

Acceptance of Cashless Society among Indigenous Youth: A Qualitative Analysis

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Abstract

Youth drive growth in cashless payments, but rural youths show less acceptance. Scholarly research on indigenous youths' acceptance of cashless payments is lacking. This study aims to examine acceptance behaviour of cashless payments among indigenous youth in rural areas and identifies strategies to increase their usage. A qualitative study was adopted through focus group discussions conducted with indigenous youth residing in Sungai Siput, Perlop 3, Perak, Malaysia. The informants' responses were analysed using manual methods and content analysis software (NVivo 12). The results revealed that indigenous youth have a moderate cashless use intention. Due to its convenience and comfort, they preferred cashless payment options. Due to cashless payment ignorance and limited internet availability, many informants chose cash. They hesitated due to money loss concerns and a lack of cashless transaction experience, underlining trust as a big problem. This study understands indigenous youths' particular demands and preferences and recommends cashless payment solutions targeted to them. The study provides personalized suggestions, enhances user engagement and happiness, empowers indigenous youth with financial education, and fosters a supportive knowledge-sharing network. More importantly, it enables indigenous youth in Malaysia to comfortably use cashless payments, maximize digital transactions, and build an inclusive and empowered cashless society.

Keywords: Acceptance of Cashless Society, Indigenous Youth, Cashless Payment, Rural

Introduction

Centuries ago, when the barter system was the norm, little did our ancestors know that their humble transactions would evolve into the digital marvel of today's cashless society (Fabris, 2019). As civilizations advanced, the need for efficient payment systems became paramount, driving the development of paper money in the 17th century and paving the way for economic growth and modern society (Tomić & Todorovic, 2018). Fast forward to the present day, digital payment systems have revolutionized how we conduct financial transactions, offering seamless and secure experiences for individuals and businesses alike (Sifat & Mohamad, 2018). With advanced security measures in place, fraud is thwarted, instilling confidence in consumers and bolstering business operations. The transition towards a cashless society is inevitable, propelled by the flexibility and adaptability of governments, businesses, and consumers in embracing this new financial landscape (Fisher, 2020).

In the realm of cashless transactions, certain countries like the Netherlands, Germany, and Scandinavian nations have surged ahead, embracing digital payments with gusto (Sreenu, 2020). However, in Asian countries, the adoption of cashless payments has been a slower journey, led by trailblazers like India, Singapore, and China (Sreenu, 2020). Take Malaysia, for instance, where Touch 'n Go has become the go-to e-payment method for a whopping 92 percent of users in 2022, followed by GrabPay and Boost at 51 and 36 percent respectively (Unknown source). The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has further underscored the importance of contactless payments, making them a crucial tool in our long-term fight against virus transmission (Balakrishnan & Shuib, 2021). The rapid development of cashless payment method has dismantled barriers, enabling governments, businesses, and consumers to unlock the advantages and indispensability of digital transactions (Gorshkov, 2022). Interestingly, consumer choices are primarily driven by personal preferences rather than weighing the costs or infrastructure availability (Krivosheya, 2020).

Amidst this transformative shift, it is the youth who have taken center stage, riding the waves of information and financial technology innovations (Chaveesuk, Khalid & Chaiyasoonthorn, 2021). Being digital natives, youth have wholeheartedly embraced cashless payments, leveraging their digital fluency and entrepreneurial spirit (Sivathanu, 2019; Gawer & Phillips, 2013). As active participants in the digital ecosystem, they have become catalysts for growth, infusing dynamism into cashless payment platforms (Wang, 2021). Their desire for convenience and efficiency drives the demand for fast and seamless payment solutions that seamlessly integrate into their digitally-driven lives (Sahayaselvi, 2017). In essence, the acceptance and widespread use of cashless payment systems are intrinsically tied to the active involvement and open embrace of digital platforms among the youth. They are shaping the future of finance with their innovative mind-set and unwavering enthusiasm.

