to take over. Youth will live most of their lives in the future – where they will determine the fortune of their own lives as well as the fate of our nation.



Source: "Population Distribution and Basic Demographic Characteristics", Dept Statistics, 2010

MALAYSIAN YOUTHS IN NUMBERS

Whether we realize it or not, the composition of Malaysian society is changing. Our society is getting larger than we used to be with more young people to fuel its workforce.

Malaysia is currently at its demographic peak, with a population of 28 million people and a workforce of 18 million people. This means that it has a young and productive workforce that is capable to push the nation into greatness during the duration of their productive lifetime over the next 20-30 years. This is the golden window of opportunity for Malaysia to achieve its goal of prosperity and advanced development.

But this window of opportunity will not last forever. It is also important to note that due to the relatively low population growth rate, the number of newborns each year keeps decreasing. This has been happening since the 1990s. As a result, the size of each new generation of Malaysians keeps getting smaller.

It is only a matter of time before Malaysia becomes an aging society. This trend can be seen in the numbers. Notice that the number of Malaysians between the ages of 25-29 is more than the number of Malaysians between the ages of 30-34. However, do also notice that the number of Malaysians between the ages of 10-14 is fewer than the number Malaysians between the ages of 15-19.

YOUTH : THE ESSENTIAL SEGMENT

As they grow older and play a more important role in society, Malaysian youth will contribute even more to the well being of the nation.

As the older generation retires, today's youth will increasingly take over their role as the nation's main consumers and workforce. Because of this, it is important that government policy makers and business decision makers better understand this crucial demographic area.

For government officials, engaging Malaysian Youth is essential because of the sheer size of

MALAYSIAN POPULATION BY AGE GROUPS	Male	Female	Combined
0-4	1,238,619	1,188,338	2,426,957
5-9	1,374,368	1,293,155	2,667,523
10-14	1,405,294	1,328,133	2,733,427
15-19	1,451,974	1,383,720	2,835,694
20-24	1,470,440	1,383,540	2,853,980
25-29	1,427,217	1,283,803	2,711,020
30-34	1,123,426	1,001,415	2,124,841
35-39	988,189	929,726	1,917,915
40+	4,083,111	3,979,777	8,062,888
All Age Group	14,562,638	13,771,497	28,334,135
Total Youth	6,461,246	5,982,204	12,443,450
Percentage Population	44.40%	43.40%	43.90%

Source: "Population Distribution and Basic Demographic Characteristics", Department of Statistics, Malaysia 2010

the youth population in Malaysia and their very significant contribution to the nation's economy. Proper development of Malaysian Youth will ensure that Malaysia will have a productive workforce for decades to come.

For business executives, engaging Malaysian Youth is essential because of their potential as a market. Capturing youth business today will provide businesses with a loyal customer for decades to come.

NOTE TO CHAPTER 1: THE RISE OF A NEW WAVE ERA OF EMPOWERING YOUTH, WOMEN AND NETIZENS

THE NEW WAVE ERA

The world as we know it is changing as equal access to information is empowering individuals to become more informed about the world around them.

Specifically, we see a “horizontalization” trend happening where government and companies are no longer having monopoly over information, news and opinions which traditionally have been distributed through mainstream media. Instead, we find that more and more individuals share information among each other by using social networks, personal blogs, and peer-to-peer media.

These new horizontal connections between individuals is empowering less dominant sections of our society to voice their opinions and ideas. This is particularly true of the youth segments which for a long time has only been “seen but not heard”.

Youth today have many avenues to voice out their opinions (i.e., Blogs, Tweeter, Facebook postings and comments, etc). Youth of today are no longer the passive consumers of other people’s ideas and perspectives but can more actively influence the world around them.

This rising importance of the youth segment is happening in parallel with two other important trends in society. The first is the trend of increased women participation in the social and economic activities of our society. The second is the trend of increased technological use among urban Malaysians. These three trends when combined are creating a new culture in our society.

THE RISE OF YOUTH

Over the next 30-40 years, as today’s youth (the largest generation of Malaysians in history) enters the workforce, we expect Malaysia will thrive as a

nation. During this period of time Malaysia must make the best use of the productivity and energy of its young workforce to achieve greater heights.

Overtime Malaysia youth (defined as Malaysian citizens between the ages of 15-40 years) will gradually replace the older generation to be the leaders of the country both in the private sector and the public sector. Although this generational transition will be slow and gradual in nature, however, it is inevitable. As the older generation retires, the younger generation will take on more responsibilities in both the public sector and the private sector.

This is why our youth are so important – they are truly Malaysia’s only hope for a better future.

THE RISE OF WOMEN

Another shift that is happening in the market is the growing importance of Women.

Women have always been an important market segment in Malaysia due to its size in numbers (there are over 13 million women in Malaysia) and the role they play in their families (they are at the center of over 8 million families in Malaysia).

A global study of women done by Boston Consulting Group (BCG) shows that women control almost two-thirds of the global consumer spending – which means that women are the decision makers for most household consumption.

However, it is important to note that women are also becoming a major contributor to the workforce. Malaysian women make up close to half of the workforce. Some 46% of Malaysian women are actively working today, with plans by the Malaysian government to increase this number to 55% by 2015.

THE RISE OF NETIZENS

Aside from the demographic changes mentioned above, there is also an interesting technology related change that is happening in the market. This change is driven by the introduction of the Internet which is creating a divide between the technologically literate and the illiterate.

Over the last decade, there has been a significant increase in the technological literacy among the general population. Malaysians are increasingly not only Citizens of the offline world, but also Netizens of the online world.

Though these Malaysian Netizens exist in the surreal realm of chat rooms, websites, social networks, etc. Their numbers are quite convincing. In 2008, IDC Research found that there are about 16 million Internet users in Malaysia. This number is projected to reach 20.4 million Internet users by the end of 2012.

With the emergence of a local Internet user community, local websites are also emerging. Some of the most popular include news websites like Berita Harian's (bharian.com.my), The Star's (staronline.com.my), and the independent (malysiakini.com).

There are also handful Malaysian social networks offering localized contents and services. Some of the notable local social networks are Ruangz, eKawan, and Pacmee.

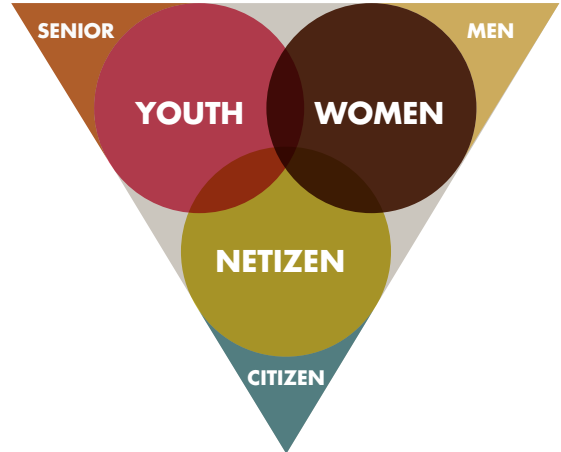
With all of these excitement surrounding the Internet, a differentiated class of Netizens has emerged where they are not only technologically literate, but also possess access to unlimited amounts of information, up-to-date news from around the world, and a global networks of friends – which are all only a click away.

On the flip side, there are still many Malaysian, particularly those in rural areas, who have difficulty accessing the Internet regularly due to limited access to broadband and mobile internet technology.

This gap in technology access creates an information gap between New Wave Netizens

who readily embrace new media as their source of information and ordinary traditionalist Citizens who are still dependant on traditional media (Television, Radio, Newspaper, Magazines) for information.

THE RISE OF A NEW WAVE CULTURE



Source: MarkPlus YWN Concept

Malaysia's demographic and technographic shift is in line with the prediction of MarkPlus' theory on New Wave which predicts that in this new era the position of Senior will be replaced by Youth, the dominance of Men will be substituted by women and the role of Citizens will be increasingly be made obsolete by Netizens.

This phenomenon, which MarkPlus calls The Anatomy of New Wave Culture is happening across the World. It is a global trend which is changing the balance of societies in many nations. Youth, Women and Netizens (or which are also called The New Wave Sub-Cultures) will take on an increasingly important role in society in the coming years. They will also become key segments for marketers to focus their budget on.

To be successful in the New Wave Era, you must:

- First, Lead the Youth if you want to win the Mind-share...
- Second, Manage The Women if you want to win the Market-Share...
- Third, Organize The Netizen if you want to win the Heart-Share...

**CHAPTER 2:
THE CONTRIBUTION
OF YOUTH FOR
MALAYSIA**

2

CHAPTER 2: THE CONTRIBUTION OF YOUTH FOR MALAYSIA

WORKFORCE CONTRIBUTIONS

Youth are a significant contributor to the workforce of Malaysia. Out of Malaysia's 16 million strong workforce, approximately 7.14 million (48%) are youth between the ages of 15 and 40. These youth contribute not only their productivity as workers, but also contribute their ideas and energy to the companies they work in.

SIZE OF YOUTH LABOUR FORCE 2006 - 2010					
Year	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
15-19	484.5	476.4	478.8	452.4	452.8
20-24	1,612.2	1,615.8	1,619.5	1,614.8	1,587.7
25-29	1,746.0	1,793.4	1,831.5	1,905.7	1,927.0
30-34	1,523.1	1,552.5	1,578.3	1,632.5	1,676.6
35-39	1,408.9	1,434.0	1,437.9	1,464.4	1,501.4
Total	6,774.7	6,872.1	6,946.0	7,069.8	7,145.5

Source: Labour Force Survey, Department of Statistics, Malaysia

However, not all youth that intend to work actually find a job. Indeed youth unemployment is a chronic problem in the country. Across age groups, an average of 9.9% of Malaysian Youth was unemployed as of 2007. This number is still significantly higher than the national unemployment level of 3%. The worst case of unemployment can be found amongst working youths between the ages of 15 to 24. These youths have consistently suffered from unemployment levels above 15% over the last couple of decades.

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE BY AGE BRACKET

Age Bracket	15-19	20-24	25-29	30-34
1995	17.1	5.7	2.0	1.0
2000	29.5	36.1	13.2	4.8
2004	16.4	9.9	2.8	1.3
2007	16.7	9.3	3.1	1.2

Source: Labour Force Survey, Department of Statistics, Malaysia

SOCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS

Giving youth the opportunity to fulfill their potential is very important. When youth are given the chance to contribute to society, they become a productive force. Vice versa, if they are not given the opportunities they desire, they can end up becoming a disruptive force.

Because of this, we should beware of this high youth unemployment. Unemployed youth are a volatile element as they are full of energy but disappointed with the world –a dangerous combination indeed. Such unemployment is the root cause of social instability.

Unemployed youth are often stigmatized by society as lazy or unproductive. This results in frustration and anger which are often vented in very negative ways. Like dry grass waiting to be sparked by a match, unemployed youth can easily be convinced to join demonstrations and uprisings. This can be seen in the many of the uprisings in the Middle East and Western world have been driven by these unemployed youth.

During the Tunisian Jasmine Revolution, the young people who helped bring down Ben Ali were called hittistes—French-Arabic slang for those who lean against the wall. Their counterparts in the Egypt Tahrir Square protests which forced President Hosni Mubarak to resign his post, are the shabab atileen - the unemployed youths.

Not only in the Middle East, European countries also found itself in trouble with youth unrest. In Britain, these youth mobs are known as NEETs—“not in education, employment, or training.” These NEETs participated in the mass protests across London which included looting of high end boutiques, attacking of the Conservative Party’s headquarters and battering of a royal limousine carrying Prince Charles and his wife.

Employed youth on the other hand, tend to be supporters of social peace. They contribute to society in productive ways and become important drivers of the economy. They are an integral part of the society. Having a steady and responsible job allows youth to have a higher sense of self-worth and pride.

Work for youth is more than just about earning money. Work also provides a sense of identity and social status to youth. It is not uncommon to hear friends gossip about the career achievements of their other friends. Working youth have higher self-esteem and feel better about themselves and their surroundings. Unemployed youth feel less positive about themselves and their surroundings.

OTHER CONTRIBUTIONS

Youth today have the opportunity to engage in activities beyond simple economic ones. Many are exploring in fields such as sports, music, culture, etc.

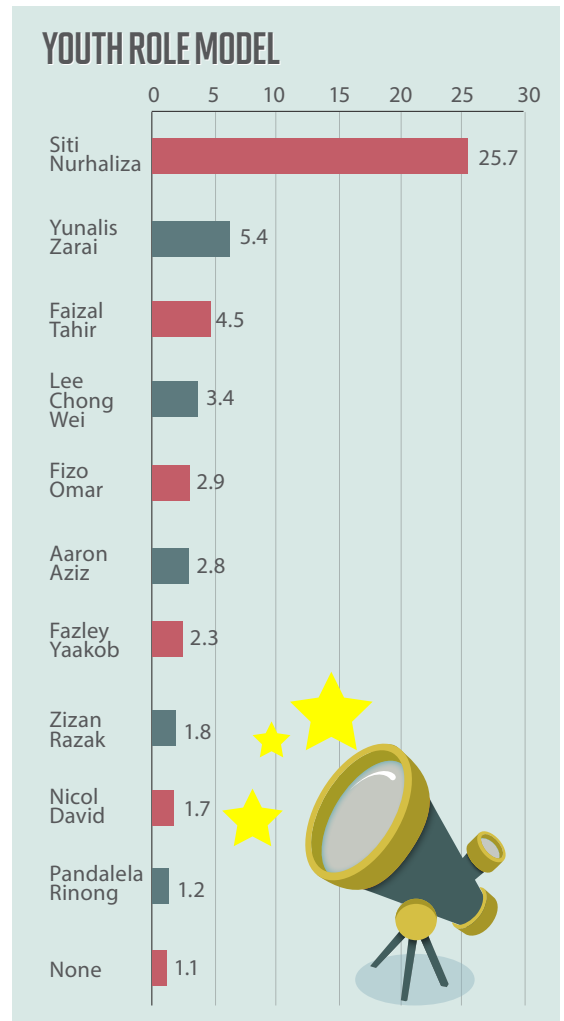
Due to the relatively stable and abundant environment in which they live in, young people growing up today have far more power and potential to create change than any previous generation of youth in the past. Today’s youth enjoy better nutrition, better education, and better access to cultural and athletic facilities than was available several decades ago.

Youth have also benefited from the information revolution happening over the last 20 years which

provides them with access to information and knowledge from around the world. With all these opportunities available to them, it is no wonder that youth today are achieving more.

It is entirely within the character of youth that they want to achieve something in order to get acknowledgement from their peers and seniors. It is no wonder that many of the world’s best athletes, musicians, artists and entrepreneurs tend to be people below the age of 40 who are at the prime of their physical and intellectual state.

Malaysian youth are optimistic and full of aspirations. They crave for an improvement in their lives and they are willing to work hard to achieve it. In doing so, they look at the role models in society.



Source: IPPBM & MarkPlus Youth Anxiety & Desire Study, 2012



In particular, there are some youth role models who inspire youth as found in the Youth Anxiety Desire survey.

Looking at the names and the achievements of these role models, we see that Malaysian youth are showing their world class abilities at an International level – some are singers, others athletes or cultural icons. The youth's choice of role models mirrors their own expectations for themselves. This is what Malaysia's youth aspire for themselves: to become world class contributors to our society.

Let's discuss on these top ten role models

1. Music: **SITI NURHALIZA**



Siti Nurhaliza

Dato' Siti Nurhaliza was chosen by youth in our study as their #1 role model. She also happens to be Malaysia's top diva.

Her career began when she won the Bintang HMI competition in 1995 when she was only 16 years old. Since then she has won an unprecedented number of music awards in Malaysia: 34 Anugerah Industri Muzik awards, 23 Anugerah Bintang Popular awards, 21 Anugerah Planet Muzik awards, 18 Anugerah Juara Lagu awards, four MTV Asia Awards and the holder of two records in the Malaysian Book of Records.

