

BEYOND BRAND AND INNOVATION: A COMPREHENSIVE INVESTIGATION INTO DETERMINANTS OF PURCHASE INTENTION FOR HUAWEI PRODUCTS IN THE MALAYSIAN CONSUMER MARKET

WANG YIMENG¹, SIEW POH PHUNG², FRAH RUKHSAR KHAN³ and

GUAN YUCHEN⁴

^{1,2,3}Limkokwing Graduate School, Limkokwing University of Creative Technology, Cyberjaya, Malaysia.

⁴SEGi University, Malaysia.

Email: ²fancykatherine.k@gmail.com

Abstract

This study explores the multifaceted determinants of consumer purchase intention toward HUAWEI products in Malaysia. Beyond traditional variables such as brand image, convenience, technical innovation, and media richness, the paper integrates emerging factors such as perceived security, country-of-origin effect, brand trust, and product ecosystem fit to propose a more comprehensive theoretical framework. With HUAWEI navigating a complex international reputation, this study contributes theoretically by enriching the construct of purchase intention in transnational markets and practically by offering strategic insights for Chinese tech brands in Southeast Asia. The study concludes with a roadmap for empirical validation using structural equation modeling (SEM) and suggests implications for future research and managerial practice.

Keywords: Purchase Intention, Brand Trust, Perceived Security, Technical Innovation, HUAWEI, Malaysian Market, Country-of-Origin, Product Ecosystem, Smart Devices.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Malaysian consumer electronics market has witnessed a significant transformation in the past decade, with the rapid expansion of Chinese brands, particularly HUAWEI. Since its official entry into the Malaysian market in 2011, HUAWEI has not only challenged incumbents like Apple and Samsung but also reshaped consumer expectations through affordable innovation and ecosystem integration (Y. Chen, 2024). However, its trajectory in Malaysia remains influenced by multifaceted dynamics, including geopolitical skepticism, cross-cultural brand perception, and evolving technological demands.

This research seeks to extend current understanding by offering a comprehensive review of both conventional and underexplored determinants of purchase intention. Through a synthesis of established and emerging literature, we build a conceptual framework for understanding what drives consumers in Malaysia to choose HUAWEI products. The paper aims to serve as a precursor to empirical analysis, providing theoretical depth for future quantitative research.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Purchase Intention

Purchase intention is a pivotal construct in consumer behavior research, often defined as the individual's conscious plan or motivational state to perform a purchasing act shortly (Kumaran et al., 2024). It represents not only a consumer's readiness and likelihood to buy a product, but also acts as a behavioral proxy that bridges attitudinal dispositions and actual consumption behavior (Matatu, 2019). In the context of technologically driven products such as smartphones, purchase intention becomes particularly salient due to the changing times and different age groups, utilitarian and hedonic considerations.

Existing literature identifies several antecedents of purchase intention, including perceived value, customer satisfaction, brand trust, and perceived ease of use (Djakasaputra et al., 2020). In high-involvement product categories like consumer electronics, perceived value is not limited to price-performance tradeoffs, but extends to dimensions such as technological novelty, product ecosystem compatibility, and post-purchase service support (Chang, 2012). Furthermore, the role of brand image and technical innovation has traditionally dominated studies related to purchase drivers in the technology sector. However, as digital trust and global brand perceptions evolve in an increasingly competitive and surveillance-conscious market, determinants such as perceived security, media richness, and country-of-origin effects have gained prominence (Merabet, 2020). These factors interact with socio-cultural variables, especially in multicultural markets like Malaysia, thereby necessitating a more holistic approach to understanding purchase intention.

In the specific context of HUAWEI, a brand often situated at the intersection of innovation and geopolitical scrutiny, purchase intention cannot be fully understood without accounting for the broader ecosystem in which it operates. This includes consumers' trust in brand ethics, the perceived risk of technology adoption, and compatibility with existing digital infrastructures. Consequently, this study advocates for an expanded model of purchase intention—one that incorporates conventional constructs alongside emergent variables—to capture the nuanced decision-making processes of Malaysian tech consumers.