One relatively neglected area of investigation, however, is the acceptance behaviour of cashless payment methods among rural youths that support the front-facing digital platforms. Previous studies have evaluated on cashless payments mainly focuses on customer experiences and communications (Costello & Reczek, 2020), business models (Täuscher & Laudien, 2018), advertisers and policy makers (de Reuver et al., 2018), algorism use and product or service (Kohtamäki, Parida, Oghaza, Gebauer & Baines, 2019). Rural youth have shown a decline in embracing cashless payment methods, with a decrease from 70 percent to 55 percent. To address this, the Malaysian government has taken proactive steps to encourage cashless usage and move towards a cashless society. The government has introduced enticing RM150 incentives for the youth to choose from various digital platforms like Big Pay, Grab Pay, Shopee Pay, and Touch 'n Go e-wallet. This initiative, called the e-

Pemula program, aims to sustain the momentum of cashless payments and empower the youth to transact seamlessly through digital platforms, even in small towns. By providing incentives and driving nationwide digital transformation, the government seeks to empower the youth, break barriers, and revolutionize the financial landscape one touchpoint at a time.

This current study aims to bridge this gap by qualitatively examining the rationale behind the acceptance of cash-based payments among youth in Malaysia. Additionally, as the impact of digital era at the individual level has received a lot of attention, however, scholarly work related to acceptance behaviour on cashless payment methods among indigenous youth still needs to be highlighted. Indigenous communities may have limited access to reliable internet connectivity and technology infrastructure, making it difficult for youth to access and utilize cashless payment platforms. Indigenous youth may face challenges in acquiring digital literacy skills necessary to navigate and use cashless payment systems effectively. Additionally, indigenous youth, like many others, may have concerns about the security and privacy of their financial transactions when using cashless payment methods. Building trust in these platforms and addressing security concerns is essential to foster acceptance among indigenous youth.

Therefore, this study extends the literature on the acceptance of cashless society in various ways. Firstly, it explores the determinants that lead to the acceptance of cashless society in rural areas, which have received relatively little attention. Secondly, this study conducted among indigenous youth, thus contributing to the literature by providing a clearer picture of the acceptance of cashless society whose play the most crucial roles in achieving the new norms without differences. Furthermore, understanding the acceptance of cashless society among indigenous youth can develop effective strategies to gain users' confirmation of their expectations and consequently motivate them to continue using cashless payment methods. By gaining a comprehensive understanding of the acceptance of cashless society among indigenous youth, this study opens doors to innovative approaches that can bridge any existing gaps. It empowers policymakers, businesses, and communities to tailor their strategies, ensuring they resonate with the specific needs and aspirations of indigenous youth. This tailored approach, rooted in understanding, can boost users' confidence, generate enthusiasm, and foster long-term adoption of cashless payment methods.

Literature Review

The utilization of cashless transactions has become increasingly prevalent in everyday life since the 1990s, coinciding with the rapid growth of digital investments in the commercial sector (Shaji & Mathias, 2021). Over the past decade, digital payments have gained widespread adoption and have been instrumental in facilitating efficient transactions within cashless communities (Aldaas, 2021). Embracing cashless payments as the primary mode of exchange for goods and services not only eliminates the reliance on physical currency but also ushers society into a new era of convenience and security (Tee & Ong, 2016). The benefits of a cashless society extend beyond the assurance of secure payments. Consumers can also reap financial rewards through the various incentives and advantages offered by cashless payment methods. Extensive research has been conducted to assess the impact of different digital payment systems on consumer behaviour. Previous studies have explored the evolving attitudes of consumers in state capitals and major cities towards cashless transactions, shedding light on the influence of technology and the role of service providers, such as banks, in facilitating these transactions (Taasim & Yusoff, 2018).

To delve deeper into these dynamics, researchers have developed frameworks such as Technology Assessment (TA) and the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT). Technology Assessment focuses on evaluating the impact of technology on society and the environment. It involves examining the social, economic, and ethical aspects of technology adoption. In the context of cashless payments, TA can help assess the benefits, risks, and implications of transitioning from traditional cash-based transactions to digital payment methods. This framework enables researchers to explore factors such as the accessibility, reliability, and security of cashless payment systems, as well as their environmental impact and long-term sustainability. Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT): The Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) is a widely used framework for understanding user acceptance and adoption of technology. It identifies several key factors that influence individuals' intentions to use a particular technology. These factors include performance expectancy (perceived usefulness), effort expectancy (perceived ease of use), social influence, and facilitating conditions.