Young people that see Dato' Siti Nurhaliza as a role model admire her for her successes in life which was achieved through hard work and perseverance.

2. Music: **YUNA**



Yunalis Zarai

Yuna (Yunalis Zarai) is an independent singer-songwriter. She began writing her own songs when she was 14 years old, and her first performance of her own songs was at the age of 19, after she learned how to play guitar.

Yuna's meteoric rise in the Malaysian indie music scene is largely due to the strong following she gained via Myspace. She played at many gigs since the release of her Demo, EP and then two local albums. She has performed in numerous acoustic shows and events in many parts of Malaysia since 2006.

Young people admire Yuna for her creativity and self confidence. Yuna stands out because she is not afraid to retain and embrace her Muslim side and combine it with a Western musical style.

3. Music: **FAIZAL TAHIR**





Faizal Tahir

Ahmad Faizal bin Mohammad Tahir a.k.a Faizal Tahir is a Malaysian Singer. He started off his career as a contestant in “One in A Million” competition where he won 1st runner up but was recognized for his hit song “Mahakarya Cinta” which later became a best-selling single.

Faizal joined the Nasyid group, Mirwana, but he later left the group to pursue a purely solo career where he has found success Faizal’s first album, *Aku.Muzik.Kamu*, was released on 22 November 2007.

Faizal Tahir is also very active on Twitter where he has over two hundred thousand followers. His followers admire Faizal not only for his good look and his ability to sing, but also his life journey from just a regular guy to becoming one of Malaysia’s leading rock stars. It is proven that with strong will and hard work, youths can achieve their dreams in life.

4. Sports: **LEE CHONG WEI**



Lee Chong Wei

Datuk Lee Chong Wei is a professional badminton player and one of the most respected Malaysian athletes of his generation. Chong Wei’s many achievements have made him into a household name and national icon. Chong Wei was ranked first worldwide for 199 consecutive weeks in the men’s singles category from August 21, 2008 to June 14, 2012. Chong Wei is also the only Malaysian badminton player to have won two All-England championships.

When Chong Wei won the silver medal in the 2008 Olympic Games, he became the first Malaysian to reach the final of the men’s singles event and ending Malaysia’s Olympic medal drought since the 1996 Games. This winning earned him the title ‘Datuk’ and praised by Malaysian Prime Minister Najib Tun Razak who called him ‘the national hero’.

As a well-known celebrity athlete, Chong Wei is also an active corporate endorser. He doesn’t only pose for ads for sportswear but has also been the face of a wide range of products ranging from soft drinks to antivirus software.

Youths truly admire Chong Wei’s determination to achieve the most for his nation. When commenting on his recent struggles during the 2012 Olympics, he explained that despite his injuries, he has a promise to keep to Malaysia, which was to at least reach the finals. Not only did he keep his promise, he ended up bring home a gold medal.

5. Sports & Movies: **FIZO OMAR**



Fizo Omar

Fizo Omar is a popular up and coming actor. His first movie entitled “Kongsi” was made in 2011. Since then he has acted in 3 other movies, the latest being “Sembunyi” which was made in 2012.

Before Fizo became an actor, he was first a footballer. In his football days, Fizo represented both Kelantan and Perlis, and had donned the national jersey once in 2000.

Both as a footballer or an actor, Fizo Omar has proved to his youth admirers that his talent does not have any limitations.



6. Entertainment: **AARON AZIZ**



Aaron Aziz

Aaron Aziz is a Singaporean actor with a strong followers in both Singapore and Malaysia. Aaron's career began as a supporting actor in "Cinta Bollywood" TV series in 2001. He later expanded into Movies in 2008 in "Evolusi KL Drift". The pinnacle of his career so far was his performance in the movie "Ombak Rindu".

Despite his Singaporean background, Aaron is well accepted in Singapore and Malaysia. In fact, Aaron had just recently received a Malaysian Permanent Residence card. His work on the screen has successfully bridged the cultural divide of the two nations.

7. Motivator: **FAZLEY YAAKOB**



Fazley Yaakob

Fazley Yaakob is another role model chosen by youth in our study. Fazley is a motivator and businessman. He was also the director of Fazley International College in Kuala Lumpur before he

resigned due to a scandal involving his academic credentials.

However, despite this setback, Fazley Yaakob is still motivated and determined to continue on his life. His admirers say that it is this resilience that sets him apart from other role models.

8. Entertainment: **ZIZAN RAZAK**



Zizan Razak

Zizan is a comedian and actor. He made his first appearance in the first season of Raja Lawak competition where he was the second runner up. But despite losing during that competition, Zizan subsequently took on bigger and better roles.

Zizan is currently a very popular presenter and actor. He is well known for his timely banter and ability to liven up any event. Indeed, Zizan's wit and humor are what most of his admirers love about. Recently, spreads his wings to be a rapper and lyricist.

9. Sports: **NICOL DAVID**





Nicol Ann David

Dato’ Nicol David is a real youth role model in both her professional life as well as her personal life.

Professionally, she is one of our most accomplished athletes. She is currently ranked world number 1 in women’s squash. She is the first Asian woman to achieve this title. She won the British Open title 4 times and the World Open title a record 6 times.

Personally, Nicol was honored with the Order of Merit (Darjah Bakti) which is a royally conferred award given to exceptional individuals who have contributed to the nation in the field of arts, sciences, and humanities. She was the first ever recipient of the award (with Datuk Lee Chong Wei eventually becoming the second to receive the award). Recently Nicol has also been appointed as UNDP National Goodwill Ambassador for Malaysia.

Her many achievements and humble attitude provide unending inspirations for youth to follow in her footsteps and become the best that they can be.

10. Sports: **PANDALELA RINONG ANAK PAMG JBK**



Pandalela Rinong anak Pamg

Pandalela Rinong anak Pamg JBK is ranked #10. Pandalela created history for Malaysia in the 2012 Summer Olympics London after becoming the first female Malaysian athlete to win a medal at the prestigious games. She won a bronze medal for women’s 10m individual platform diving. Towering hopes were placed onto Datuk Lee Chong Wei’s shoulder to win Malaysia’s first ever Olympic gold medal but the Bidayuh girl from Sarawak became the center of limelight when she went against all odds to deliver the country’s first-ever Olympic medal in a sport other than badminton.

The tanned, 19-year-old immediately became an inspiration for many youth to bring dream into life. Besides the glorified triumph, Pandalela has won medals in many other international competitions. She won silver at the 2010 Summer Youth Olympics in Singapore in the girls 10m platform and 3m springboard finals and brought home Malaysia’s first gold in the women’s 10m platform at the Commonwealth Games 2010 in New Delhi.

INSPIRING YOUTH IN SOCIAL / HUMANITARIAN FIELD

Social/Humanitarian:

SUHAIL BIN MOHAMEDKAMARUDDIN



Suhail bin Mohamed Kamaruddin was born on 6 September 1985 in Kelantan Darul Naim. He got his secondary education at Maahad Al-Anuar, Kelantan (1998-2003), he studied at University Teknologi Mara (UiTM) (2004-2007) and (UPM) (2008-2011) and enrolled his Diploma in Youth Development from Commonwealth Youth Program, Commonwealth Secretariat, London (2008-2011). Some of his recognitions are “Anugerah Remaja Perdana Rakan Muda” (Silver), The International Award for Young People, London (Gold), and Volunteer Youth Icon. Currently he is working at K-Fiqh Sdn Bhd as a Project Manager formerly; he was a Program Assistant at International Youth Centre.

He participated in various national programs and activities actively such as Kapal Layar Diraja Tunas Samudera 228/08 (Voyage Leader/Best Trainee), International Youth Policy (Research Secretary), Crime Awareness Team (Trainer and Modulator), National ARPRM Convention (Speaker), Pusat Perundingan dan Latihan IKIM (Speaker), Youth Development Transformation Lab (Member/

Initiative Leader), Institut Kefahaman Islam Malaysia (Speaker), Lembaga Pembangunan Penduduk dan Keluarga Negara (Facilitator), Institut Darul Ridzuan (Invited Speaker), United Sabah Islamic Association (Invited Speaker), National Youth Development Policy Review (Group Leader) and Majlis Perundingan Belia Negara (Members Appointed).

He had been selected as Malaysia Representative in various International Program such as Asean–Japan Youth Leader Summit (2009), 21st International Youth Forum in Korea (2010), Ship for Southeast Asean Youth Program (2009), Global Model United Nation Conference (2010), ASEAN Logics Conference (2010), Asian Youth Forum, Incheon, South Korea (2011). He involved and participated in various organizations actively such as Premier Youth Association (President), Malaysia Gold Award Association, MAGAA (President), Malaysia Islamic Youth Movement, ABIM (Secretary-WPKL), Pertubuhan Belia Pemikir Muda (Secretary-WPKL), Smart Management Enterprise (Executive Director), Pusat Latihan Pidato Profesional (VIP Member).

Social/Humanitarian:

RAVICHANDRAN S/O SUBRAMANIAM



Ravichandran s/o Balasubramaniam, this iconic youth leader was born on 2 June 1986. By the age of early 20s, this young Indian-Malaysian man has received numerous awards locally and also at international levels.

Among of his precious achievements, the International Award for Young People (IAYP) 2012-2014 which Ravi received recently is really something that a kid of his age should be proud of which is one of the highest achievement in international level for youth. In 2009, he has

already claimed as the IAYP Gold award holder. This double-award-winning boy has really shown something out of his active involvements in youth organizations is not just “herding cats”.

Despite of all the awards and titles he gained, Ravi has not just let go of everything, sit back, relax and enjoy his international achievements. He also manages to be in the spotlight of the local youth scene. As one of the member of the National Youth Consultative Council (NYCC) Malaysia as elected by the Minister of Youth and Sports, he is also active in other youth organizations. He is also the secretary for Malaysia Gold Award Association (MAGAA), the National Panel Member for National Award for Young People (ARPRM) and the Chairman for Hindu Youth Organization (HYC), Negeri Sembilan.

Besides that, he is also the Regional Training Panel for Asia Pacific Region. With all these achievements and involvements, Ravichandran can really keep his head held high.

MALAYSIAN YOUTH CONTRIBUTING IN THEIR OWN WAY

These youth role models provide a glimpse on how youth are working hard to contribute in their own way to Malaysian society. Like their role models, Malaysian youth contribute in their own special way to the development of the nation. Some of them work as entrepreneurs, others as workers, athletes, academicians, humanitarians or artisans.

Also like their role models, Malaysian youth come from various backgrounds (poor or rich, Chinese, Indian or Malay). But one thing that they all have one thing in common - all of them work hard everyday to make Malaysia proud. Our youth bring their perseverance, determination, hard work, innovation, creativity, and optimism to achieve their dreams. In doing so, some take an academic route, some take a business route, and others take an athletic or cultural route. Each in their own way seeks to make Malaysia a better place.

**CHAPTER 3:
UNDERSTANDING
YOUTH CONSUMPTION
PATTERNS**

3

CHAPTER 3: UNDERSTANDING YOUTH CONSUMPTION PATTERNS

Young people start their lifelong journey as consumers at an early age.

- As children, they were mainly users and influencers. Their ability to purchase a product was only as good as their skills in begging their parents to buy things for them.
- As young people enter their teen years, they take control of their own purchases. They become the main decision makers for their personal interests. At around this age, youth are given the freedom by their parents to shop alone and make their own decisions on what to buy.
- Later on, as they enter adulthood and begin working, they become even more serious consumers – buying not only for themselves, but also oftentimes for their households.

Companies need to remember that consumers do not magically appear at age 21 but their role as consumers actually start significantly earlier – around the age of 15. Brands who tap into the youth market early will not only enjoy consumption today but a lifetime of loyalty. When a brand approaches a consumer as a teen and nurture the youth through the years, the brand will end up with an extremely loyal customer by the time the customer is a young adult.

Indeed, Malaysian youth are avid consumers of products and services across many categories – particularly food and beverage products, apparels, toiletries, entertainment products and services, telecommunications services, and transportation services. These are some of the top spending items for youth.

Our Youth Anxiety and Desire study found that Malaysian youth receive and spend a good sum of money each month. Many still receive pocket money from their parents. Some earn money by working part-time or full time jobs. This is money that is fully under their discretion which can be used without the permission of their parents. This discretionary money is spent by these youth to support their everyday activities and lifestyle. Often times larger spending items such as school tuition or purchases of private transportation vehicles are still subsidized by their parents.

YOUTH INCOME AND SPENDING

Most youth of today have a disposable income. Some youth get pocket money from their parents, while others earn wages from their full time part time job. Our Youth Anxiety and Desire study found that youth who participated in the study earned on average sum of RM 1,729 per month.

This disposable income is money that they received either as wages from their employees or as pocket money from their parents. This disposable income is money which youth have complete control over (as opposed to “family money” which they only can influence).

Moreover, the average respondent in the Youth Anxiety and Desire study spend an average of RM 943/month. This figure is considerably lower than the national average consumer spending (which is determined to be RM 2,285 a month in urban areas and RM 1,301 a month in rural areas based on a census of household income and expenditure by the Department of Statistics, Malaysia). But this is understandable, given that our respondents include school age and college age students who earn very little money and do not have many needs to fulfill.

The real insight on the important of youth as consumers emerges when we calculate the cumulative spending power of youth. If we take youth’s average monthly spending of RM 943 and multiply it 12 months and times the size of the youth population as a whole (12.4 million), we find that the cumulative annual consumer spending by Malaysian youth to be considerably large. The tally comes up to approximately RM 140.7 billion.

Given this spending power, the youth market should be appealing for businesses providing products and services as youth are avid consumers. Moreover, it must be noted that Malaysian youth’s



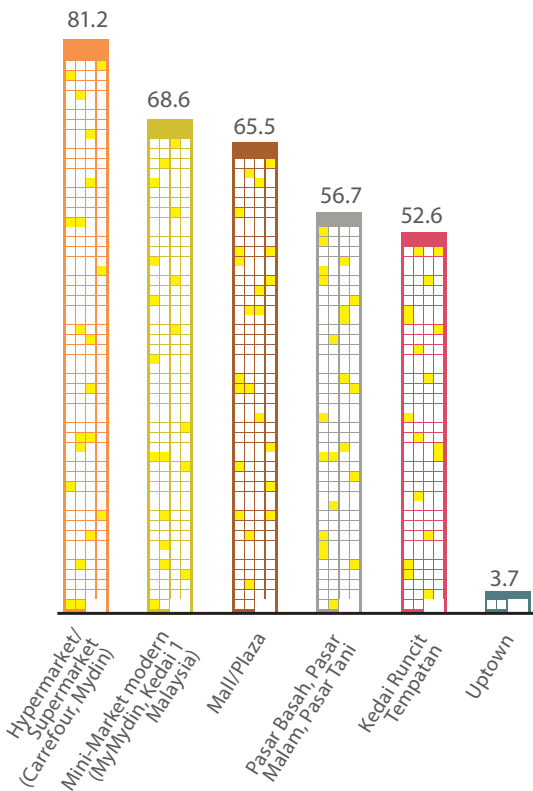
annual spending of RM 140.7 billion makes up a sizable chunk (close to 20%) of total consumer spending in Malaysia.

Companies that target youth depend on this very spending for their livelihood. Hence, it is no wonder that they willingly spend millions of ringgit every year in youth advertising, promotions and events to capture the attention of the youth market so that they become the product that youth choose the next time they go shopping.

WHERE THEY BUY

Youth love to shop. Whether for simple snacks and drink, or to stock up groceries, or shopping for clothing and shoes, shopping is something that youth do regularly alone and with friends.

MOST VISITED RETAIL FORMAT



Source: IPPBM & MarkPlus Youth Anxiety & Desire Study, 2012

Hypermarkets and supermarkets are the most visited retail format for youths. Our Youth Anxiety and Desire survey show that some 81.2% of youths regularly go to supermarkets to shop. Whether going alone or with parents, shopping at supermarkets gives youth a variety of food, drinks, toiletries, household appliances and affordable clothes to choose from.