2.2 Brand Image

Brand image is a multidimensional construct that encapsulates consumers' perceptions, cognitive associations, and emotional responses toward a brand, often shaped by marketing communications, personal experiences, and social discourse (Dzyabura & Peres, 2021). It functions as a mental representation that consumers hold about a brand, encompassing both tangible attributes (e.g., product quality, design) and intangible elements (e.g., trustworthiness, prestige, personality). These cognitive and affective impressions collectively influence consumer attitudes, brand evaluation, and ultimately, purchase intention (Foroughi et al., 2012).

In the case of HUAWEI, brand image assumes particular significance due to the brand's complex international identity. While HUAWEI is widely recognized for its technological sophistication and innovation, its global reputation is simultaneously influenced by political

narratives and data security controversies. In culturally pluralistic markets like Malaysia, where consumer trust is often mediated by national identity, media exposure, and brand provenance, managing brand image requires a nuanced approach that harmonizes technological credibility with cultural compatibility (Swaminathan, 2013).

Moreover, research indicates that the effectiveness of brand image in influencing consumer behavior is contingent on contextual variables such as socio-cultural congruence and perceived authenticity (Baltus, 2019). In the Malaysian context, where ethnic diversity and collective values shape consumer preferences, a foreign brand must not only convey quality and innovation but also align with local norms, values, and expectations. For HUAWEI, this implies the strategic localization of brand communication to resonate with Malay, Chinese, and Indian consumers alike, ensuring emotional relevance while sustaining the brand's high-tech positioning.

Additionally, the symbolic dimension of brand image is especially salient in the digital electronics sector, where consumer choices often serve as extensions of identity and lifestyle (Osmanova et al., 2023). HUAWEI's ability to position itself not merely as a utilitarian product provider but as a lifestyle enabler may significantly enhance its emotional equity in the Malaysian market. Therefore, brand image in this study is conceptualized not merely as a marketing outcome but as a mediating psychological construct that connects brand identity with consumer behavior.

2.3 Convenience

Convenience is a vital construct in consumer behavior literature, denoting the perceived ease, speed, and effortlessness associated with the processes of acquiring and using a product or service. It encapsulates consumers' desire to minimize time, cognitive load, and physical effort when interacting with brands, particularly within increasingly digitized and multitasking-oriented lifestyles (Jih, 2007). In the context of consumer electronics and mobile technologies, convenience extends beyond mere physical accessibility to include the intuitiveness of product interfaces, ease of integration into digital ecosystems, and post-purchase service experiences. Brown (1990) subsequent scholars have conceptualized convenience as a multidimensional construct, encompassing five core components:

1. **Time Convenience** – the extent to which a product can be accessed or used with minimal temporal disruption;
2. **Place Convenience** – the ease of reaching purchase channels (e.g., retail locations or e-commerce platforms);
3. **Acquisition Convenience** – how quickly and easily a product can be obtained;
4. **Use Convenience** – the simplicity of using the product without extensive learning.
5. **Execution Convenience** – the effortlessness of resolving post-purchase needs such as support, repair, or return.

With the proliferation of omnichannel retail strategies, especially in technologically advanced sectors, perceived convenience now also includes cross-platform functionality, mobile accessibility, and real-time customer assistance (Sarim Nadeem, 2024). HUAWEI, as a global consumer electronics brand, offers both brick-and-mortar retail outlets and extensive online purchasing options. The company's ability to deliver a seamless customer journey—whether a consumer chooses to purchase via Shopee, Lazada, the official HUAWEI website, or physical outlets—is critical in shaping purchase intention.

In Malaysia's diverse and digitally maturing market, where younger generations increasingly favor mobile commerce while older segments may still prefer in-store engagement, the perceived convenience of HUAWEI's channels plays a central role in shaping its brand competitiveness. Furthermore, product-level convenience, such as ease of switching from Android to HarmonyOS, data migration tools, or fast-charging technologies, can serve as micro-experiences that collectively reinforce the brand's customer-centric positioning (A. C. H. Chen et al., 2016; CİVELEK & SÖZER, 2018).

Therefore, this study theorizes convenience not merely as an operational variable but as a strategic determinant of perceived customer value and behavioral intention. Especially in a post-pandemic context where contactless, frictionless, and time-saving solutions are prioritized, convenience becomes an instrumental antecedent in influencing Malaysian consumers' inclination to purchase HUAWEI products.