In the context of cashless payment adoption among rural youth, UTAUT can help researchers examine the determinants that lead to their acceptance or resistance towards cashless payment methods. It allows for an exploration of factors such as perceived usefulness and ease of use, social influences (such as peer or family pressure), and the availability of necessary resources and infrastructure. By applying the UTAUT framework, researchers can gain insights into the specific barriers and facilitators affecting the adoption of cashless payments among rural youth and develop targeted interventions to promote their acceptance. These frameworks enable a comprehensive examination of factors such as quality, skills, transaction costs, user satisfaction, and the role of service providers in shaping consumer behaviour within the cashless ecosystem. Moreover, the influence of the environment in which these transactions occur is also explored, highlighting the interconnectedness between technological advancements, user experiences, and societal norms. By expanding our understanding of these complex dynamics, researchers and stakeholders can make informed decisions and devise strategies to foster the acceptance and utilization of cashless payment methods. This knowledge enables the development of user-friendly technologies, efficient payment ecosystems, and supportive regulatory frameworks that enhance user experiences, boost trust, and ultimately accelerate the transition towards a cashless society.

Besides that, there is previous study has clarified the factors of consumers to adopt new payment services and two models in the payment context are developed (Dahlberg & Oorni, 2007). One of them demonstrates the factors of the mobile payments' services adoption while the other models the determinants of electronic invoicing adoption. Meanwhile, the study on recurrence of usage of digital wallets among the university students of South Kolkata and the monthly spending of different age groups of students has been analysed (Routray et al., 2019). There is a study proved that the spending behaviours of the youth and the way that they manage their finances are likely to determine their financial status in the future (Kurt et al., 2011). This is because an individual's spending behaviour is greatly influenced by their family and friends. Family members play a key role in the usage and consumption of certain goods and products. Moreover, the lifestyle of youth also directly influences the manufactured products that they spent on as the lifestyle reflected to the person's ways of living in the society (Bona, 2018). The attitude of youth makes up one's interest towards spending as the spendings provide better understand regarding their financial management (Hayei & Khalid, 2019).

Cashless Society among Indigenous Youth

Understanding of acceptance behaviours in relation to cashless payment methods among indigenous youth society is an essential yet complex issue. Indigenous youth, like any other group, play a significant role in shaping the future of society, and their perspectives and preferences should be taken into account when considering the adoption of cashless payments. A previous study draws attention to the relationship between welfare payments, other forms of remote service delivery, and questions of mobility and immobility (Vincent et al., 2020). The study identified a concept of “orbiting” emerged and it is fostering disempowerment, passivity and social pathologies of reduced dependence on “welfare poison”, thus it was minimally elaborated (Burke, 2013). Orbiting can be explained as leaving and returning to remote settlements, represents the possibility of maintaining an indigenous identity, links to ancestral country, and simultaneously attaining individual success in the wider world (Pearson & Noel, 2000). Also writing about Cape York, indigenous youth leave remote communities, which he termed “ghettos” to circulate to other places for work and education particularly (Sutton & Peter, 2009).

In Malaysia, the indigenous peoples were estimated to account for around 13.8 percent of the 31,660,700 million national population and they are collectively known as *Orang Asli* (Samath, 2018). *Orang Asli* is a collective terminology that means original or first peoples in the Malaysian language. They comprise of ethnic groups which is less than 150,000 who are widely regarded as peninsular Malaysia’s original inhabitants. As technology has been at the forefront towards the developing world, the quality of life is determined by technology assessment whether at work or at play. Smartphones, online classes, and virtual games are not granted to everyone and specifically who are usually marginalised, rural communities that have a sparse internet connection that led them not relied heavily on cash to purchase daily necessities (Fitri, Sawalludin, Lim, Min, Izzuan, & Ishar, 2020).

While Malaysia is evolving into a developed nation, the growth in cashless advancements must also include universal digital inclusion for all, not only those who can afford and it included the indigenous community living, particularly indigenous youth on the urban fringes (Inclusive Docs, 2022). Digital inclusion plays crucial role in enhancing digital payment to be applied as the ability of individuals and groups to access and use information and communications technologies (ICT) can be optimised with the usage of ICT which comprised of digital literacy skills (Borgen, 2019). The growth of digital payments is cooperated with many sectors such as education, health care, and banking have developed through digital means. They have innovated their services with the help of technology. For instance, the switch from face-to-face classrooms to online classes, telemedicine services and online banking.