A TESCO SUPERMARKET



The popularity of hypermarkets and supermarkets are driving its growth as a retail format. In the 1980s, there were only a handful of hypermarkets and supermarkets in the country, today there are over 2,000 supermarkets and hypermarkets outlets throughout the country. The number of outlets keep on growing with each of the major players racing to build new outlets throughout East Malaysia and second tier cities in Peninsular Malaysia.

Like, supermarkets and hypermarkets, convenience stores are also growing fast in Malaysia. Companies like MyMydin, KK and 7 Eleven are building their presence by the thousands throughout Malaysia.

Compared to supermarkets which are more general in nature, convenience stores are located closer to residential centers as well as to centers of activities (i.e., schools, offices, etc.). This makes convenience stores more easily accessible to youths, many of who are constrained in their means of transportation.

A KK SUPER MART CONVENIENCE STORE



Convenience stores are effective places for reaching youth. Our Youth Anxiety and Desire study show that convenience stores are the second most visited retail format for youths with close to 80 percent of youths shopping at convenience stores regularly.

Malls are the a third favorite location for shopping for youth. But in truth, today's malls are more than just simple shopping centers. There are other things that people go to malls for. A few things that come to our mind are food, movies, entertainment and of course a place to hang out with friends and family on the weekend.

People in general find malls as the best place to visit and shop, and get free-entry to the air-conditioned interior during the hot weather; as well as to try the different and delicious cuisines available in such places.

ONE UTAMA SHOPPING MALL



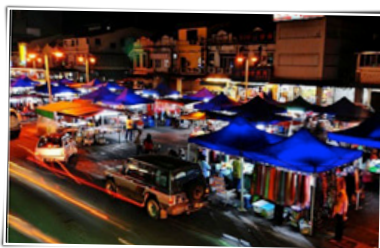
For young people, more than just a place to buy products, malls are social centers where they can shop, socialize and connect with their friends. It is also a place where teens can see and be seen by their peers.

Slightly older youths in their 20s may see malls as a "home away from home" as many of these youths still live with their parents and do not have a place of their own to invite friends and family to. Even older youth in their 30s who are married and more settled see malls as a place of activity with friends, family, and their significant other members to eat out together or watch a movie.

The fourth favorite place for Malaysian youth to shop is the traditional market. Such markets, whether they are weekend farmer's market (i.e., pasar tani) or night markets (i.e., pasar malam), are the traditional center for shopping activities.

These markets bring together traders, ordinary people and children, either for a simple errand or a journey to discover delicious food and local goods. Such markets can be found all across Malaysia, both in urban and rural areas. In urban centers, weekend market and night markets are common. Special markets also tend to appear during festive seasons such as the month of Ramadhan.

NIGHT MARKET IN SIBU



Unlike convenience stores and supermarkets which are clean and have been systematically designed for convenience, traditional markets have a chaotic element to it which is some what appealing.

Part of the charm of traditional markets is exactly the disorder and inconvenience. It provides a different vibe for the shoppers who come to see feel the enthusiasm of the many shops and makeshift stalls playing music and displaying their products.

Moreover, traditional markets also tend to provide different type of products that may not be offered in normal supermarkets and convenience stores. There is also more emphasis on local products compared to imported ones. This difference in selection is another added value what makes traditional markets interesting and attractive for youth.

Our Youth Anxiety and Desire survey have found that over 50% of youths regularly go to these markets during their leisure time to spend time browsing for clothes, try the food and maybe to meet with friends. Many youths also go simply to feel the unique shopping experience of such traditional markets.

HOW THEY BUY

There are four spending characters that can be divided into two indicators. These indicators are buying behavior (smart and simple) and buying motivation (planned and impulsive). Based on our findings, majority of Malaysian youth are categorized as planned-smart buyer.

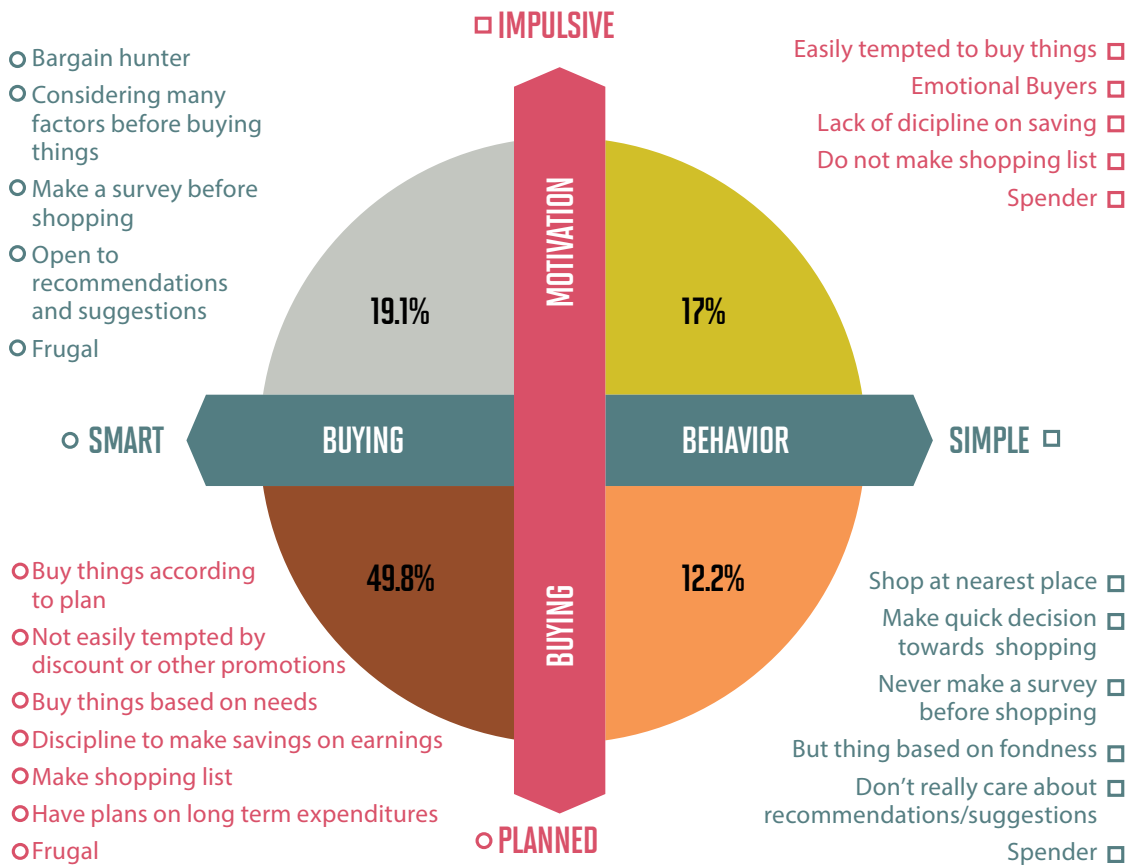


Figure: Four psychographic consumption profiles of youth

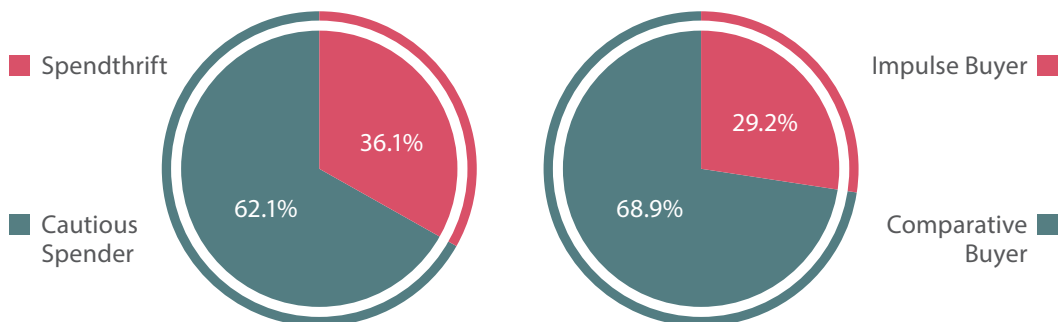
Planned-smart buyers usually buy things according to plan, they are not easily tempted by discounts or promotions, even they only buy thing based on their needs with a shopping list. On the other hand, planned-simple buyers make quick purchase

decision based on fondness and tend to be a big spender.

In spending their money, Malaysian youth tend to be cautious (62.1%) and comparative (68.9%). Their

purchasing decisions are driven more by research and reason than emotions and impulse. More than 60% of these youth will seek information on the products or services before purchasing it. This careful attitude towards buying is in part driven by their limited income. Having only a limited amount of money to spend makes youth think before they buy.

ATTITUDES TOWARDS SPENDING



SPENDING HABIT

Source: IPPBM & MarkPlus Youth Anxiety & Desire Study, 2012

Another key characteristic of youth is their affinity for new things. This attraction to new products, new brands and new technologies is driven by their urge to explore.

Youth are in the phase of transition, from restrictions and supervision to more responsibilities and freedom. Up to adolescence, these youth did not have a lot of freedom in their actions and decisions. They still mainly depend on their parents for guidance and permission. However, when these youths reach their teen years, suddenly their lives change as they are given more responsibilities and freedom by their parents. This independence expands further when they get their D (car) driver's permit card at the age of 17 years. Also in political terms, young people are given the freedom to cast their own vote during elections when they reach the age of 21 years.

No longer under constant restriction from their parents, young people have the urge to try something new. This urge can be illustrated to be like as a dam. If the dam has a large inlet with only a small outlet, then it will quickly become full of water and the pressure will grow, increasing over time. At some point, when the pressure becomes great enough, the door of the dam will suddenly

burst open, letting out water that will flood through anything in its way.

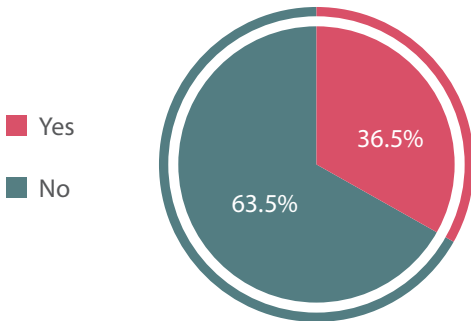
This is what happens to young people who in the beginning were given many limitations and then all of the sudden gain the freedom to choose. They will of course want to try everything that has been restricted. It is simply pent up demand. For young people, this freedom is euphoric, because they were deprived of it for so long.

In product selection, young people tend to want to try something new, which is in stark contrast to the "senior" segment who are more loyal to certain brands or products that they have used on a regular basis. Whether for new brands or new product categories, young people are always at the forefront of consumption. They are the "early adopters" that marketers are told to seek first.

That is why young people are the subculture of the most frequently targeted by marketers to market their products and new innovations. One clear example of this is in the technology arena where smart phones and gadgets are actively targeting youth to be the first consumer of their product. Youth were the first one who used Sony's walkmans back in the 1980s. Youth were also the first ones to use Motorola (and later Nokia) cell phones in the 1990s and early 2000s. Today, youths are also the first ones that bought Apple

iPads and iPhones. They will also with no doubt become the first to buy whatever new brands and innovative products that will emerge in the future.

PERCENTAGE OF YOUTH THAT HAVE PURCHASED ONLINE



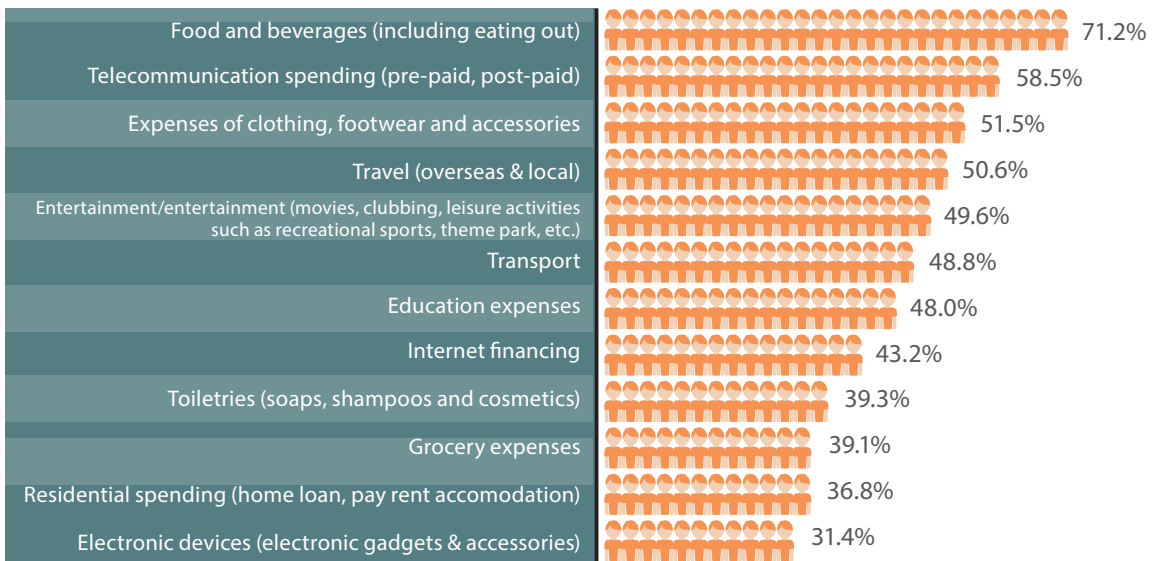
Another interesting fact about youth consumption is the emerging popularity of Internet commerce. Our Youth Anxiety and Desire survey found that 36.5% of youth have used the Internet to buy products. Many have bought airfare, books or apparel online.

These numbers are in line with estimates by Goldman Sachs which say that e-commerce in Malaysia is projected to hit RM3.4 billion this year and is growing by 30% each year.

Source: IPPBM & MarkPlus Youth Anxiety & Desire Study, 2012

WHAT THEY BUY

PRODUCTS BOUGHT MOST OFTEN (BY PERCENTAGE OF YOUTHS)



Source: IPPBM & MarkPlus Youth Anxiety & Desire Study, 2012

When we asked youth what the product they bought most often were, 71.2% of youth still say that food and beverages is their most often bought products, whereas only 58.5% say that telecommunication and 51.5% say that apparel is their top most frequently bought product.

These priority products are planned into youth's monthly spending budget. With a limited budget to spend, most Malaysian youth are forced to prioritize basic necessities like food and beverage & communication over less essential items like apparel, travel and entertainment.

Being fashionable is important because no youth want to be seen as “uncool” or behind the times. For many young people, being seen as untrendy is something to feel shamed about and their self-esteem will go down significantly. Sometimes without regard to convenience, youth will buy and use products that are “in” this season, although the product may not necessarily be good in quality or very comfortable to wear. Being trendy and following the latest fashion makes young people become more confident.

This is particularly true of young women who have a special relationship with the fashion world. Take a look at any department stores and you will see the wide array of apparel for women - dresses, gowns, blouses, shirts, t-shirts, tank tops, skirts, jeans, formal pants, blazers, vests, baju kurung, baju kebaya, muslim wear, scarves, and many other fashion items.

This love for fashion is exacerbated by the consumer culture that is purveyed by fashion magazines, television, and websites that tout the latest “in” style to their audience and encourage the purchase of trendy brands and products.

The fashion bug has even affected young men who have their own fashion brands and fashion magazines. The rising numbers of the metrosexual men, who are more concerned with their looks and appearance, have also affected the consumer culture amongst young males. Not only are young men of today more concerned about their hairstyle and attire, they also pay more attention to the health of their skin, hair and nails.

CONSUMPTION OF ENTERTAINMENT SERVICES

Entertainment is another major expenditure item for youth. Whether to go to the cinema, arcades, night club or theme park youth spend a good portion of their money on entertainment. Our Youth Anxiety and Desire study shows that 7.21% of the expenditure budget of youth in our study is spent on purchasing entertainment products and services.