2.4 Technical Innovation

Innovation, particularly in the context of consumer electronics, represents not only the development of new technologies but also their effective integration into product design, user experience, and functional ecosystems (Hieltjes & Hieltjes, 2014). It encompasses both product innovation, such as enhanced hardware capabilities, software systems, and design aesthetics, and process innovation, including production efficiency, supply chain advancements, and after-sales service improvements (Subedi, 2016; Taifi, 2014). Together, these forms of innovation serve as strategic levers to strengthen competitive advantage, enrich perceived product value, and cultivate brand differentiation in saturated markets.

In the case of HUAWEI, innovation has been central to its global brand narrative and market expansion. Its proprietary technologies—such as the HarmonyOS operating system, AI-integrated photography systems, 5G chipset development, and ecosystem-wide device integration—demonstrate a deliberate effort to not only match but surpass industry benchmarks (Sie, 2022). These features function as innovation “touchpoints” that not only elevate product performance but also convey a brand ethos centered around cutting-edge advancement, self-reliance, and user empowerment (Lan, 2024).

Within the Malaysian consumer market, where technological literacy is on the rise and mobile connectivity is deeply embedded in everyday life, innovation becomes a key persuasive element in influencing consumer choice (Wen et al., 2023). However, innovation alone is insufficient unless it aligns with user expectations and translates into meaningful benefits—such as improved usability, enhanced efficiency, or seamless interoperability (Kim &

Christiaans, 2011). For example, Malaysian consumers may be attracted to innovative features like multi-screen collaboration or rapid wireless charging, but their long-term brand loyalty hinges on whether these innovations deliver consistent and intuitive user experiences.

Furthermore, innovation acts as a differentiator in highly competitive segments where hardware specifications are often commoditized. In such contexts, it is not merely the existence of new features, but their perceived relevance, integration into the lifestyle of users, and ability to solve real-world problems that drive purchase intention (Kim & Christiaans, 2011). HUAWEI's strategic innovation positioning must therefore be viewed not only as a technological pursuit but also as a consumer-oriented proposition that anticipates needs, enhances functionality, and reinforces brand credibility. As such, this study conceptualizes innovation as a multidimensional construct—comprising technical superiority, usability enhancement, and perceived future-orientation—which collectively shape consumer attitudes and intentions. In emerging markets like Malaysia, where consumers are highly receptive yet value-conscious, the influence of innovation on purchase intention is particularly salient. This reinforces the need for a holistic evaluation of innovation's role, not just as a product attribute but as an experiential and symbolic driver of consumer behavior.

2.5 Media Richness

Media richness theory, originally formulated within organizational communication contexts, asserts that the effectiveness of information exchange is contingent on the medium's ability to transmit multiple cues, offer immediate feedback, and convey emotion or personal focus (Sheer & Chen, 2004). In the context of digital marketing and e-commerce, media richness has evolved to denote the extent to which online platforms, content formats, and interactive technologies can replicate the richness of face-to-face communication and provide consumers with comprehensive, vivid, and personalized product experiences (Rosenkrans, 2009).

In a consumer market saturated with competing brands and an abundance of information, rich media serves a crucial role in shaping cognitive and affective responses toward products. It allows for the dynamic presentation of product features through multimedia content—such as videos, interactive 3D models, live demonstrations, augmented reality previews, and user-generated reviews—which can reduce information ambiguity, enhance message clarity, and foster psychological engagement (Maity et al., 2018). These immersive stimuli not only facilitate better product comprehension but also enhance perceived credibility and emotional resonance with the brand.

For HUAWEI, media richness is especially salient given its emphasis on technological sophistication and ecosystem integration. The ability to visually demonstrate features like multi-device collaboration, advanced AI photography, and HarmonyOS functionality across different media platforms enables consumers to form a more concrete and confident impression of product utility (Sie, 2022). In addition, the brand's usage of influencer marketing, localized digital storytelling, and real-time livestreams on platforms like TikTok and Shopee Live contributes to an enriched media environment where potential buyers can observe, interact with, and evaluate products in simulated usage contexts (X. Wang, 2024).