The Northern Corridor Implementation Authority (NCIA) in partnership with Kiplepay Sdn Bhd has introduced a special outreach effort for *Orang Asli* to bolster digital literacy among layers of the society via the Kasih Ibu Darul Ridzuan (KIDR) programme and Kiplepay (Digital News Asia, 2022). Through this programme, the indigenous youth will be given prepaid cards with RM250 reload monthly from the federal government and they can purchase necessities from local merchants and mobile merchants. Northern Corridor Implementation Authority (NCIA) is driving outreach by enabling mobile merchants to adopt feature of Kiplepay’s cashless cards that can be inspired to up-skill their digital literacy and embrace digital change even those in rural areas (The Malaysia Reserve, 2022). The use of mobile merchants is guaranteed to help and facilitate the indigenous youth especially to those living in the outback and enables them to purchase essential items easily. From this,

the problem of secluded areas cannot be assessed can be solved and indigenous youth that reside in these areas can make easy purchases of essential items without travelling far from their villages (Vengadesan, 2019).

Challenges of Cashless Society Acceptance among Indigenous Youth

Indigenous youth face unique challenges in developing the necessary digital literacy skills to effectively utilize cashless payment systems. Particularly for indigenous groups residing in remote or rural areas, limited access to technological infrastructure and reliable internet connectivity can hinder their ability to engage with and utilize cashless payment options. A lack of access to cell phones, laptops, and the internet further restricts their capacity to interact with these systems. Moreover, their limited exposure to technology and digital devices can result in a lack of familiarity and confidence when it comes to utilizing cashless payment methods. Additionally, indigenous populations often have their own cultural practices, beliefs, and traditions that shape their perceptions of technology and financial transactions. Factors such as trust, a preference for face-to-face interactions, and reliance on traditional payment methods like cash or barter networks can impact their adoption of cashless payment systems.

Security and privacy concerns surrounding financial transactions are common among indigenous youth and others alike. Worries about disclosing personal and financial information online can influence their willingness to use and trust digital payment services. Language plays a crucial role in effective communication and comprehension. Indigenous communities may have their own languages or dialects, which can pose challenges when adopting cashless payment systems predominantly available in major languages. Language barriers may hinder their understanding of terms and conditions, instructions, and security measures associated with cashless transactions. Economic hardships, including reduced income, limited access to formal banking services, and financial marginalization, can also affect indigenous youth's ability to fully participate in the digital economy and utilize cashless payment systems. Lastly, trust is a significant factor in the acceptance of cashless payment options. Indigenous adolescents often rely on their social networks and community affiliations when making financial decisions. Therefore, establishing trust in cashless payment systems and addressing security concerns are crucial for promoting their adoption among indigenous youth.

Methodology

This study employed a qualitative approach to investigate and describe the acceptance of cashless society among indigenous youth. Focus group discussions were conducted, which are widely used by market researchers to gather opinions, attitudes, and recommendations (Templeton, 1987). The focus group discussions facilitated one-on-one interactions, allowing participants to clarify their views and engage in discussions (Smithson, 2000). This approach was chosen to capture a range of perspectives and gain valuable insights beyond direct questioning (Kitzinger, 1995). The size of the focus groups should strike a balance between including diverse viewpoints and enabling meaningful interactions (Corbetta, 2003). Typically, a focus group consists of five to eight participants who share common characteristics and may already know each other (Tang & Davis, 1995). However, the number of participants should be flexible to ensure a sufficient number for a fruitful group discussion (Teijlingen & Pitchforth, 2006).

In this study, the manager of the Community Centre in Perlop 3, Sg. Siput, Perak, facilitated the gathering of five indigenous youth as informants. Their ages ranged from 18 to 30, with three unemployed and two working in the private sector. The data were collected through focus group interviews conducted with indigenous youth residing in Sg. Siput, Perlop 3, Perak, Malaysia. The selection of this specific community centre was recommended by the Ministry of Rural and Regional Development due to the lack of facilities, such as limited internet connectivity and the absence of nearby automated teller machines (ATMs). Although the exact location of Perlop 3 is not clearly mapped as it is a small sub district town, the focus was on gathering data from this particular community. Five informants, comprising two women and three men, were chosen to participate in the discussion, despite potential language barriers.

Data collection for this study took place from January to March 2022. In January, an official meeting was held with the Ministry of Rural and Regional Development to obtain approval for the selected community centre. Once the endorsement was obtained, the manager of the community centre in Perlop 3 was contacted and the study's objectives were clarified to ensure the interviews could be conducted in March 2022. Written consent was obtained from the informants, and a brief explanation of the study was provided at the beginning of each interview. The interviews were conducted by experienced researchers trained in qualitative research methods, proficient in the Malay language, and translated into English based on the topic guide in Appendix I. With the informants' consent, the interviews were recorded for reference purposes, and each interview lasted approximately one and a half hours.