Among the main beneficiaries of youth entertainment spending are cinemas. Data from the Malaysian Movie Development Board (FINAS)

shows that total box office revenue in Malaysia totaled some RM 601.9 million annually in 2011. It is safe to say that a good portion of this box office revenue came from the pockets of youth who go to movies often with their friends, families and other significant members.

CONSUMPTION OF TRANSPORTATION GOODS & SERVICES

Only 17% of youths in our study have their own private transportation vehicle. As many youths do not have cars, public transport such as LRT, KTM, Public Buses and Taxis are their main modes of transportation. This is particularly true of younger youth who are still in schools or colleges.

Hence, it is not surprising that many 5.98% of the expenditure budget of youth in our study is allocated for transportation. Indeed, hop on to any LRT, KTM or bus early in the morning or later in the evening, and you will see that the majority of passengers are young children and workers.

But public transport has its limitations. For one, public transport may not take you so far. There are many areas throughout Malaysia that are very difficult to reach by using public transportation. Also, public transport only provides its users with a functional benefit, but not an emotional one. There is no pride in riding a bus or railway. It does not engender any sense of identity or group belonging. It simply is not in any way “cool”. It’s just basic transportation.

This is why many youth like the idea of owning a private mode of transportation vehicle. Among transportation vehicles, motorcycles and cars are the most preferred by Malaysian youth, with bicycles less so. Cars and motorcycles ownership is a major subject of youth desire.

Cars are generally chosen by parents who fear for their children rather than on a motorbike. Cars are considered safer because the body does not interact directly with other vehicles or to road accidents. Additionally the car can also take a longer distance than a motorcycle. It is also better to transport more than two passengers.



Motorcycles on the other hand, are nimble vehicles that can easily traverse the traffic density. In many cities that suffer from overcrowded streets, motorcycles can always find a loophole to pass another vehicle and free from congestion. Motorcycle is a type of vehicle in demand by young people, it could be because of the price of a motorcycle that is quite affordable and motorcycles also use much less gasoline compared to cars.

Youth also tend to choose motorcycles over cars because of licensing policies. This is because the age requirement to obtain a B2 (motorcycle) driver's permit is 16 years old which is a year less than the age requirement for a D (car) driver's permit. This means many teenagers will have a motorcycle before they have a car.

Motorcycle or car, psychologically, driving a motor vehicle provides a sense of freedom and allows youth to express the energy of their youth. Notice how the ones speeding in their motorcycle or their cars are usually teenagers. The "mat rempits" who race in urban cities are also young. It is rare that you will find anybody beyond 30 still doing illegal racing for thrills.

Having control of a motor vehicle also gives youth a sense of control. When everything else in their lives are still controlled by their teachers and parents, driving a motor vehicle gives them a sense of control of where they are going and how they will get there. When they get their driving permits, they are given more independence and responsibilities from their parents. Many begin using their car or motorcycle to go to school or to the mall. Many even begin travelling with their friends

Cars were originally meant as a functional means of transport to and fro, but later evolved into objects of status and identity. Car ownership provides confidence and status for the young, because it is more expensive cars are considered to form a positive image as a more affluent. Surely it is much more prestigious to pick up a girlfriend with a four-wheeled vehicle than a motorcycle.

Like most people, youth of course prefer new cars over used cars. But even when they are given a used car, they will refurbish and add accessories to make their car more attractive.

Indeed, accessorizing cars is a favorite pastime for many youth. Youth will oftentimes accessorize their cars according to their personal taste and hobbies. For example, young people who have an interest in music will most likely buy a more advanced stereo and speaker system to be installed in their car. Similarly, youth that like to drive fast will add features to make their cars faster. Other youth prefer extreme motorsports like rally or off-roading and will accessories their car accordingly.

Overall, owning a personal ownership creates a sense of identity for youth. They would like to have the car reflect their own personalities and image.

Having a motor vehicle could also open up opportunities for young people to interact with other people who happen to have the same vehicle. The emergence of brand-specific vehicle communities (i.e., a community of Proton Wira owners or a Perodua Myvi club) has become a means of networking and interaction for young people. Such a community is also useful as it can provide members with information on modifications, about the best places for spare parts and service and even help them sell or buy cars when the time comes. The common interests will foster a feeling of 'camaraderie' among the members so that the bonds of friendship will naturally occur.

In financing their purchase and maintenance of private transportation, many young people are still depending on their parents. Those who are still in school may be totally dependent on his parents to buy him/her the vehicle outright, while the young professionals may still need some help from parents. Many youth also receive their vehicle second hand from their parents or siblings.

CONSUMPTION OF TRAVEL SERVICES

Youth are avid travelers. According to a 2008 study on youth travel by the World Tourism Organization, young people (which they define as those between 16-29-year-olds) spend more than any other group on international travel and is the highest growing market for travel services.

Many youth save up to travel during their holidays. On average, youth in our study allocate 5.7% of their expenditure budget for travelling. With the emergence of cheaper airlines thanks to low-cost airlines like Tiger Airways and Air Asia, Malaysian youth are also contributing to this trend of International youth travel. And not only International travel, Malaysian youths are also travelling domestically as well using buses, trains and personal vehicles.

CONSUMPTION OF TELECOMMUNICATION SERVICES

Communicating is very important when a person is young. Young people have an on going need to communicate with their friends. Unlike older people that prefer to communicate face to face or via a telephone discussion, young people connect using mobile and internet data technologies – whether its email, SMS, chatting on Yahoo Messenger or Microsoft Messenger, group discussions on What’s App or Blackberry Messenger, tweets on twitter, or simply exchanging comments on Facebook.

Youth today are much more connected than previous generations. This translates to more spending on telecommunication services. 5.61% of the expenditure budget of youth in our study is spent on telecommunication services.

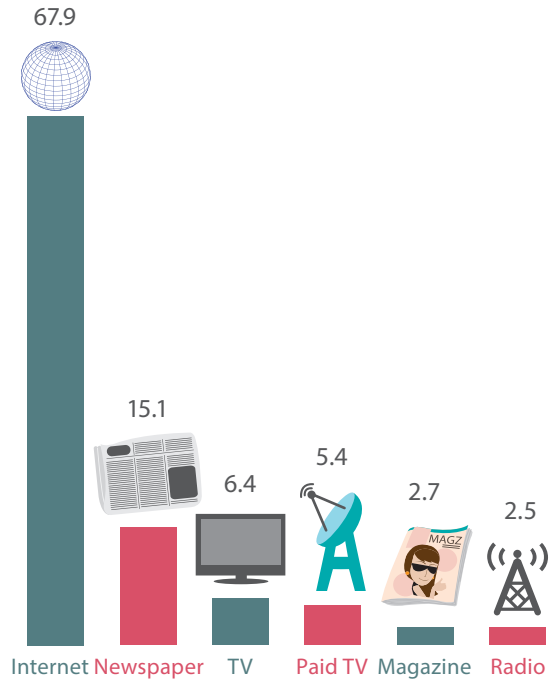
EXAMPLE OF A TELECOMMUNICATION PRODUCT TARGETING YOUTH



Many use up these credits not only for voice services but also for data services as many youth surf Internet websites using their smart phones. Some of them even spend more for fixed line telephones and broadband Internet. 4.42% of the expenditure budget of youth in our study is spent on Internet services.

The main driver behind this high demand for telecommunication services is the youth’s lifestyle of constant connection via multimedia. Indeed we find that our younger generation is no longer dependent on TV, Radio and Newspapers for their information. They prefer to get their news on the Internet.

YOUTH MEDIA PREFERENCE



Source: IPPBM & MarkPlus Youth Anxiety & Desire Study, 2012

Unlike previous generations, today’s youth have many sources of information including both traditional media such as newspapers, free-to-air TV, magazines and radio as well as new Internet based media. Interestingly, we found that a strong majority (67.9%) prefer Internet based news sources such as Internet news websites, blogs and social media websites.

This shift to new Internet media allows youth access to peer-to-peer information about their friends and family. It also provides them with an outlet to voice their personal opinions about the world around them – allowing them not only to become consumers of information but also publishers.

CONSUMPTION OF ELECTRONICS GOODS

If there is one particular thing that distinguishes youth lifestyle in the present era from those two to three decades ago: it is technology. Before the nineties, the youth lifestyle did not include technology devices.

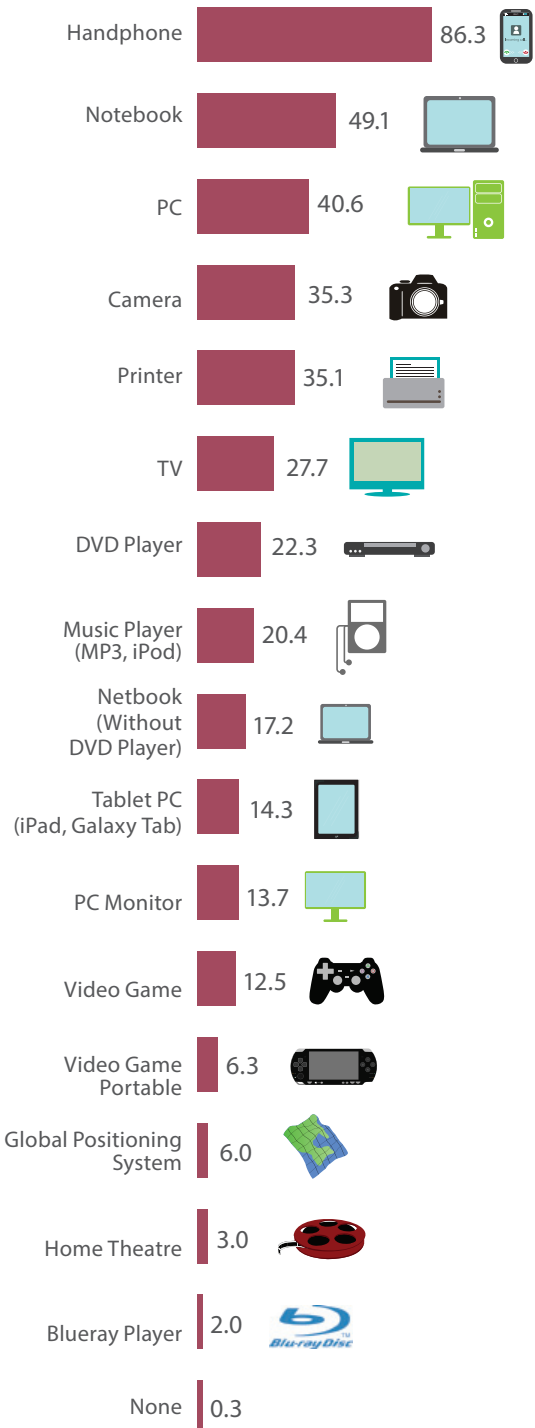
Although the use of PCs or personal computers in the homes of the era began in the eighties, however, it was out of necessity, not as a part of a lifestyle trend. The use of computers was limited to simple tasks such as typing, creating a database, making presentations or playing games. The clunky nature of PCs of that era with large monitor display tube, board keyboard, CPU box, not to mention the added stabilizer device, made it impractical to carry anywhere.

In the early nineties pager or beeper became the first phenomenal product that was an actual lifestyle gadget. Though initially the product was widely used among physicians or the salesman who needs mobility as they work on the road, however, eventually these products soon became a trend among young people. Simply wearing a pager at the waist or simply revealing its chain only became a fashion statement among youth.

Not long afterwards, came the period of handheld cellular phones in mid-nineties. Although the first cell phones were ridiculously large with a shape and size of a brick with an extended antenna on top, but at that time, young people were very proud when seen by their peers carrying a cell phone. Now, owning advanced smart phone devices is more common, even some elementary school children own them.

However with technology products becoming more affordable, sophisticated, easier to use with smaller size and with more user friendly interfaces, an even more advanced era of technology gadgets has emerged. Before there used to be long lines of students lining up to use computers at the school's free computer center, but now things are different. You can see the long lines have been replaced by groups of students on campus carrying laptops, notebooks, netbooks, tablet PCs, iPads, Smartphone and other electronic devices.

ELECTRONIC GADGETS THAT YOUTH OWN



Source: IPPBM & MarkPlus Youth Anxiety & Desire Study, 2012

Our Youth Anxiety and Desire survey results show that 86.3% of youth in our survey own mobile phones, 49.1% own notebooks, 40.6% own desktop PCs, 17.2% own netbooks and 14.3% own tablet computers. It is interesting to see that notebooks are now more popular than PCs and that adoption of tablet computers is so high.

This adoption of gadgets has also gone hand in hand with adoption of more connectivity. Internet technology has also progressed to become more cheap and accessible. People can access the Internet through free Internet access in their schools or office or affordable terrestrial or mobile broadband at home costing less than RM 100 a month.

Technology has become a lifestyle! Technology products are no longer seen as a luxury but an everyday necessity driven by a constant need to connect among young people.

TECHNOLOGY AND THE YOUNG GENERATION



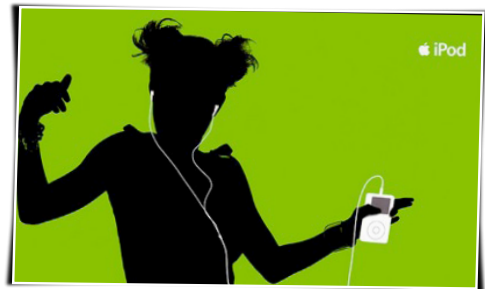
If you listen to the discussion of youth nowadays, you will often find that their discussions are on the on the topic of technology, whether it be the launch of a new gadget, debates on the benefit or functionality of the gadget, and following all feature updates are an integrated part of the daily conversation of young people now. Youth – be they still school students or young professional office workers – tend to be passionate when they talk about technology products and their latest gadgets.

At first, the producers of these technology and gadget products do not seem too focused in targeting young people. But now there is no doubt, young people are the largest markets technology products gadgets.

This can be seen when Apple's iPod was launched several years ago. When other electronic products positioned themselves as high quality products for well-off executives, iPod went in and specifically targeted fashionable trendsetter youth with a product with cool design features and an intriguing ad campaign featuring dancing silhouettes wearing earphones.

The success of the iPod was the precursor for even more cool Apple products such as the iPhone, iPad and Mac Air.

THE ICONIC IPOD AD



It is the nature of young people that they have the ability to adapt to more flexible than adults. Thus, young children more quickly adapt to new things. In digital technology there is an operating system called the platform.

Typically, adults that are used to one platform will be reluctant to learn a new platform. This is why people who grew up using Microsoft Windows will be reluctant to switch to Apple's Operating System. However, this is not true of younger people. Younger people tend to be more flexible in adapting to new things. In fact, they tend to become quickly bored with the same old products. This is precisely why they like to try things that are new, particularly those related to technology.

Young people even have their own labels to classify people who do not keep up with technology: outdated. Adults are among those most often bestowed this label.

Youth on the other hand are most adept in keeping up with technology advancement. Via self-learning or through purchase of book and magazines that discuss how to use various software and gadgets. These types of books are quite popular these days.

So if we do not want to be called outdated by young people, we ourselves have to keep up with the trend of gadgets and technology that young people are using. Companies must also consider developing a “younger” version of their products to appeal to their youth market.



CONSUMPTION OF FINANCIAL SERVICES

Financial services – whether a safe place to save money or an appropriately structured loan to finance changes in lifestyle or to further education – play an integral role in building the lives of young people.

CIMB YOUTH AD



Financial service companies look at youth as potential customers. Providing young clients with financial services at the right times in their lives and with the right support network can help them improve their livelihoods in the short term, and position themselves for more sustainably productive lives in the long term.

There are four main areas where youths have a need for financial services to support their modern lifestyle:

a) Saving.