In the Malaysian digital landscape—characterized by high social media penetration and mobile-first consumption habits—media richness influences not just the initial stages of awareness and interest, but also the evaluative and decision-making phases of the customer journey. Rich, interactive content can serve as a substitute for physical trial experiences, particularly for high-involvement purchases like smartphones and smartwatches, where tactile and visual understanding is essential (Li & Yi, 2017). It also plays a vital role in reducing perceived risk and enhancing trust, particularly for a brand like HUAWEI that must contend with mixed global narratives and varying consumer perceptions.

Therefore, this study conceptualizes media richness not merely as a communication strategy but as an experiential variable that enhances message effectiveness, moderates perceived product complexity, and ultimately influences behavioral intentions. In a technologically convergent environment, the richness of media used by HUAWEI becomes a strategic asset in driving consumer purchase intention, reinforcing brand image, and differentiating the brand in a competitive and culturally diverse market like Malaysia.

2.6 Perceived Security

In the digital economy, security concerns have evolved into a pivotal determinant of consumer behavior, particularly concerning technology-based products and services (Singh, 2024). As consumers increasingly engage with interconnected devices, cloud storage, and mobile applications, their perception of data security, system integrity, and privacy protection has become central to the evaluation of product reliability and brand credibility (Fox, 2021). These concerns are no longer limited to technical specifications but have extended to include the ethical posture of brands in managing, sharing, and protecting user data.

Perceived security encompasses multiple dimensions, ranging from technical robustness (e.g., encryption protocols and authentication mechanisms) to institutional trust (e.g., transparency of data policies, responsiveness to breaches, and adherence to international standards). It also includes subjective assessments of a company's intent and integrity in handling personal information. In high-involvement purchase contexts such as smartphones and smart devices, especially those that collect and store sensitive user data, security perceptions play a decisive role in influencing purchase intention (Aggarwal & Rahul, 2018; Zimmermann et al., 2022). In the case of HUAWEI, these dynamics are particularly pronounced. While the brand has earned recognition for its technological innovation and competitive pricing, it simultaneously operates under heightened scrutiny regarding data privacy, government affiliations, and international trade restrictions. Such geopolitical narratives, whether substantiated or speculative, shape consumer perceptions and can act as psychological barriers to adoption, especially among security-conscious segments such as professionals, enterprises, and digitally literate users.

Within the Malaysian market, where digital adoption is accelerating but trust in data governance remains in development, perceived security is not merely a background concern but a foreground variable. Consumers may exhibit caution toward devices perceived to be vulnerable to surveillance or misuse, even if these products offer superior features or performance. Conversely, brands that proactively communicate their data protection measures,

undergo independent audits, and emphasize ethical compliance may be able to mitigate security-related skepticism and foster trust-based engagement (Kamarudin et al., 2022; Morel & ThH Pruyn, 2003).

This study thus positions perceived security as an integral antecedent in the formation of purchase intention toward HUAWEI products. It is conceptualized not as a fixed attribute of the product itself but as a consumer-driven judgment, shaped by media discourse, brand communication strategies, regulatory visibility, and peer experiences. Recognizing the affective and cognitive weight of security concerns in contemporary consumer decision-making allows for a more comprehensive and context-sensitive understanding of why—and under what conditions—consumers in Malaysia are willing to adopt HUAWEI technologies.

2.7 Country-of-Origin Effect

Country-of-origin (COO) remains a salient extrinsic cue that significantly influences consumers' cognitive evaluations, affective responses, and behavioral intentions toward foreign brands. It refers to the extent to which the perceived image of a product's originating country affects the consumer's assessment of the product's quality, safety, credibility, and desirability. COO functions as a heuristic in situations where consumers are faced with information asymmetry, allowing them to draw on broader cultural, political, or historical associations in forming product judgments (Hui & Zhou, 2002; İzmir, 2016).

In the case of technology-intensive products such as smartphones, smart wearables, and AI-enabled devices, the COO influences not only initial brand perceptions but also post-purchase satisfaction and long-term loyalty (Nainggolan & Hidayet, 2020). For consumers in emerging markets like Malaysia—characterized by multiethnic composition, varying technological literacy, and growing exposure to global narratives—the COO effect becomes even more complex and multidimensional.