For data analysis, this study utilized the "Grounded theory" approach, which is a widely used thematic analysis method in qualitative studies. The transcripts were imported into NVivo, and coding was performed using basic themes and concepts identified from the transcripts. NVivo9 was used to create categories and sub-themes. Initially, the transcripts were reviewed to identify the main areas of discussion, which were then associated with first-order codes. The same process was repeated to group similar topics of discussion under major categories. Reading the transcribed files allowed for familiarity with the data, identifying ideas, patterns, commonalities, and contradictions within the respondents' language and explanations. Ethical considerations were given utmost importance in this study. Informed consent was obtained from all participants before their participation, ensuring accurate and analysable responses while preventing any ambiguities. Participants' demographic information such as age, gender, education level, and marital status was collected solely for the purpose of the study, and anonymity and confidentiality were strictly maintained. Transparent and comprehensive communication was prioritized to ensure participants' understanding and competence in the study.



Figure 1. List of Pusat Komuniti Desa (PKDs) in Perak, Malaysia

Results and Discussion

The findings comprise a few sections: a) understanding of cashless payment; b) modes of payment preferences and frequency; c) factors of using cashless payment; d) challenges of using cashless payments; e) security of using cashless payment; and f) recommendations to increase cashless usage. Table 1 illustrates the informants' description, and Table 2 summarises the responses made by the informants.

Table 1
Informants' Descriptions

Age Group	Employed		Unemployed	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
16-20				1
21-25	1			2
26-30	1			
31-35				
36-40				
Total	2			3

Understanding of Cashless Payment

According to the informants' insights, cashless payment refers to a digital platform that enables individuals to make various transactions without the need for physical cash. They highlighted examples such as Maybank2U, which is an online banking service allowing users to conveniently pay bills and conduct other financial transactions electronically. The informants recognized the convenience and efficiency offered by cashless payment methods, emphasizing the elimination of the need to carry physical currency and the ability to make transactions digitally. Their understanding of cashless payment encompassed the idea of using digital platforms to transfer funds, make purchases, and settle bills without relying on physical cash. The focus group discussions provided valuable insights into the informants' perspectives on the concept of cashless payment, highlighting their recognition of its benefits and its role as a convenient alternative to traditional cash-based transactions.

"...cashless payments are like payments like MayBank2U...Touch-n-go, and use the card..."
(Male, Employed, Age 22).

"...Shopee..." (Female, Unemployed, Age 18)

Modes of Payment Preferences and Frequency

Informants demonstrated a varied usage pattern when it came to payment methods, utilizing both cash and cashless options. They mentioned several cashless payment modes that they frequently employed, including MyDebit (EBB), online transfer, online banking, and touch n go. Among the cashless payment modes mentioned, informants expressed a strong preference for using them to pay bills at convenience stores like 7Eleven. This indicates that they found cashless payment methods more convenient and suitable for their bill settlement needs in such establishments. In terms of frequency of use, the informants reported different patterns. Some stated that they used cashless payment methods once a week, while others mentioned using them twice a month. On the other hand, a few informants mentioned that they never used cashless payment methods, suggesting a lower level of familiarity or comfort with these modes of payment.

"...through the bank, 7eleven..." (Male, Employed, Age 30)

"...Transfer...transfer..." (Female, Unemployed, Age 18)

"Yes, once a week..." (Male, Employed, Age 22)

"...Yes. One of the things like the distance to go to the bank is also there... because we also use cash on delivery..." (Female, Unemployed, Age 25)

Factors of Using Cashless Payment

Informants were specifically asked to discuss the factors that influenced their decision to use cashless payment methods. The results shed light on the motivations behind their choice to purchase sport products through online platforms like Shopee and Lazada, and it was found that one of the significant reasons was the availability of vouchers or discounts. Informants expressed their enjoyment in accessing these online platforms as they provided attractive offers and promotions, allowing them to save money while purchasing sport products. Additionally, informants mentioned that they frequently utilized cashless payment methods when buying clothes and basic necessities, particularly items that were not commonly found in physical stores. By using cashless payments, they found it easier and more convenient to make purchases, whether through online transfers or by utilizing their debit cards. The informants emphasized that cashless payments played a crucial role in facilitating bill payments. They expressed that the ability to pay bills online, either through online transfers or by using their debit cards, provided them with a simplified and efficient process. By using cashless payment methods, they could easily settle their bills without the need for physical cash or visiting physical payment centres.