Savings can help youth manage their consumption and their emergency, educational, basic family needs and also help them cover the costs of such important life events as marriages and funerals.

Our Youth Anxiety and Desire study show that a major of young people do save a significant amount of their pocket money and/or salary every month. A majority of youth in our



Youth Anxiety and Desire study (89.2%) own a saving account with a major bank. Many youth in our study (21%) also save under the government's *Skim Simpanan Pendidikan Nasional (SSPN)*.

Youth seek out savings services that ensure convenient access, provide relative security and liquidity in case of emergencies, and help them accumulate their funds through reasonable interest rates.

b) Insurance.

Approximately 26% of youth in our study also own insurance policies to protect them in cases of emergencies or illness. They also spend close to 2% of their expenditure on insurance on a monthly basis.

c) Credit Cards.

Credit cards are an important form of payment for today's modern world. Not only are they useful as a form of consumption credit, but credit cards is also useful for such things as online payments, guarantees in hotels, and in emergency situations.



Approximately 9% of youth in our Youth Anxiety and Desire study own credit cards. These youth own credit cards for practical purposes. However, though useful and practical, credit card can also endanger youth to quickly amass large amounts of debt far beyond their financial ability to repay.

d) Loans.

Many Malaysian youth have taken out educational loans under the PTPTN scheme. Since 1997, through this scheme, the Malaysian government has provided over 1.9 million loans to students totaling RM 43.6 billion. Loans also help youth to finance large expenditure items. Many Malaysian

youth, especially older ones (i.e., those above 25), take up loans to buy vehicles, build homes, or start a business as they transition through various life phases. This tendency also shows in the numbers - 1.74% of the expenditure budget of youth in our study is allocated to paying various loans.

CONCLUSION

Individual youths have money to spend, though not much. As such, a good percentage of their spending goes to necessities like food expenditures, transportation, and telecommunication services, with a smaller percentage going to less essential items like apparel, travel and entertainment. Youth also save their money to purchase higher value items such as electronic goods and motorcycles.

To capture the youth market, companies must adjust their offering to youth's unique mobile and connected lifestyle. Developing a product that meets their need and lifestyle is the key to be successful in becoming a favorite youth brand.

CHAPTER 4: UNDERSTANDING YOUTH LIFESTYLE

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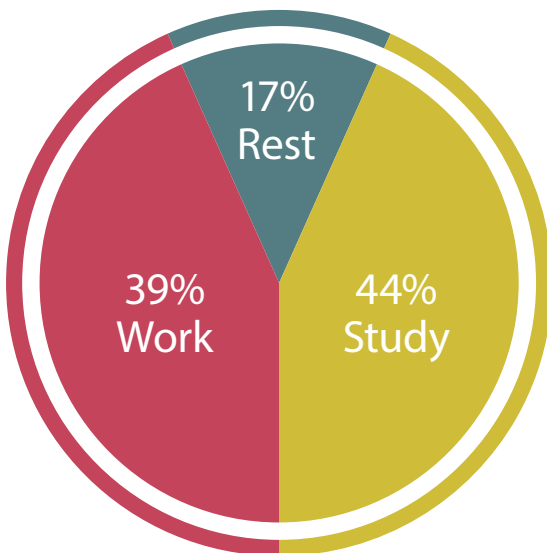
CHAPTER 4: UNDERSTANDING YOUTH LIFESTYLE

Understanding the youth lifestyle (i.e., their way of life and style of living), is crucial to understand how youth function on a daily basis. In this chapter, we will look at how youth spend their time and analyze the activities they do in their daily lives.

HOW THEY SPEND THEIR TIME

Malaysian youth live a balanced life consisting of work, study and rest. This balanced lifestyle allows them to balance their productive time where these youth study or work during their leisure time whereas some of these youth relax and take a rest.

PROPORTION OF TIME SPENT AT WORK VS STUDY VS REST



Source: IPPBM & MarkPlus Youth Anxiety & Desire Study, 2012

The figure above says a lot of things. One that jumps out immediately is that Malaysian youth are overall a very tenacious and hardworking group. They spend over 70% of their time in productive activities. The majority of their time is spent studying and preparing themselves for the future.

This shows the willingness of Malaysian youths to upgrade their skills through continuous learning.

We find this hardworking behavior almost similar across age groups. Of course younger students would spend more time studying than working and older professionals commit more time working than studying. However in all age groups, there is a balance between the three elements. Many STPM and College students spend time working on part time jobs to earn extra spending money. Vice versa, many older professional youth are also spending time furthering their studies.

WORKING

Youth's contribution in the workplace is real. Youth are the drivers of innovation in a country both as employees within the company and as independent entrepreneurs. Corporate success stories like those of Ganesh Bangah (who developed his innovative idea of "Money Online" into the largest Internet company in Southeast Asia) or SM Nasiruddin (who grew his father's legacy company into a world class auto and property conglomerate) are living proof of the power of youth in the workplace.

The younger generation's unique ability to think out of the box and introduce new ideas is quite valuable to employers. What they need is the chance to show their abilities. If given the chance, Malaysian youth are more than ready to take on more responsibilities in the workplace.

STUDYING

As the Malaysian economy transforms from a focus agriculture and resource industries to one driven by services industries, Malaysia will require more skilled and highly educated workers.

Go and take a walk through the campus of one of the many public sector or private sector universities found in and around Kuala Lumpur and you will see that many students. However, take a closer look and you will notice that a good percentage of these students are from other countries (especially Iran, Arab Saudi, and Indonesia) who flocked to Malaysia to attend university. Indeed over 90,000 international students come to Malaysia to study at any given year. Increasingly, these foreign students



make up the “bread and butter” of the education industry in Malaysia.

In contrast to the enthusiasm shown by foreign students, a good majority of young local Malaysian students have decided to skip attending college. Indeed, not enough Malaysian youth are getting their diploma and bachelor’s degree. While 68% of youth that are of secondary school age attend secondary school, only 36% of youth of tertiary education age attend college/university. This means that there are only approximately 1 million local Malaysian youth taking their diploma and bachelor’s degree at any given year, barely enough to add to the number of skilled workers in the country. (Note: The number of skilled workers in Malaysia currently makes up less 25% of the labor force, whereas the Malaysian government’s stated objective is to have 37% skilled workforce by 2015).



Studies show that education is a positive investment for a youth’s future. Indeed, the pay of a worker with only an SPM degree is indeed much lower than a worker that has a diploma or bachelor’s degree. The more highly educated are Malaysian youth, the better will their future be and the more will they contribute to Malaysian society.

REST AND RELAX

Malaysian youth are very hard-working, spending approximately 30% of their time to rest and relax. This means that Malaysian Youth only spend about 30 hours a week on leisure activities – mostly during evenings and on the weekends.

As such, Malaysian youth cherish this limited “lepak” time by actively engaging in a variety of activities such as surfing the Internet, reading books, enjoying music, eating out with friends and family, going out to the cinema and for sports, etc. Such activities are not entirely unproductive, as spending time with friends and family actually helps youth to build their social networks and also unwinds the stress accumulated from working and studying.





As we can see at the chart on the next page, the two most favorite youth activities are browsing the Internet and reading alone – which are both solitary activities. These are the most common ways that young people spend their free time.

Though less popular than solitary activities, group leisure activities such as eating out, watching movies, doing sports, karaoke and travelling are also quite popular.

Youth do these group activities together with their friends and family – both of which are important for young people. Notice in the chart above that spending time eating out with family is still a more popular activity than spending time eating out or chatting with friends.

This goes to show that many Malaysian Youth still put more importance to family compared to friends.

SURFING THE INTERNET

The most favorite way youth like to spend their leisure time is on the Internet. Whether it's chatting online with friends, reading Internet news sites, commenting postings on Facebook and Friendster, or updating their own blog or Facebook site. The Internet provides youth with a tool for leisure.

Internet sites like BHarian.com.my and Star Online and even Malaysiakini.com are one of the favorites among youth as many seek to be updated on the latest news. But news is not the only information that youth seek. Many also simply want to find entertainment which they find on websites like youtube.com. Many also seek interactions with their friends and family which is provided through social media websites like Facebook.

They access these websites through various electronic gadgets. Among the youth in our study, 77.5% access the Internet through laptops, 48.2% through mobile phones/smart phones, and 30.7% through PCs.

And if you have ever seen a young person watching TV, you will see that they oftentimes will simultaneously use a variety of gadgets. It is not

uncommon to have youth today simultaneously watching news on TV, browsing the Internet on his/her laptop while texting their friends by using their mobile phone. Multitasking is a unique aspect of youth technological habit.

Our Youth Anxiety and Desire study also found that the majority of youth in our study participate in online social networks. Grey Review Social Web Journal reported that Facebook has over 12 million Malaysian users, whereas Twitter has over 1.1 million Malaysian users.

The social networking trend is becoming more pervasive. Online social networks websites are used to build relationships, communicate, share information, multimedia contents and to increase their social networks for personal or business purposes.

Today, there are hundreds of social networking sites operating. Some of them are popular in certain countries while others have global reach. Some of these sites are targeted at very specific interest groups while others are general in nature.

Social networking sites allow young people to maintain and grow their network of friends. Being online, young people can maintain ties to a lifetime of friends and acquaintances, as well as make new friends.

Social networking sites offer the opportunity for young people to connect with their existing friends who may have moved to another city or another country. Many youths also state their desire to meet and communicate with new people through these sites.

As youth's social networks grow, they can either become a dormant network of weak ties or an active network of strong friendships. The more active and intertwined a young person's network, the stronger is his/her community of friends. These friendship communities are indeed very valuable for a young person's future. Much more than one might initially think. As a young person grows up and enters the business world, their friendship communities will transform into their business network.



Navigating the Internet

78.9



Read books/
magazine

58.8



Eating out
with family

53.7



Eating out
with friends or
couple

49.5



Chat with friends/
couple in the
virtual world

45.8



Sport with
friends

43.7



Attending
religious,
educational
events

43.1



Watching a
movie with
friends/couple

36.1



Express yourself
with friends

30.8



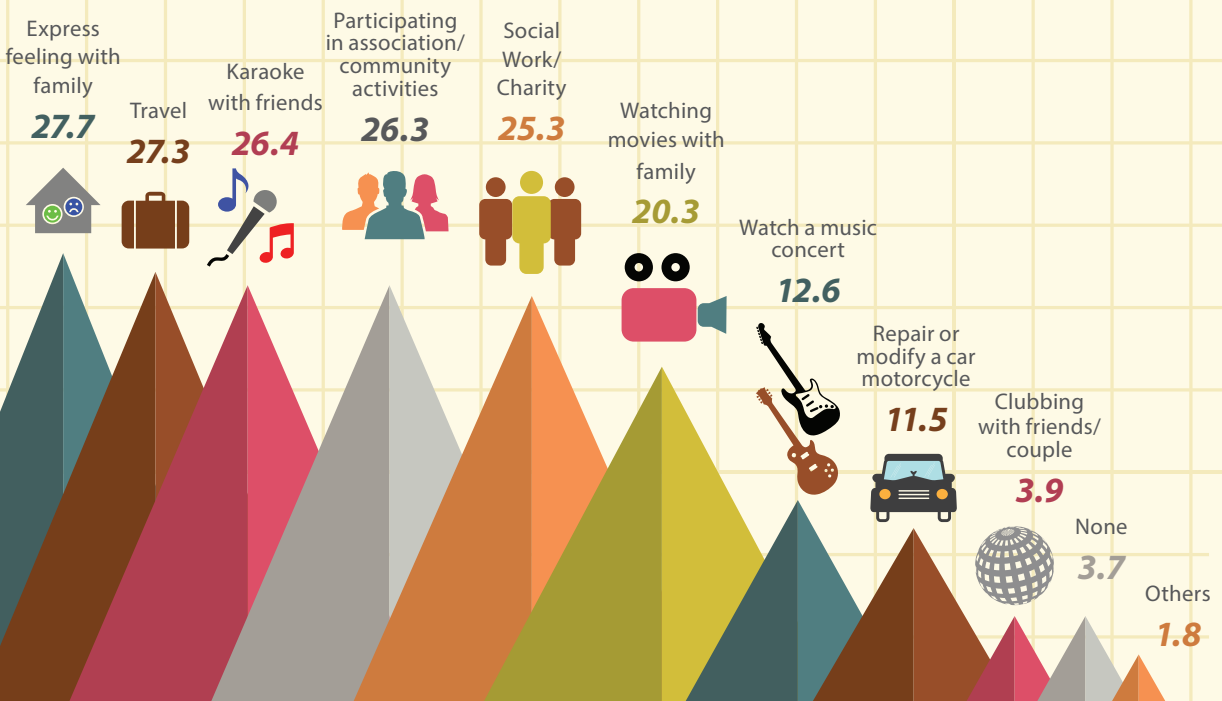
Play games at
home

28.9

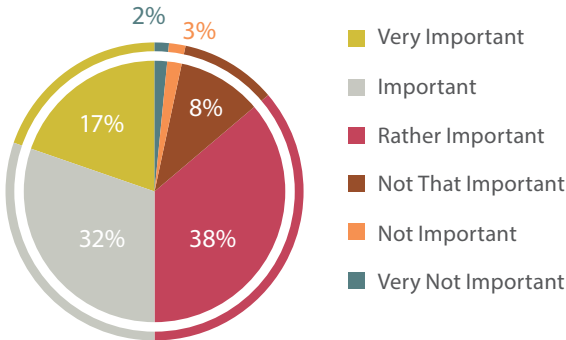




ACTIVITIES DURING LEISURE TIME



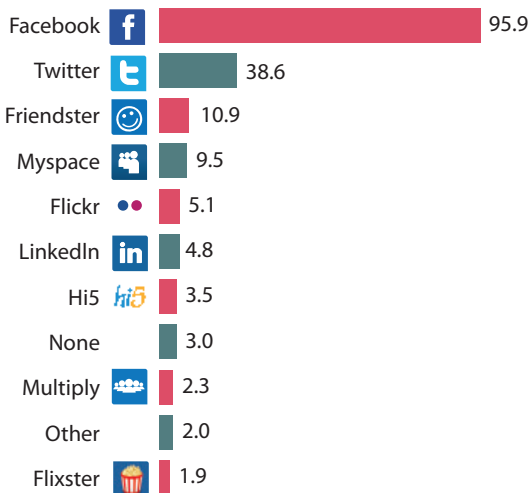
OPINION ON IMPORTANCE OF SOCIAL NETWORKS



Source: IPPBM & MarkPlus Youth Anxiety & Desire Study, 2012

Because of this, 49% of youth in our study have identified that social networks are important or very important in their lives, and though what they do online may seem trivial such as changing their status, uploading pictures and links, or commenting other people's status and postings. Online social networks provide an ongoing connection to a youth's personal networks. Youth's that actively use social media will never lose any friends – they will always have "weak links" to friends they may have made in kindergarten or events or during holidays.

SOCIAL MEDIA WEBSITES USAGE BY YOUTH



Source: IPPBM & MarkPlus Youth Anxiety & Desire Study, 2012

Some social networks are exclusive in nature such as LinkedIn, a very popular social network for business executives which allows connections between executives for their professional purposes. There are also general social networks are sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Friendster, MySpace, Blogger and many more which are used by a more diverse set of people.

Among these many social networking sites, Facebook and Twitter are two of the most popular amongst Malaysian Youth. This is reflected in our youth anxiety and desire study which found that over 95.9% of youths in the study have a Facebook account and some 38.6% have a Twitter account.

READING BOOKS & MAGAZINES

Reading is another one of Malaysia's favorite pastimes. Statistics provided by the Ministry of Arts, Culture, and Heritage showed that amongst Malaysians who read regularly, 77% of them prefer newspapers, 3% like to read magazines, 3% read books and 1.6% read comics.

And with more time on their hands, a higher proportion of youth are readers compared to their seniors. The 2005 National Library Survey which was done by the National Statistics Office of Malaysia showed that 55% of those aged 10 to 24, read books, compared to 39% within the 25 to 56 age bracket. Only 6% are those aged 57 and above.