China, as the country of origin for HUAWEI, evokes dual perceptions in the Malaysian consumer psyche. On one hand, Chinese brands are increasingly recognized for technological innovation, manufacturing efficiency, and competitive pricing. On the other hand, they are simultaneously subjected to skepticism regarding intellectual property practices, data security, and political influence. These ambivalent perceptions are amplified through both traditional and digital media, shaping how consumers interpret brand credibility and risk. For HUAWEI, COO perception is not an isolated factor but is intricately linked with broader concerns about data privacy, geopolitical alignment, and the brand's strategic positioning. In Malaysia, certain segments—particularly younger, tech-savvy consumers—may regard HUAWEI as a symbol of disruptive innovation and Asian excellence. In contrast, more risk-averse or Western-oriented segments may be cautious due to perceived associations with state-controlled systems or a lack of alignment with democratic values (Hawass, 2013). This duality poses a strategic challenge and an opportunity for HUAWEI. The brand must actively manage its COO associations not through denial or concealment, but by reframing its narrative—emphasizing global standards compliance, local partnerships, transparent data practices, and its contribution to Malaysia's digital transformation. By doing so, HUAWEI can shift the COO perception from a passive

national stereotype to an active dimension of brand trustworthiness and technological legitimacy. In the context of this study, COO is conceptualized as a moderating variable that influences the relationship between brand image, perceived risk, and purchase intention. Understanding how Malaysian consumers reconcile their perceptions of China with their evaluation of HUAWEI as a brand is essential for developing a nuanced and culturally grounded model of consumer behavior in transnational technology markets.

2.8 Brand Trust

Brand trust constitutes a fundamental psychological construct in consumer-brand relationships, representing the belief that a brand will deliver on its promises with consistency, honesty, and the consumer's best interest in mind. It encompasses multiple dimensions, including perceived reliability (the brand's ability to perform its stated function), integrity (adherence to ethical and moral standards), and customer orientation (the perceived alignment between brand actions and consumer well-being) (Delgado-Ballester et al., 2001; Chunzhi. Wang & Chen, 2010). In high-involvement product categories such as smartphones, where switching costs are substantial and information asymmetry is common, brand trust serves as a critical mechanism to reduce perceived risk and reinforce consumer confidence. As a mediating variable, brand trust plays a pivotal role in translating favorable brand image into sustained consumer loyalty and purchase intention. While brand image may influence initial perceptions and awareness, it is brand trust that determines whether these positive impressions are internalized and sustained over time, especially when consumers are required to commit financially or emotionally to a brand (Adiba & Syahideni, 2018). This mediating function becomes even more salient in competitive and politically sensitive markets, where brand claims are often met with skepticism.

In the context of HUAWEI, establishing and maintaining brand trust presents both unique opportunities and challenges. On the one hand, the brand has cultivated a reputation for technological innovation, product reliability, and affordability. On the other hand, HUAWEI operates under a global spotlight, where issues related to data privacy, regulatory restrictions, and alleged affiliations with state apparatuses have sparked public debate. Such scrutiny has created an environment where traditional brand-building efforts must be supplemented with deliberate trust-building strategies—including transparent communication, third-party validation, and demonstrable compliance with international norms (Truong et al., 2022). In the Malaysian market, where consumer trust is influenced not only by brand performance but also by perceived socio-political alignment and cultural resonance, HUAWEI must engage in adaptive trust management. This involves consistent post-purchase experiences, responsive customer service, visible investment in local partnerships, and proactive engagement with consumer concerns (Permadi & Silalahi, 2021). Failing to cultivate trust may lead to cognitive dissonance, where consumers recognize the functional benefits of HUAWEI products but refrain from purchasing due to unresolved doubts about integrity or long-term accountability. This study conceptualizes brand trust as a mediating pathway through which brand image affects purchase intention. While a positive brand image may enhance brand visibility and desirability, only when trust is firmly established can these perceptions translate into actual consumer behavior. In examining the Malaysian consumer context, understanding the

dynamics of trust formation—and its potential to bridge the gap between brand image and behavioral outcomes—is essential for a comprehensive model of purchase intention in the digital technology sector.