"...the one who did this...buy shoes, but he's urmm...it's Facebook, we pay in cash..." (Male, Employed, Age 30)

"...if there is a voucher, we can...cut it there..." (Female, Unemployed, Age 25)

"...Things like sport equipment (Male, Employed, Age 22)

However, two informants were informed that they never used online shopping, and were not interested in using cashless payment. Moreover, due to accessibility to the psychical markets in the rural area, it has increased in using cash for buying grocery and food items.

"...because we don't use cards, there is no credit card..." (Female, Unemployed, Age 25)

"...Because this shop is close to the village, we don't have to, like foodpanda..." (Female, Unemployed, Age 18)

Challenges of Using Cashless Payments

One of the key challenges identified by the informants was their lack of knowledge and familiarity with using cashless payment methods. While they acknowledged that cashless payments are generally perceived as easy and convenient, many of the informants expressed a sense of uncertainty and distrust when it came to utilizing these methods. The informants acknowledged that cashless payment methods offer a range of benefits, such as convenience, speed, and enhanced financial tracking. However, their lack of knowledge and understanding of the technical aspects and procedures involved in cashless transactions posed a significant hurdle. Some informants mentioned difficulties in navigating through the various digital platforms and mobile applications associated with cashless payments. They expressed a need for more comprehensive education and guidance on how to effectively and securely use these methods.

"..Don't know how to use it..." (Female, Unemployed, Age 25)

"Actually, in our place, the facility is there, but we don't have that exposure..." (Male, Employed, Age 30)

"...because many people cheat..." (Female, Unemployed, Age 18)

Security of Using Cashless Payment

Some informants expressed a lack of trust in cashless payment methods due to hearing about incidents involving scammers and fraudulent activities. These stories and rumours circulating within their communities had created a sense of apprehension and scepticism towards cashless transactions. The informants cited these concerns as a reason for their hesitation and reluctance to fully embrace cashless payments. They felt unsure and insecure about navigating the digital platforms and applications associated with cashless payments. The complexity and unfamiliarity of these systems contributed to their feelings of uncertainty and mistrust. However, it's important to note that not all informants shared the same reservations about cashless payments. Some informants expressed trust in the payment systems, stating that they had never encountered any negative experiences or incidents while using cashless methods. These informants had found cashless payments to be convenient, efficient, and reliable in their personal transactions. Their positive experiences had instilled a sense of trust and confidence in the security and effectiveness of cashless payment systems.

“...There are doubts too...50 percent...” (Male, Employed, Age 22)

“...The dealer is a scammer... ..after that I didn't do it anymore...” (Male, Employed, Age 30)

“...trust because you want to make things easier... even though there are doubts, but still believe...” (Male, Employed, Age 22)

Recommendations to Increase Cashless Usage

The informants put forward several suggestions to address the challenges and improve the acceptance of cashless payments among indigenous youth. One of the key recommendations was the need for increased awareness and education through additional classes or workshops dedicated to promoting the benefits and advantages of using cashless payment methods. By increasing awareness and knowledge, informants believed that more indigenous youth would be encouraged to embrace cashless payment methods. Another suggestion put forth by the informants was the need for the government to enhance and upgrade existing facilities, particularly internet connectivity. The informants highlighted that limited access to a reliable internet connection posed a significant obstacle to the widespread adoption of cashless payments. They emphasized the importance of improving internet infrastructure in rural and remote areas where indigenous communities reside. By expanding internet coverage and enhancing the quality of the connection, informants believed that indigenous youth would have better access to online platforms and be more inclined to use cashless payment services.

“...The first reason is that there is no line...” (Male, Employed, Age 30)

“...education level also plays a role...” (Male, Employed, Age 22)

“...The hope is that we want this thing to be standardised, right...so, for progress as well. So, for this, we need, what kind of class, for that exposure, it's also necessary. Because even the youth does not know yet, this exposure also needs to be applied. After that, the infrastructure was like kiosks...” (Male, Employed, Age 22)