A whole industry of media targeting youth has emerged on the back of this demand for youth oriented magazines and books. Many books, comics as well as magazines such as *Remaja*, *Hai* and *Seventeen* are made to specifically serving the demand of younger readers. Reading topics of interest for youth tend to be light with discussion youth fashion, lifestyle, movies, music, health, and relationship issues.

EATING OUT

Another favorite way for youth to spend their leisure time is eating out. In today's busy society, where many youth study or work far away from their home, eating outside is no longer a luxury



but has become a necessity. Whether in school or campus cafeterias, food courts, nasi kandar stalls, mamak stalls, fast food outlets or other restaurants, youth spend a significant amount of their monthly expenditure budget to eat out.

Youth also eat out as a form of recreation during the weekends. This is usually done together with their friends and family. Eating out with friends and family are the 3rd and 4th most favorite way youth spend their leisure time. 53.7% of youth regularly eat out with their families and 49.5% regularly eat out with their friends.

CHATTING WITH FRIENDS

For youth, spending time with friends is another favorite past time. 45.8% regularly spend time just talking or chatting with their friends while another 30.8% regularly spend time “expressing” their emotions to their friends.

For youth, communicating with friends and peer group are important, because they are considered as persons or groups who best understand and empathize with the things they are experiencing. Friend or peer group is needed as they search for identity, in the process of young people entering the gates of adulthood.

For someone who has once been young yourself, you must have remembered how “complicated” life was during this transition period. For them, there are many new things to explore, new activities to do and many new mysteries to solve. All of these create so many questions that need to be answered. With this, there is also the new burden of having parents and society who see young people as adults and “demand” that they behave like responsible adults.

At a time of transition like this, most young people need and seek for people who understand, feel and experience the same thing as them - people who can be invited to share in the “confusion” and can exchange information. Given this situation, it is no wonder that our Youth Anxiety and Desire study shows that Malaysian youth spend a lot of time with their friends.

Why, if you may ask, the reason of young people not to spend more time with their parents? Maybe

it’s because parents are judgmental and perceived to not understand youth needs and difficulties. Even if young people want to share their feelings and experiences with their parents, it would be rather difficult and awkward because oftentimes youth share their feelings and experiences on topics that are somewhat sensitive, such as sex for example.

So it’s no wonder that young people tend to be closer to their friends, social group, or what we call peer groups (or in today’s lingo: their “member”).

Usually these types of social groups are made up of people of similar age and have certain similarities in values and/or interest, which ultimately bind and unite them. Or this unity can also be due to general similarity in the peer group, such as the fact that they share the same school, classroom, college, housing complexes, hobbies and so forth.

Many parents are worried that their children have become closer to their peer groups than to their parents or other family members. When youth go through the age of puberty, they experience a transition from the family environment to the wider social environment. At this time, they begin to shift their dependence on their parents and rely more on their friends. But this is not to say that they have absolutely no need for their family.

As youth grow older, the role of the family does not disappear, but are reduced. Many protective parents would feel uneasy of this transition, especially during the teen years. For this reason, peer groups are often viewed with suspicion, especially if their child’s peer group is from a less than desirable family background. Moreover, peer groups are often blamed when a child fall into a habit of smoking, drug addiction, or other negative things.

Many parents are deeply concerned to their children’s exposure to their peer groups. Some even set to limit their children’s exposure to a select number of friends to ensure that they have the right kind of influence.

In any social group, there will be individuals who are more dominant, which usually gives a large influence on the DNA of the peer group itself. A group’s DNA can be positive or negative. On

the positive side, through the peer group young people can learn to socialize, learn to understand what the meaning of friendship, solidarity and tolerance. On the negative side, this group unity can easily morph into a negative “gang mentality” which results in bullying and ostracizing of outsiders.

This is why it is important for parents to channel their young children’s social need to positive groups. For example through participation in certain communities such as musical schools, dancing schools, martial arts clubs, arts clubs, sports clubs, “majlis belia”, or other interest based groups. Peer groups formed in such environments tend to be more positive (and productive) in nature.

PLAYING SPORTS

Try asking a young man, what are his hobbies. Then most likely he will mention the name of a sport – be it football, futsal, jogging, swimming or basketball.

Our Youth Anxiety and Desire study found that 43.7% of youth in the study regularly spend time playing sports with their friends. Also when asked who their favorite characters are, then in addition to emerging public figure names in entertainment such as music and movies, many of the names that appear are the names of athletes.

Badminton athletes such as Lee Chong Wei are most favored by young people, as well as other renowned athletes like squash champion Nicol David. These names show up in our survey again and again.

Their achievements in sports arenas, plus the frequency of media coverage and advertising has been the emergence of the star athletes which has only grown in popularity in the minds of young people. Meanwhile, if asked who the favorite foreign athletes, the respondents will answer the names of Lin Dan, Lionel Messi, Cristiano Ronaldo, Ronaldo, Fernando Torres, Rafael Nadal, Tiger Woods and others.

As you may have noticed, many of the names mentioned by our respondents were that of famous football players. Indeed football is a sport that most youth respondents in this study favored

– both by actively participating in the sport or by just simply watching the games on TV.

In addition to soccer and futsal, other sports which are favored by youth are basketball, badminton, and swimming. If the respondent answers are sorted based on their sex, football and futsal enthusiasts seem more masculine. Nearly half the male respondents said football or indoor soccer as their favorite sport. However, there also were some women respondents who claimed to love football, though only as a TV audience. For young women, their favorite sports are badminton, swimming, basketball and aerobics.

Physically, compared with adults, young people are still very athletic and vibrant. By law of nature, the more older we get, the more our physical ability, agility, and endurance will decrease. That is why senior athletes went on to become coaches because of their physical abilities in the field will lose the match against the new opponents who are always younger.

But it does not matter if it is grown up sports activities that would be abandoned. In fact many young people do not leave the habit of exercising after work. Just look at the youth workers who are still able to find time to exercise in their busy schedules.

Even at many offices, groups of young workers will get together to form sports clubs. These small clubs often hold the match between office, making the sports activity more challenging and competitive.

One of the most favorite sports among youth today is futsal. It is the natural evolution of the world’s most favorite sport of football. However, limitations in land and players have seen the larger football format transform into a compact version which is more urban friendly.

In urban areas, futsal is a favorite choice of young people. Now many futsal fields have emerged in parks and residential areas, replacing the less popular basketball fields which have lost its popularity over the last decade or so. Go to any of these futsal fields on the weekend, you will notice that they are really quite popular. Just look



at the queue of groups of employees or students who come and go. Futsal fields are also a favorite hangout for young people looking for afterhours or weekend activity with friends. Meeting new friends and broadening social networks can happen here.

In addition to futsal venues, many older professional youths choose to go to fitness centers or gyms. Unlike in the futsal as a group, the exercise that happens in a fitness center is more personal. But that does not mean no exercise done in groups.

But not only sports, many youth spend their free time on the evenings and on weekends to work out at a gym. If you go to one of the many gyms in any major Malaysian city, you will see packed aerobics classes. Whether pilates or yoga or taebo, aerobic classes are always crowded with participants. Followers of these classes are mostly women. Notice that men tend to concentrate more towards individualistic exercise routines such as running on the machine or lifting weights.

Whether in the indoor soccer field or at the gym, want to stay healthy is the main reason young people do sports. But some are doing it as a means of socialization and get-togethers with friends. Some are motivated to improve the appearance of the body.

Initial sports activities eventually drive many young people to eventually choosing to adopt a healthy lifestyle – which consists of not only enough sport but also enough rest and eating right. Typically, those that have made exercise into an everyday habit will eventually start keeping a healthy diet, reduce or even avoid smoking, and take enough time to rest every night.

WATCHING MOVIES

Going to the cinema is another favorite pastime for youth. Whether local productions, Asian films, or Western blockbusters, Malaysian youth love to go to their local cinema to catch the latest movie.

Going to the movies is a group activity. 36.1% of youth in our study regularly watch movies with their friends, whereas 20.3% watch movies with their family.

More than just simply entertaining, movies help youth dream big and widen their perspective. It helps youth picture places that they have never seen and envision careers that they would otherwise would never have imagined.

Movies are also a good way to spend with their family and friends during weekends. This is why most all cinemas are full with young people during the weekends.

GOING TO MUSIC CONCERTS

Over the last years, there has been a number of concerts in Kuala Lumpur. Some of the most popular ones include concerts by LMFAO, Justin Bieber and Avril Lavigne.

These concerts are an attraction for youth, especially those who love music. Concerts for the youth are a moment celebrating freedom as this maybe one of the few times they can be free to express themselves outside the confines of their family and school.

The history of youth and music goes far back in time. Youths are drawn to the idea of self expression that is provided by music and music events. Indeed concerts are effective magnets to attract thousands of youth to gather in one place so that they can be influenced via branding and product promotions.

Concerts are a very effective way to market to youth. Youth love music, to them music is a universal language, an expression of their dynamic soul. It is a fantastic tool to unite youths into a community.

Corporate sponsors like Digi, Maxis, and CIMB who support these music events understand this connection and uses music to try to build their own connection with the younger generation.

Of course there are many parties who argue that music can damage the moral of a nation's youth. This is why a lot of music concerts have recently been cancelled by the authorities.

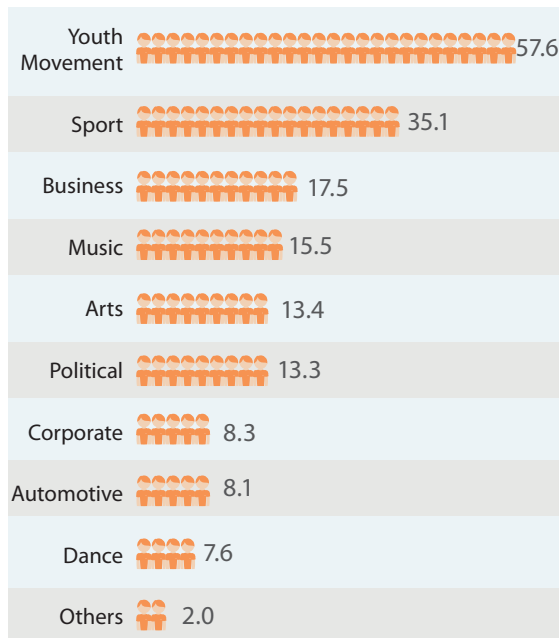


However, this opinion on the destructive nature of music is not entirely accurate. Music is simply a neutral tool that can be used for both positive and negative purposes. For this reason, musical events may be a very beneficial tool when used for a positive objective.

INVOLVEMENT IN CLUBS AND INTEREST COMMUNITIES

Interest Communities are social groups that shares common interest in a certain activity or hobby. Unlike peer groups which are smaller groups of friends, most interest communities are larger and less personal in nature. This is certainly true for some national organizations such as *Pandu Puteri Malaysia* or *Persatuan Pengakap Malaysia*.

Participation in interest communities and clubs



Source: IPPBM & MarkPlus Youth Anxiety & Desire Study, 2012

It is estimated that the nation's youth-serving organizations, such as the *Persekutuan Pengakap Malaysia* (PPM), *Pandu Puteri Malaysia* and others, serve more than 3 million youths each year.

Youth programs are developed with many goals. Some national organizations use their youth programs to instil a sense of nationalism and patriotism in youth. Some religious organizations use their youth programs to instil religious values through experiential learning. However, it can be said that the ultimate goal of a youth program is to achieve "youth engagement".

The long term nature of the program allows active learning to happen naturally through the activities. The best youth programs are not only fun and engaging but also helps participating youth develop and improve themselves.

Youth are attracted to join clubs and organizations as a way to channel their interests and aspirations and also a way to meet new people and develop their personal networks.

54.7% of youth say that they participate in such clubs or communities. Many young people join interest communities at their school. In most schools in Malaysia, youths can join extracurricular activities that best fit their interests. Outside the school, some of the most popular interest communities include youth movement activities and sports-related clubs.

CONCLUSION

Though close to 70% of Malaysian youth's time is spent at work or at school, these youth still have approximately 30 hours per week to spend on leisure activities. Of these 30 hours, we found that Malaysian Youth engage in plethora of activities ranging from solitary ones like surfing the Internet and reading alone to group activities such as eating out, playing sports, going to cinema and concerts.

This high level of activity among young Malaysians is a sign of their vitality and dynamism as well as their ability to manage their time to balance between productive activities and leisure activities.

**CHAPTER 5:
UNDERSTANDING THE
ANXIETIES & DESIRES
OF MALAYSIAN YOUTH**

5

CHAPTER 5: UNDERSTANDING THE ANXIETIES & DESIRES OF MALAYSIAN YOUTH

Each generation of Malaysian goes through a unique time history and a common set of experiences. These experiences shape their expectations, lifestyles, value systems, and influence their opinions, lifestyle and behaviours.

To reach out the youth in our country, decision makers and policy makers should try to understand not only their opinions, lifestyle, and behaviour but also the underlying values and psychology at the foundation of these behaviours.

GENERATIONAL INFLUENCES

One important aspect that we need to understand to truly comprehend our youth is the generational factor of their upbringing. Generational influences affect youth through the set of common experiences which the generation go through together.

The bulk of the youth discussed in this book come from two generations: Gen X (born between 1965-1977) and Gen Y (born after 1977). Each of these generations have gone through different experiences which influence the way their behavior and actions.

a) GEN X

Generation X (a.k.a Gen X) is defined by most experts as a category of people born between the mid-60s and 70s and is in the 35-50 age range as of 2012. This generation reached adulthood during turbulent economic times in Malaysia. As such, success for this generation has been less certain with many of them facing hardships during the 1999 Asian Crisis and 2008 Global Recession.

Gen X individuals tend to be responsible people and value family first as a result of their experience earlier in their lives. As youth, Gen X individuals had

to grow up quickly as many of them were subject to working mothers in dual income households. They had taken greater responsibility for raising themselves and tend to be more independent than Gen Y individuals.

Gen X are born-achievers. To Gen X individuals, multiculturalism and thinking globally are simply the norm. They have experienced the increasing impact of personal computers and produced the 1990's dot.com stars as well as the economic boom (and bust) that followed. On the downside, Gen X individuals tend to be pessimistic, sceptical, disillusioned with almost everything, and are very questioning of conventionality.

In our Youth Anxiety and Desire survey, we found that The Gen X youth are mostly working executives with families. They have a higher income level than the younger Gen Ys and are more conservative in their worldview.

b) GEN Y

Generation Y (a.k.a. Gen Y, Millennial) is defined by most experts as a category of people born between 1977 and 1994 and are in the 18-35 age range as of 2012. They are children of Baby Boomers and their numbers are quite large – the largest generation of Malaysians in history.

This generation grew up in a time of immense and fast-paced change in Malaysia including a time of economic growth, low unemployment, increasing numbers of dual-income households, significant respect for ethnic and cultural diversity, heightened social and environmental awareness, and computers in the home and schools.

Gen Y individuals are well grounded. They were born into a technological, electronic, and wireless society with global boundaries becoming more transparent. They are accustomed to a diverse universe where anything seems possible.

In our Youth Anxiety and Desire survey, Gen Y youths are mostly still in school and university. A small proportion has entered the working world as staff. As such, their income levels are still limited. We also found that most of Gen Y in our study hold conservative worldviews and place their religion and family very highly in their set of life priorities.

PSYCHOGRAPHIC PORTRAIT

Generational differences aside, our study found that there are significant psychographic differences amongst Malaysian Youth. Using a simple psychographic tool, we tried to measure the degree of conservatism in Malaysian Youth's attitude towards religion, towards social values and towards economic freedom.

In terms of religion, we asked the respondents whether they felt "religion is very important in their life" & "whether they always obey their religious duties" or, on the other hand, they felt that "religious beliefs are important, but not the most important thing in their life" & "they have yet to properly perform the duties of my religion perfectly".