2.9 Product Ecosystem Fit

In the contemporary digital environment, the concept of product ecosystem fit has emerged as a critical factor shaping consumer purchase behavior, particularly within the domain of smart technologies. Product ecosystem fit refers to the perceived compatibility and interoperability of a device within a consumer's existing network of technological products, services, and platforms. As consumers increasingly adopt multiple interconnected devices—such as smartphones, smartwatches, tablets, laptops, and cloud-based applications—the value of any single product is no longer evaluated in isolation but as part of a broader, integrated technological environment (Tang et al., 2025; Zhou et al., 2009). The perceived utility of a new device is greatly enhanced when it can seamlessly communicate with other products within the same ecosystem, offering shared data access, synchronized functionalities, and unified user experiences. This convergence of functionality contributes not only to usability efficiency but also to the cognitive and emotional convenience consumers derive from ecosystem consistency (Zhou et al., 2009). As such, devices that offer high ecosystem fit are more likely to be perceived as value-adding, future-proof, and worth the investment, thereby strengthening purchase intention and brand loyalty. For a brand like HUAWEI, which has invested heavily in building an integrated product environment through its “1+8+N” strategy—encompassing smartphones, wearables, PCs, home appliances, and IoT services—ecosystem fit becomes a core differentiator in competitive markets. Unlike traditional product innovation that focuses on singular technological advancement, ecosystem-oriented innovation emphasizes cross-device continuity, unified operating systems (e.g., HarmonyOS), and shared services infrastructure (e.g., Huawei Cloud, AppGallery (Jiang et al., 2017)). These elements collectively create a holistic and sticky user experience that encourages repeat purchases and brand dependence.

In the Malaysian consumer market, where mobile and multi-device usage is prevalent across age and income groups, the importance of ecosystem compatibility is further amplified. Consumers may already use Android-based platforms, Google services, or hybrid systems, and the decision to adopt a HUAWEI product often hinges on its ability to integrate smoothly into this existing technological landscape. Disruptions or incompatibilities—such as limited app access or restricted third-party integrations—may create switching costs that deter purchase, even if the product is technologically superior on its own merits (Dzhain, 2014).

This study conceptualizes product ecosystem fit as a structural determinant of perceived value and behavioral intention. It serves not only as a facilitator of device adoption but also as a strategic mechanism through which HUAWEI can reinforce consumer retention, reduce churn, and elevate its long-term positioning in the Malaysian technology market. By addressing the cognitive demand for interoperability and reducing cross-device friction, ecosystem fit transforms the purchase decision from a singular transactional act into an investment in a sustained digital lifestyle.

3. RESEARCH FRAMEWORK AND HYPOTHESES

Based on the above review, the proposed framework consists of the following relationships:

- H1: Brand Image positively influences Purchase Intention.
- H2: Convenience positively influences Purchase Intention.
- H3: Technical Innovation positively influences Purchase Intention.
- H4: Media Richness positively influences Purchase Intention.
- H5: Perceived Security positively influences Purchase Intention.
- H6: Country-of-Origin Effect positively influences Purchase Intention.
- H7: Brand Trust mediates the relationship between Brand Image and Purchase Intention.
- H8: Product Ecosystem Fit positively influences Purchase Intention.

4. METHODOLOGY

The study will employ a quantitative methodology using a structured questionnaire with Likert-scale items to measure the constructs. The population will consist of current and potential HUAWEI product users in urban Malaysian cities (e.g., Kuala Lumpur, Penang, Johor Bahru). A minimum sample size of 384 will be targeted using Krejcie & Morgan's (1970) (Lee & Penyelidikan, 2006) formula. Data will be analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) via SmartPLS to test model fit, direct and indirect effects, and moderation/mediation pathways. Reliability, validity, and multicollinearity will be tested.

5. THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS

This study expands on the consumer behavior literature by integrating trust, perceived security, and ecosystem alignment into the purchase intention model for technology products. It further tests the cross-cultural relevance of brand image and country-of-origin theories in Southeast Asia. The inclusion of ecosystem fit and perceived security as determinants offers a forward-looking lens in the post-platform era. The findings of this study hold substantial strategic and operational value for HUAWEI and similar technology firms operating in culturally diverse and politically sensitive markets such as Malaysia. As consumer purchase intention is shaped by an interplay of technological attributes, psychological constructs, and sociocultural contexts, brands must adopt a multidimensional approach to market engagement.