Table 2
Summary of Findings

What do you understand about cashless payment?				
Informant 1	Informant 2	Informant 3	Informant 4	Informant 5
Bill payment without cash	Buy necessities without cash	Shopee platforms provide digital payment	Any transaction without cash, by using Maybank2u and touch n go	Transaction without cash
Which cashless payment modes do you favour?				
Informant 1	Informant 2	Informant 3	Informant 4	Informant 5
Always use cash	Mydebit such as EBB	Always use cash	Online transfer and debit card	Online banking, touch n go and pay bills at

				convenience store such as 7eleven
How often do you use cashless payment?				
Informant 1	Informant 2	Informant 3	Informant 4	Informant 5
Never	Twice a month	Never	Once a week	Once in two weeks
What is the purpose of using cashless payment? What types of transactions do you use cashless payment? What are other motivations that lead you to use cashless payment?				
Informant 1	Informant 2	Informant 3	Informant 4	Informant 5
Never use online shopping platforms such as Shopee	Use for Shopee and Lazada	Not interested in using online platforms	Buy clothes, basic necessities that cannot get in physical store through Shopee	Pay bills by online transfer or debit card
In your opinion, are the facilities related to cashless sufficient?				
Informant 1	Informant 2	Informant 3	Informant 4	Informant 5
No	No	No	No	No
Do you agree digital payment is convenient with your daily life?				
Informant 1	Informant 2	Informant 3	Informant 4	Informant 5
Not sure	Yes	Not sure, but it saves time	Yes, because of it is user-friendly and fast system	Yes
In your opinion, what are the factors that encourage you to use cashless payment?				
Informant 1	Informant 2	Informant 3	Informant 4	Informant 5
Always use cash	Has voucher points	Always use cash	Buy clothes	Pay bills
What are challenges discouraging you to use cashless payment?				
Informant 1	Informant 2	Informant 3	Informant 4	Informant 5
Do not know how to use cashless payment	Lack of knowledge in using cashless payment	Do not know how to use cashless payment	None, because cashless is easy to discover by myself	No, but sometimes feel distrust on using cashless
Do you feel secured to use cashless payment and why?				
Informant 1	Informant 2	Informant 3	Informant 4	Informant 5
No, because heard a lot from friends regarding 'scammer'	Trust but sometimes feel insecure to use cashless	No, because do not know how to use cashless payment	Yes, because never experience any bad experience while using cashless	No, but there is experience which involve 'scammer' and prefer to use cash more
In your opinion, what are the recommendations to increase the cashless usage?				
Informant 1	Informant 2	Informant 3	Informant 4	Informant 5
Conduct classes and	As youth, learn from friends	Conduct classes that can teach on	Need to increase the	More awareness and

increase awareness related to benefit of using cashless	who are familiar with cashless can be a help	how cashless	using	facilities such as internet connection	knowledge related to cashless need to be enhanced
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Conclusion

The findings of this study have contributed valuable insights to the ongoing discourse surrounding the acceptance of cashless society among indigenous youth. One of the significant discoveries was the identification of key factors that serve as catalysts for encouraging indigenous youth to adopt cashless payment methods, as well as the determinants that hinder their motivation to embrace such digital transactions. Specifically, the lack of awareness and knowledge regarding cashless payments emerged as a prominent demotivating factor. This study highlighted the strategic importance of addressing these factors in order to foster the acceptance of cashless society among indigenous youth. It emphasized the need for targeted interventions that focus on developing and enhancing the factors that encourage indigenous youth to utilize cashless payment methods (Vengadesan, 2019). This could involve educational initiatives, awareness campaigns, and tailored programs that aim to bridge the knowledge gap and increase awareness about the benefits and functionalities of cashless transactions.

Simultaneously, efforts should be made to eliminate the demotivating factors and barriers that hinder indigenous youth from adopting cashless payment methods. Addressing the lack of awareness and knowledge through educational programs and targeted information dissemination can help dispel misconceptions and alleviate concerns surrounding cashless transactions. By providing comprehensive support and resources, such as training programs and user-friendly interfaces, indigenous youth can gain the necessary confidence and competence to fully embrace and utilize cashless payment systems. The study highlights the importance of a multifaceted approach that combines awareness-building, knowledge enhancement, and tailored interventions to foster an environment conducive to the acceptance of cashless society among indigenous youth (Fitri et al., 2020). . By proactively addressing the factors that encourage and demotivate their adoption of cashless payment methods, stakeholders can work towards creating an inclusive and digitally empowered society where indigenous youth can fully participate in the benefits and opportunities offered by cashless transactions.