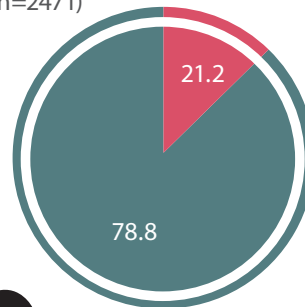
Next, in terms of social values, we asked the respondents whether they believed in traditional values such as collaboration ("gotong royong") and kinship ("kekeluargaan") and that "the interests of the community is more important than personal interests" or, on the other hand, they believed more in "modern values such as freedom and individualism" and that "the rights of the individual are of the utmost importance".

Finally, in terms of economic freedom, we asked the respondents whether they believed in "Malaysia's current economic system based the New Economic Policy" and that "the government has an important role in the development of the Malaysian economy" or, on the other hand, they preferred to have "Malaysia's economy to be based competition" and to have "the government provides opportunities to the private sector to develop Malaysia's economy".

These selected statements provide the respondents with a choice of polar opposite positions regarding religion, social values and Malaysia's economic system. This tool allowed the respondents to define their own psychographic profile based on their agreement to a set of statements. The resulting analysis was quite interesting.

YOUTH ATTITUDES TOWARDS RELIGION

Total (n=2471)



male (n=1030)

77.8

22.2



female (n=1432)

79.5

20.5

15-17 years old (n=460)

78.5

21.5

18-21 years old (n=744)

80.2

19.8

22-29 years old (n=1141)

77.8

22.2

30-39 years old (n=113)

79.6

20.4

- Religion is very important in life
- Religious belief are important, but not the most important

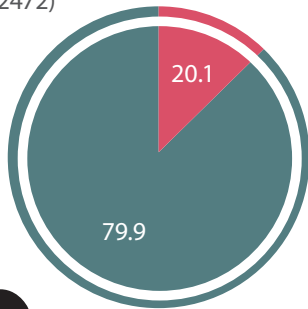
Source: IPPBM & MarkPlus Youth Anxiety & Desire Study, 2012

With regards to youth attitudes towards religion, we have found that religion plays a very important role in the lives of the majority of our young people (78.8%). This attitude is spread equally among both genders and across age groups.



YOUTH ATTITUDES TOWARDS SOCIAL VALUES

Total (n=2472)



male (n=1030)



female (n=1433)



15-17 years old (n=461)



18-21 years old (n=744)



22-29 years old (n=1141)



30-39 years old (n=113)

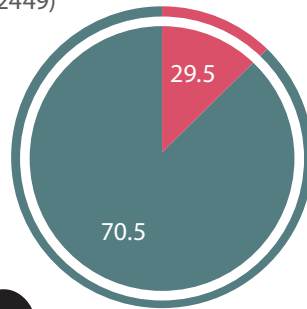


I believe in traditional values

I believe in modern values

YOUTH ATTITUDES TOWARDS ECONOMIC FREEDOM

Total (n=2449)



male (n=1023)



female (n=1417)



15-17 years old (n=449)



18-21 years old (n=740)



22-29 years old (n=1134)



30-39 years old (n=113)



Prefer NEP-NEP (New Economic Policy, NEP)

Prefer open-market

Source: IPPBM & MarkPlus Youth Anxiety & Desire Study, 2012

Source: IPPBM & MarkPlus Youth Anxiety & Desire Study, 2012

Next regarding youth attitudes towards social values, we found that most Malaysian youth still uphold their traditional values. This belief becomes stronger as the youth grow older and is slightly stronger amongst females than males.

Lastly, regarding youth attitudes on economic freedom, we found that a majority (71%) of youth prefer the current New Economic Policy compared to open market competition. This attitude is dominant among older youth above the age of 22.

In summary, what we found was overall, many of the youths in our study were quite conservative in their attitudes towards religion, social values and economic freedom. The breakdown was as such: 78.8% of youth in our study were religious conservatives, 79.9% were social conservatives and 70.5% were economic conservatives.

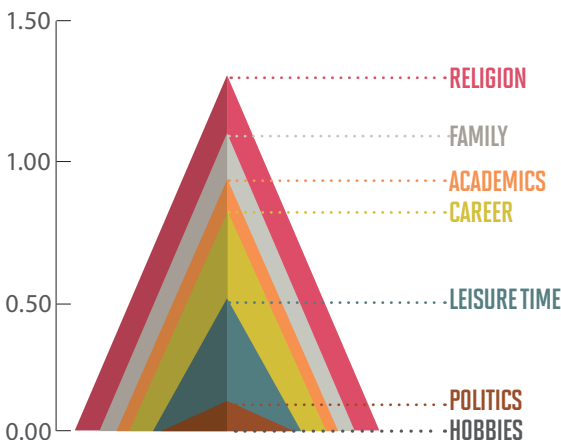
Youth's generally conservative stance on these three crucial issues is quite a surprise given the general opinion that globalization and the Internet have made Malaysian Youth to become more liberal and free-thinking than their seniors. However, our study seems to show that many Malaysian Youth are actually quite traditionalists in their views of religion, social values and support for the New Economic Policy.

YOUTH NEEDS AND WANTS

Needs and wants describe the priorities in life that people seek to meet. Young people have many needs that must be met as well as wants that they would like to be met.

When our Youth Anxiety and Desire survey asked respondents about their needs and wants in life, we got some interesting answers. In terms of life priorities, we found that many Malaysian youth put priorities on their religion and family beyond the need of education, career and free time.

WERE ARE THE PRIORITIES IN YOUR LIFE AT THIS POINT

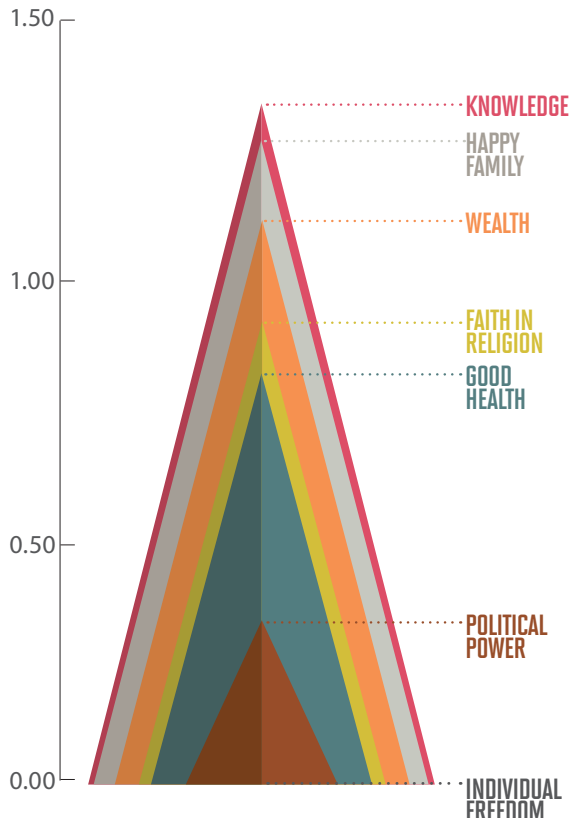


Source: IPPBM & MarkPlus Youth Anxiety & Desire Study, 2012

Whereas in terms of wants for their life, Malaysian youth in our study want knowledge, a happy family and wealth as their top 3 wants.

It is interesting that youth in our study chose "knowledge" as the number one want in their list. This is an indication that many Malaysians want a better education for themselves and value knowledge higher than wealth. Most likely they realize that education is a leveler because it enhances a person's ability to maximize their talents, realize life goals with greater foundation of cognitive and mental skills. It amplifies everyone's potential - elite and disadvantaged alike. Closing the literacy gap, the numeracy gap, or the technology gap across all of society gives the previously disadvantaged population a better chance to compete for success in seeking employment or creating other economic and social benefits for themselves and their families.

WHAT DO YOU WANT IN LIFE?



Source: IPPBM & MarkPlus Youth Anxiety & Desire Study, 2012



YOUTH PERCEPTION AND EXPECTATIONS

We also asked respondents of our survey about their perceptions of the quality of their current life and their expectations for the future. We asked them to rate the quality of life across 4 dimensions: Social life, Professional Life, Family Life, and Personal Life.

What we found was quite interesting. As it turns out, Malaysian youth in our survey are quite content with the quality of their current life.

63.4% of Malaysian Youth in our survey rated their social life as good or very good. 55.4% rated their professional life as very good. 83.0% rated their family life to be good or very good. Similarly, 67.8% rated their personal life to be good or very good.

PERCEPTION ON THE QUALITY OF YOUR CURRENT LIFE

SOCIAL LIFE



CAREER



FAMILY



PERSONAL FREEDOM



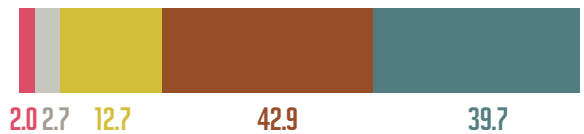
■ VERY BAD ■ BAD ■ FAIR ■ GOOD ■ VERY GOOD

Source: IPPBM & MarkPlus Youth Anxiety & Desire Study, 2012

Similarly, when asked about their expectations for their lives in 10 years, the Malaysian youth in our study were quite optimistic. 82.6% expects a good or very good social life, 92.4% expects a good or very good professional life, 93.8% expect a good or very good family life and 86.8% expect a good or very good personal life. This shows that overall Malaysian youth are actually quite optimistic about their prospects in the future.

EXPECTATIONS FOR QUALITY OF LIFE IN THE FUTURE

SOCIAL LIFE



CAREER



FAMILY



PERSONAL FREEDOM



■ VERY BAD ■ BAD ■ FAIR ■ GOOD ■ VERY GOOD

Source: IPPBM & MarkPlus Youth Anxiety & Desire Study, 2012

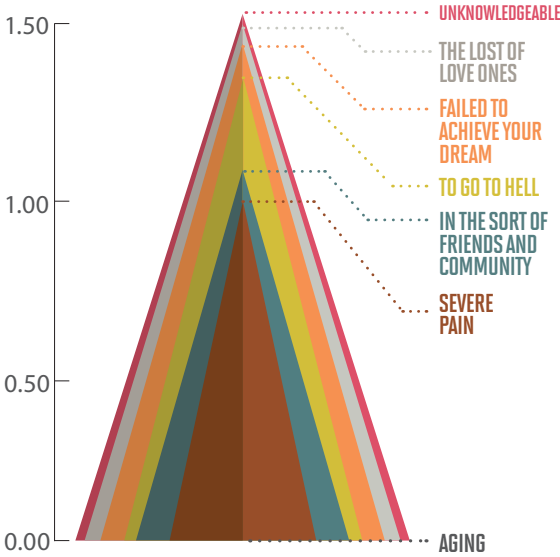
YOUTH ANXIETY AND DESIRES

When asked about their anxieties and desires, youth surveyed for the Youth Anxiety and Desire study mentioned several key fears. The top among them is "going to hell". Second is "losing people they love". The third highest fear is "failure in achieving my dream & being poor".

In terms of anxieties, Malaysian youth in our study say that their number one fear is to be unknowledgeable, to lose loved ones, and to fail in life (become poor).



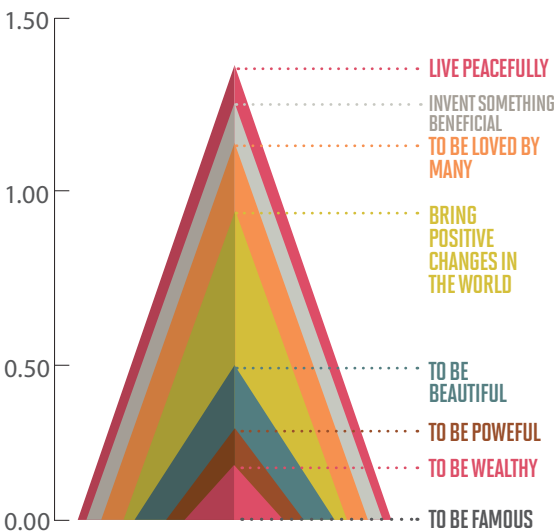
WHAT ARE YOUR ANXIETIES OF IN THIS LIFE?



Source: IPPBM & MarkPlus Youth Anxiety & Desire Study, 2012

When asked about what they desire and dream of, the Malaysian youth that we surveyed said that “living peacefully” was their #1 desire. Second was to “invent/create something beneficial”. Third was to be “loved by many”.

WHAT ARE YOUR DESIRE IN LIFE?



Source: IPPBM & MarkPlus Youth Anxiety & Desire Study, 2012

Notice that being wealthy and famous are ranked #6 and #7 top desires respectfully. This shows that the majority of Malaysian youth in our study shun the material drive for gold and glory in exchange for a peaceful life surrounded by people they love.

This lack of desire for wealth and fame is echoed by other youths across the world. A global youth study entitled “The Truth About Youth” done in May 2011 by McCann Worldwide found that when asked what their top 3 desires, only 22% of youths’ mentioned that it was to be rich whereas only 6.3% mentioned that it was to be famous.

Furthermore, the top 4 desires in this worldwide study of youth were to maintain good health (40%), to be successful in their chosen career (40%), meet their soul mate (36%) and take care of their families (34%).

CONCLUSION

Overall, our study of Youth Anxiety and Desire in Malaysia has found that the youth in our study were considerably religious and family driven. They also tend to desire a peaceful and happy life, not one full of wealth and fame. This may very well be a reflection of the general attitude amongst the wider youth population in Malaysia in their life priorities.

When we asked the youth in the study about their needs & wants as well as their anxieties & desires, what we found was quite interesting. As it turns out to be “lack of knowledge” is their #1 anxiety and that “knowledge” is their #1 want. These numbers show that many Malaysian youth secretly want to have a higher level education to improve their lives. They are insecure with their current level of knowledge/education and thus predict a bad future for themselves.

**CHAPTER 6:
PUTTING IT ALL
TOGETHER: KEY
INSIGHTS ON
MALAYSIAN YOUTH**

6

CHAPTER 6: PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER: KEY INSIGHTS ON MALAYSIAN YOUTH

Understanding youth can be a difficult task. However, through a combination of statistics, data, observations, analysis, and stories, throughout this book we have slowly built up a comprehensive profile of Malaysian youth anxieties and desires.

This final chapter will summarize the key findings of our study of youth anxiety and desires into 8 key insights about youth in Malaysia.

8 KEY INSIGHTS ON MALAYSIAN YOUTH

1. MALAYSIAN YOUTH ARE RELIGIOUS

In the 2012 Anxiety and Desire Survey we found that in fact many Malaysian Youth are quite religious in their outlook in life. Indeed, we found that religion forms a very important part of youth's anxieties and desires.

For example when asked about what are their priorities in life, 41.1% of youth in our study mentioned that the most important thing in their life is religion. Hence, youth in our study prioritizes their religion above their friends, family, and personal wealth and fame.

Such strong religious convictions among the youth participants of our study may be the result of strong religious upbringing in families and in schools. This seems to be particularly true amongst Malaysian Muslim youth. A comparative study of Malaysian and Indonesian Muslim youth values dreams and ideals done by the Merdeka Institute found that 88.2% of Muslim youths in Malaysia are brought up in homes that they consider very or rather religious. As a result, many of these youth themselves have adopted the strong religious beliefs of their parents.

The same study by Merdeka Institute found that 50.9% of Malaysian Muslim youths often or always

pray 5 times a day, 87.6% often or always fast during Ramadhan, and 27% approve of the practice of polygamy¹.

But strong religious beliefs are not exclusive among Malay youth alone. We found that Chinese and Indian youths in our study were also similarly religious. 59.5% of Chinese and 79.5% of Indian youths in our study felt that religion was the most important aspect of their lives and that they almost always fulfilled their religious duties.