First, investing in transparent and proactive cybersecurity communication is imperative for fostering trust (Kang & Hustvedt, 2014). Given the growing consumer awareness of data privacy and surveillance risks, particularly associated with Chinese technology firms, organizations must not only comply with international data standards but also visibly communicate these efforts through third-party audits, public disclosures, and customer education initiatives. By normalizing transparency and showcasing ethical data handling, firms can mitigate skepticism and position themselves as responsible digital partners (B. Chen & Su, 2016).

Second, the localization of branding strategies through cultural adaptation is crucial for enhancing emotional resonance and brand relevance (Liu, 2023). In a multi-ethnic society like Malaysia, where consumer perceptions are filtered through distinct cultural, linguistic, and religious lenses, one-size-fits-all branding is likely to fall short. HUAWEI and similar brands must tailor their communication styles, imagery, language use, and value propositions to align with the norms and preferences of Malay, Chinese, and Indian consumer segments, thereby cultivating a sense of familiarity and cultural alignment.

Third, firms must emphasize interoperability and seamless integration across devices within their product ecosystem. As consumers increasingly demand fluid cross-device experiences, brands that offer tightly integrated hardware-software solutions will likely benefit from higher perceived value, stronger switching costs, and increased customer retention (Haile & Altmann, 2018). HUAWEI's continued investment in HarmonyOS, device collaboration technologies, and service bundling should be aligned with user expectations for ecosystem fit and simplicity.

Fourth, companies should balance omnichannel convenience, ensuring that both online and offline purchasing touchpoints are optimized for accessibility, personalization, and service quality (Sarim Nadeem, 2024). While urban Malaysian consumers may prefer mobile commerce and live-stream shopping, others may value hands-on experience in physical stores. Brands must therefore ensure that e-commerce platforms, retail locations, and customer support services are integrated and coherent, enhancing perceived convenience across the customer journey.

Finally, policymakers and regulatory stakeholders may derive important insights from understanding the underlying factors that shape consumer sentiment toward foreign technology brands. Issues such as data sovereignty, cybersecurity frameworks, and cross-border digital regulations play a critical role in mediating public trust and market entry dynamics. By aligning regulatory interventions with consumer concerns and market realities, policymakers can foster a competitive yet accountable digital environment that protects consumers while enabling innovation (Allahrakha, 2023).

In sum, this study encourages a strategic recalibration of how technology firms approach consumer engagement, moving beyond transactional marketing to a more holistic, culturally embedded, and trust-centric paradigm. Such recalibration is essential not only for driving short-term purchase intentions but also for securing long-term brand loyalty and market sustainability in complex international contexts.

7. CONCLUSION

In sum, the determinants of purchase intention toward HUAWEI products in Malaysia go beyond brand and innovation. By incorporating variables like perceived security, trust, and ecosystem alignment, this paper develops a multidimensional framework for understanding tech consumer behavior in emerging markets. This proposal serves as a theoretical foundation for future empirical studies that can validate and refine the model.