In addition to its focus on indigenous youth, this study uncovered an interesting dissimilarity among indigenous youths within the same areas regarding their adoption and usage of cashless payment methods. While cashless payment usage was observed, it was found to be at a relatively low rate among these youths. This disparity prompted the researchers to explore and analyse the distinguishing factors between indigenous youth who were inclined to use cashless payment methods and those who were not. During the focus group discussions, the informants willingly shared their personal experiences, particularly when discussing matters related to trust and security in the context of using cashless payment systems. This voluntary exchange of information allowed for a deeper understanding of their perspectives and shed light on the factors that influenced their levels of trust and confidence when using cashless payment methods (Li & Brar, 2022). It became apparent that individuals are more likely to trust and embrace cashless systems when they perceive them to be secure, especially during transactions.

Furthermore, the role of friends and family emerged as a crucial factor in encouraging the long-term adoption and usage of cashless payment methods. The influence and support from their social networks played a significant role in shaping their attitudes and behaviours towards cashless transactions (Kurt et al., 2011). Positive experiences and recommendations from trusted individuals within their close circles served as influential factors in building confidence and promoting sustained usage of cashless payment systems. By recognizing the importance of trust, security, and social influences, this study provided valuable insights into the complex dynamics surrounding the acceptance and adoption of cashless payment methods among indigenous youth. These findings highlight the need for comprehensive strategies that not only address issues of trust and security but also harness the power of social networks in promoting the benefits and advantages of cashless transactions. Such strategies can play a vital role in fostering a greater acceptance and utilization of cashless payment methods among indigenous youth, ultimately contributing to their financial empowerment and the advancement of a more digitally inclusive society (Li et al., 2021).

Contribution

The findings of this study hold practical contribution for financial institutions, including banks, microfinance organizations, and their marketing managers. These entities can benefit from the insights provided in the study, as it offers valuable guidance on how to facilitate the transition of cash-based customers towards electronic payment methods, specifically focusing on the popular e-wallets that resonate well with young people in Malaysia. Understanding the preferences and behaviours of indigenous youth in relation to cashless payments can assist management and marketing managers in designing targeted strategies and campaigns that effectively promote the adoption of electronic payment options. Building on the existing literature, we recommend that future researchers consider incorporating the main determinants identified in this study as crucial factors that encourage indigenous youth to embrace cashless payment methods. Social influence, perceived security and trust, and the level of education were found to significantly influence the acceptance and usage of cashless payment systems. Recognizing these determinants, future studies can explore their roles as moderating variables to develop comprehensive frameworks that aim to establish a cashless society and reduce transaction costs, thereby fostering faster economic growth.

To further advance the understanding of cashless payment adoption among indigenous youth, it is suggested that future research combine quantitative and qualitative methodologies. This mixed-method approach can provide a more comprehensive evaluation of the proposed conceptual model presented in this study. Additionally, other constructs, such as socio-demographic factors, can be incorporated into the research framework to bridge the gap in understanding the diverse experiences and needs of youth across different areas in Malaysia. This alignment with global trends and developments in cashless payments will enable Malaysia to position itself alongside other developed countries, fostering greater financial inclusion and economic participation among its youth population.

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Appendix I – Topic Guide Used

Introduction of informants- What is your name? How old are you? Where did you work currently?

Understanding related to cashless payment- What do you understand about cashless payment?

Cashless payment modes- Which cashless payment modes do you favour ?

EBB

MyDebit

Boost

QR Pay

Touch n Go

Frequency of using cashless payment- How often do you use cashless payment ?

Everyday

Once in a week

Two to three times per month

Never

Purpose of cashless payment- What is the purpose of using cashless payment? What transactions do you use cashless payment ? What are other motivations that lead you to use cashless payment?

Redeem points

Cashback

Voucher

Discount

Facilities provided- In your opinion, are the facilities related to cashless sufficient ?

Convenience of cashless payment- Do you agree cashless payment is convenient with your daily life?

Factors of using cashless payment- In your opinion, what are the factors that encourage you to use cashless payment?

Convenience

Helpful

Easy

Safe

Challenges of using cashless payment- What are challenges discourage you to use cashless payment?

Security of using cashless payment- Do you feel secured to use cashless payment and why?

Recommendations- In your opinion, what are the recommendations to increase the cashless usage? In your opinion, what are the suggestions for indigenous youth to enhance the cashless usage ? In your opinion, what initiatives can be taken by Ministry of Rural and Regional Development to encourage the cashless usage specifically among indigenous youth?