For youth, religion is also more than just a statement of spirituality and belief but religion also provides a common platform for youth to congregate and find a community. Many youth are actively involved in religious activity whether it is in their mosque or church or temple or in other youth religious groups.

2. MALAYSIAN YOUTH TEND TO BE CONSERVATIVE

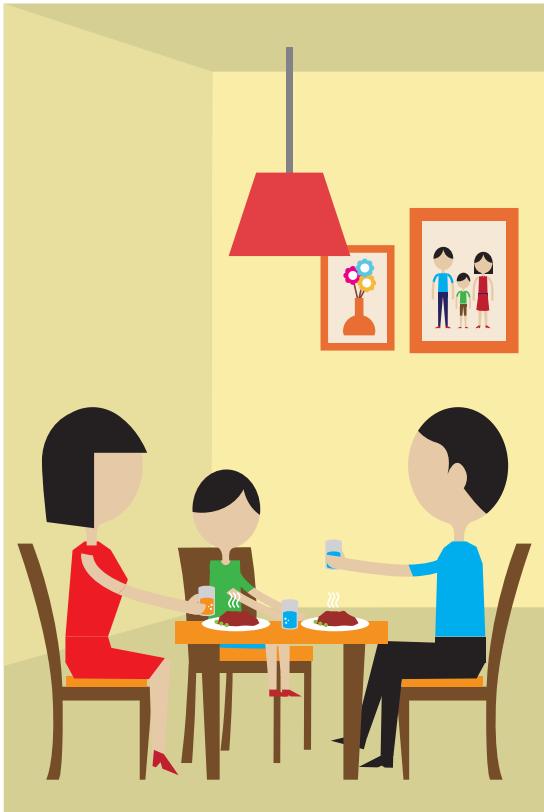
Beyond the sphere of religion, Malaysian youth also have a tendency to be conservative on matters pertaining to social values and Malaysia's current economic systems.

A strong majority (79.9%) of Malaysian youth in our study preferred traditional values like cooperation (gotong royong) and kinship (kekeluargaan) over modern values like personal freedom and individualism. This shows that a good majority of our youth are still respectful of traditional values.

In terms of economic systems, the majority (70.5%) of Malaysian youth in our study preferred the current New Economic Policy and strong government involvement in the economy over a more competitive merit-based economic system and more opportunities for the private sector to contribute in the economy. This shows their support for the economic policies of the government.

These numbers seem to indicate that the majority of youth in our study are not ready for any significant changes in government policy and indeed support the current government's conservative approach to social and economic relations in Malaysia.

¹ More surprisingly, Merdeka Institute found more than 70% of Malaysian Muslim youth in the study want the Quran to replace the Federal Constitution of Malaysia and 71.5% support the implementation of cutting off hands as punishment for thieves.



3. MALAYSIAN YOUTH ARE FAMILY ORIENTED

In our survey, young respondents were asked to rate their favorite activities. Of the various things mentioned, eating with the family activities are the activities most favoured by young people.

But indeed instances of eating together in families are “rare occasions” due to changes in modern lifestyles. Young people are increasingly preoccupied with the demands of study and activities after school or college, while both their parents are busy working. Congestion and a home location which is a distance away from the city center makes it difficult to have all family members gather at the house for dinners together every night.

Because of the busy schedule during weekdays, the weekend has become the most likely time for all family members to be able to spend time together. For most people, the weekend is family time. Some families leniently allow children to spend their time from Friday evening to Saturday night with their friends. However, many families make it mandatory

to spend Sundays together. For young families or newlyweds, Sunday is usually also a day of home visits to parents or in-laws.

Gatherings to eat together with family during the weekend are eagerly awaited. Places to eat with family no longer have to always mean at home. Eating places such as food court, restaurant or cafés have become popular venues for families to gather. Malls, shopping centers, city walks, city squares, town squares or other similar places also provide alternatives for families to spend their time together.

Malls have become the epicenter of city living. When at the mall, families will not only eat together but also go shop together and do activities together. Our Youth Anxiety and Desire survey also found that movies with the family are one of the favorite activities which young people like to do on their leisure time. Cinemas are often found within a mall or shopping centers. So after the meal, the family gathering can be followed by watching a movie in the same place.

But spending family day together does not always mean going to the mall. Many families choose to spend together at local parks or even just spend time at home.

Youths view their relationship with their family as an important priority in their lives. But the nature of the relationship between children and parents nowadays, there has been a significant change. It is no longer the same as the olden days when parents were seen as a more authoritative and disciplinarian figure.

Nowadays a parent’s relationships with their small and even older children are close, warm, familiar, and horizontal. More and more parents are proud when told that their relationship with their children is like that of best friends.

This is quite obvious if you go to a typical mall on a Saturday afternoon. If you go, try observing a typical family on their day off. Notice their body language. Maybe you will see a boy or a girl who runs to embrace her mother or father. The child persuades his father to buy something by jokingly putting his arm around his father’s embrace



– forgetting for a moment that he is actually supposed to treat grown-ups with more respect. His father laughs at his child’s behaviour.

A simple observation like this one is effective to show how familial relationships have indeed become more intimate. Notice how the body language between parent and child is so friendly and informal. Such informal relationships are a new trend where parents do not hesitate to be treated as friends by their children.

4. MALAYSIAN YOUTH ARE DYNAMIC CONSUMERS

Young people today grow up in a dynamic society, where their busy and mobile lifestyles are portrayed in their everyday spending and activities.

Most young people get their money from parents, although a few also earn it from working. As noted, we estimate that on average young people earn some RM1729 a month and spend RM943 a month on items such as food, communication, entertainment and transportation. The main expenditure of young people is not far from the food and beverage. Young people tend to like food and soft drinks are affordable and practical and therefore would not be surprised if their favorite place to shop is the supermarket and convenience store, where they can find a variety of foods and beverages with ease at a relatively cheap price. In addition, in several major cities, convenience stores are also used as a place to socialize and hang out for young people.

Communication is their second largest expenditure, along with the development of technology where the opening is likely to always be connected with his friends wherever it resides. Youth use their smart phone not only for communication; smart phones are also useful for entertainment and to get updated information.

Transportation is also a major expenditure item for youth driven by the fact that young people are almost always on the move. They tend to be active individuals with many activities outside the home. This mobility creates youth demand for transportation.

Transportation chosen by young people is quite diverse, ranging from public transport to private vehicles. Public transportation such as train or bus are used by many young people for both its functional purpose in helping youth get from their home to their place of activity. For the lucky few that can afford it, private vehicles are preferred over public transportation, particularly motorcycles and cars.

With many pressing needs, youths must be smart in the use of their limited incomes. As such, they learn to plan and prioritize their spending based on importance. Youth prioritize items which are necessities like food (to replenish their energy during their daily out-of-home activities) and telecommunication spending (to buy credits for their mobile phones). Non essential spending items like apparel, travel and entertainment are secondary priorities.

5. MALAYSIAN YOUTH ARE TECHNOLOGICALLY INCLINED

Technology has become a lifestyle among our youth. Youth today live and breathe technology. They even spend more time with their laptops and gadgets than with they speaking with their parents. This is should be of no surprise given that youth today grew up with technology all around them. They grow up playing clunky desktop computers and playing games on Atari and Nintendo machines.

So now, it is not surprising that every time new technology pops up, our young generation are the first to respond. It is in their blood. Young people are fast to adapt to new technology. They are also diligent in keeping abreast of news of new technology.

Today’s increasingly technological advances cannot be separated from the lives of young people. Indeed in many ways, technology development shapes youth lifestyles. Advances in technology such as laptops, smart phones, and broadband Internet access are not only enjoyed by young people in urban areas but now can also be enjoyed by young people in remote areas. If during our own schooldays we would see students going to school carrying textbooks and stationary, many students now go to school with also bringing along their own laptops and mobile phones.



The mobile phone in particular is a “mandatory” device for youth of today. Just look around, you will realize that youth are rarely found without a mobile phone in their hand or pocket. Many even sleep with mobile phones next to their pillows. Youth are also heavy Internet users. They access the Internet not only using PCs, but also via their smart phones and laptops. Wireless technology allows youth today to be in connection to the Internet 24 hours a day.

With unrestricted access to the Internet, all information - both positive and negative - can be easily accessed by youth. On the positive side, the Internet can help youths learn. When researching a topic for school or campus, a student no longer needs to go to the library to find the source of a stack of books. Now they just turn to their smart phones or laptops and type in keywords in Google or Bing, then a whole array of information related to their topic of interest will appear.

The Internet is also a favorite entertainment tool. Youth access (update) their Facebook page, exchange messages on Twitter and read the latest news on online news websites all the time - day and night. Many choose to spend their free time, not exercising, shopping or eating out but spending long hours in front of the computer.

6. MALAYSIAN YOUTH ARE HARDWORKING

Another important aspect we need to highlight about Malaysian Youth is their hardworking nature. As we mentioned in previous chapters, close to 70% of youths' time is spent in productive activities such as studying and working and only 30% of their time is spent on leisure activities.

Life is demanding for our youth. As students in school, many youths study long and hard to get into the best universities. As college students, these youth must also work hard to get good grades and be accepted in good companies. Later, as employees, they work hard to get promoted and achieve good positions in the company. So it's no wonder that youth only have a limited amount of time for fun and games, as they are too busy getting ahead in life.

Indeed the stress of constantly being in a competitive environment for better schools, jobs

and positions is something that many youth across the world experience, especially here in Asia. In Japan, for example a workaholic culture drives many employees to work well over 60 hours a week and have as little as 20 hours of leisure time a week.

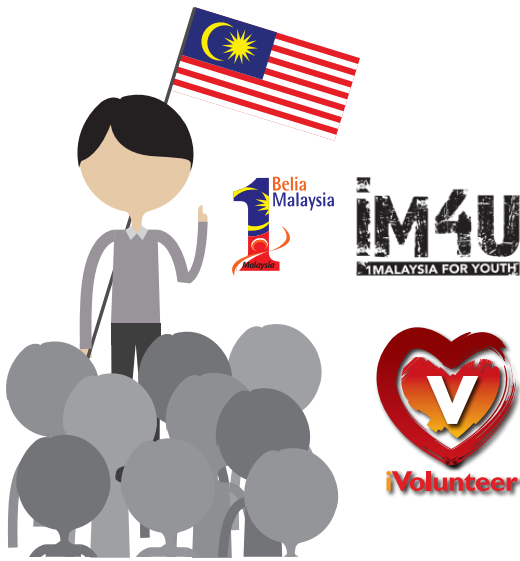
To relieve the stress of studying and working, we found that youth engage in a variety of activities during the limited leisure time that they have. The majority of youths prefer to engage in solitary activities like browsing the Internet and reading magazines and books. This is done mainly during evenings. A good number however, prefer to socialize with friends and family while eating or playing sports – especially during the weekends.

7. MALAYSIAN YOUTH ARE OPTIMISTIC YET ANXIOUS

Our Youth Anxiety and Desire study found that many Malaysian youths feel extremely optimistic about their lives in the future. Indeed, among the youth in our study, some 92.4% say they expect to have a good or very good professional life and 93.8% say that they expect to have a bad or very bad family life.

However, although optimistic about their future, we sense that youth in our study are anxious about their ability to achieve their life expectations. When we asked the youth in our study about their fears in life, their number one fear turns out to be a person that “lacks knowledge” (i.e., left behind in terms of education and knowledge). Similarly, when we asked these youth what they want most in life, the number one want on their list was simply “knowledge”. Indeed, with 64% of Malaysian youth only having a secondary school education, many of our youth must feel inadequate to compete in the ever demanding working world. This lack of education seems to trigger youth's fear and anxieties.

Another issue that may cause anxiety among Malaysian youth is the relatively high unemployment rate among youth, particularly those aged 15-24 years. These unemployed youth have a tendency to feel negative about themselves and their surroundings which can cause many youth to doubt their self worth.



8. MALAYSIAN YOUTH ARE READY TO BE ENGAGED

Youth programs can be used as an effective tool in the fight against youth despair. It is estimated that the nation's youth-serving organizations, such as the Persekutuan Pengakap Malaysia (PPM), Pandu Puteri Malaysia and others, serve more than 3 million youths each year. Such programs are popular among youth as they provide a platform for Malaysian youths to learn new things, meet new people beyond their everyday friends and achieve something beyond their ordinary routine.

The Malaysian government has also taken the initiative to engage youth through its support for volunteer-oriented youth programs. Such programs aim at providing Malaysian youth with a positive outlet for their energy that can be channelled to the needs of the community.

Recently Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak Tun Abdul Razak has even announced the creation of a RM100 million fund to support youth volunteers under the 1 Malaysia For Youth (IM4U) initiative. Our youth need to be engaged so that they can achieve more in life. These programs are a positive influence on youth and give them more opportunities to learn and prove themselves through sports, music, arts, technology, commerce, academics and other areas of life.

But engaging youth cannot be only left to the government. We need to realize that engaging

youth is the responsibility of the whole country. More parties must get involved in this effort – civil society, public sector companies, foundations, NGOs, religious institutions.

FINAL WORDS

Youth are truly an interesting subject to study. They are lively, mobile and dynamic individuals that have a unique set of values and needs that set them apart from the rest of society. Our Youth Anxiety and Desire study has successfully uncovered some of very interesting facts about Malaysian youth. This study provided insights into their everyday lives that we would otherwise have never known.



In particular, the 8 key insights provided in this final chapter provide a better understanding of the underlying motivations and psychology of our youth, about the challenges they face in their lives and about their unique behavior as consumers. From the results of the study, we know that Malaysian youth are religious people who are trying to preserve good traditional values while facing the advance shift in technology. Malaysian youth also think a lot about their families, therefore they will try to spend more time with families even though they have a lot to catch such as education and careers. Moreover, the dynamic changes in the society affect their spending behaviors as well.

As Malaysian youth already have good values and potentials, what they need next in order to advance in their development are skills. United Nation's World Youth Report (2011) stated that with less experience and fewer skills than many adults, young people often encounter particular difficulty accessing work. This statement might actually be true with the current Malaysian youth condition, we can see from the result of this study which found that even though Malaysian youth are hardworking and ready to be engaged, they are still anxious about their abilities to achieve their life expectations and they also think they are not ready to compete in the work environment.



This leads to the need of a good education platform that can help the youth to maximize their potentials as well as develop competitive skills. As competencies are increasing, we hope that their confidence will increase and that they will be more ready to face the dynamic and competitive work environment.

One of the most influential external factors in youth's social as well as personal development is the wide access to information. In this era of information and communications, youth are potential beneficiaries of increased access to Information and Communications Technology (ICT). According to UN's Fact Sheet about Youth and ICT (2010), youth also play an important role in the development of the Information society, through their ability to learn to use and develop ICT and its applications. In a broad sense, the benefits of ICT towards youth arise from improvements in education and access to information. At the individual level, ICT may assist young people to gain more meaningful jobs, communicate easily with other youth from all over the world and thus share their experiences. As the access to information become so vast, some negative news or influences might affect them as well. Therefore, youth need a guidance which can remind them to be always on the right track and thus able to gain a

lot of knowledge as well as utilize the technology in order to provide positive values to the society.

Youth play an important role in shaping the future of the nation; they must be guided and accommodated correctly in order to maximize the development of their potentials. Moreover, the anxieties of youth also need to be assessed well by listening to their aspirations and increasing their participations in several activities which will develop strong bond among others. Through this study, we have learned that our youth are hardworking and family oriented, that they are conservative in their principals and religious in their beliefs. We also learned that though our youth are optimistic about their future, that many are anxious about their lack of knowledge and want access to more schooling and education to further develop themselves. These are all important input to consider. We hope that these insights on Malaysian youth's deepest anxieties and desires will help public sector, private sector and civil society leaders to better understand and engage our youth in the future. We all have an equal share in the responsibility to support and raise our youth to achieve their full potential both socially and economically. After all, when our youth succeed, everybody will enjoy the benefits.



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