References

- 1) Adiba, F., & Syahideni, M. Y. (2018). The Influence of Brand Trust and Brand Commitment to Brand Loyalty at Consumer Society of AQUA Products in Dadaprejo - Junrejo - Batu City - Indonesia. In *European Journal of Business and Management* www.iiste.org ISSN (Vol. 10, Issue 11). Online. www.iiste.org
- 2) Aggarwal, A., & Rahul, M. (2018). The effect of perceived security on consumer purchase intentions in electronic commerce. In *Int. J. Public Sector Performance Management* (Vol. 4, Issue 1).
- 3) Allahrakha, N. (2023). Legal Challenges for International Fintech Startups. *International Journal of Law and Policy*, 1–8.
- 4) Baltus, B. (2019). *Perceptions of authenticity towards Māori Branding: Congruence as determinant?*
- 5) Brown, L. G. (1990). *Convenience in Services Marketing*.
- 6) Chang, C. (2012). *Reviewing and conceptualising customer-perceived value*.
- 7) Chen, A. C. H., Chen, S. K., & Ma, C. L. (2016). Brand experience and customer equity prediction. *Advances in Business and Management Forecasting*, 11, 19–38. <https://doi.org/10.1108/S1477-407020160000011003>
- 8) Chen, B., & Su, X. (2016). *Audit Quality and Information Transparency of Audit Firms in China: A Constructive Framework*.
- 9) Chen, Y. (2024). *Marketing Strategies for Chinese Smartphone Brands to Compete with iPhone*.
- 10) CİVELEK, M. E., & SÖZER, E. G. (2018). How Does Customer Experience Shape the Attitude Towards and Intention to Brand Switching? *Journal of Business Research - Turk*, 10(1), 856–875. <https://doi.org/10.20491/isarder.2018.400>
- 11) Delgado-Ballester, E., Luis, J. Â., & Ân, M.-A. (2001). Brand trust in the context of consumer loyalty. In *European Journal of Marketing* (Vol. 35, Issue 12). # MCB University Press. <http://www.emerald-library.com/ft>
- 12) Djakasaputra, A., Pramono, R., & Hulu, E. (2020). *Brand Image, Perceived Quality, Ease Of Use, Trust, Price, Service Quality On Customer Satisfaction And Purchase Intention Of Blibli Website With Digital Technology As Dummy Variable In The Use Of Eviews*.
- 13) Dzhain, N. (2014). *Impact of Switching Costs and Network Effects on Adoption of Mobile Platforms Information Systems Science Master's thesis*. www.tcpdf.org
- 14) Dzyabura, D., & Peres, R. (2021). Visual Elicitation of Brand Perception. *Journal of Marketing*, 85(4), 44–66. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022242921996661>
- 15) Foroughi, A., Sherilou, M., & Hajmirsadeghi, R. S. (2012). *Exploring the role of brand image in explaining consumer shopping behavior of counterfeits*.
- 16) Fox, G. (2021). Understanding and Enhancing Consumer Privacy Perceptions in the Cloud. In *Palgrave Studies in Digital Business and Enabling Technologies* (pp. 59–78). Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-54660-1_4
- 17) Haile, N., & Altmann, J. (2018). Evaluating investments in portability and interoperability between software service platforms. *Future Generation Computer Systems*, 78, 224–241. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.future.2017.04.040>
- 18) Hawass, H. H. (2013). Brand trust: implications from consumer doubts in the Egyptian mobile phone market. *Journal of Islamic Marketing*, 4(1), 80–100. <https://doi.org/10.1108/17590831311306363>

- 19) Hieltjes, P. J., & Hieltjes, E. H. (2014). Implementing inbound open innovation in the CE industry. A case study of Philips-branded Televisions. *Journal of Innovation Management* Hieltjes, 2, 69–82. <http://www.open-jim.org><http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0>
- 20) Hui, M. K., & Zhou, L. (2002). Linking Product Evaluations and Purchase Intention for Country-of-Origin Effects. *Journal of Global Marketing*, 15(3–4), 95–116. https://doi.org/10.1300/J042v15n03_05
- 21) İzmir, O. (2016). *Which Evaluation Criterion is Affected by Country of Origin and Forms Purchase Intention the Most: An Empirical Study*. www.gjebs.com
- 22) Jiang, F.-Y., Lu, C.-H., Huang, Z.-T., & Zhu, J. (2017). *An Analysis of Huawei 's Comprehensive Innovation Model and Its Enlightenment*.
- 23) Jih, W.-J. (2007). *Effects of Consumer-Perceived Convenience on Shopping Intention in Mobile Commerce: An Empirical study*.
- 24) Kamarudin, Y., Sanusi, Z. M., Nazatul, S., Syed, F., Nazri, M., Frensidy, B., & Mat-Isa, Y. (2022). *Ethical Decision Making Among Auditors in Indonesia: Examination on State Professional Skepticism and Auditor Independence*.
- 25) Kang, J., & Hustvedt, G. (2014). Building Trust Between Consumers and Corporations: The Role of Consumer Perceptions of Transparency and Social Responsibility. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 125(2), 253–265. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-013-1916-7>
- 26) Kim, C., & Christiaans, H. (2011). *The Influence of Product Differentiation, Product Innovation, Factor of Cultural, Social, Personal and Psychological on Purchasing Decisions*.
- 27) Kumaran, K., Lunyai, J., & Nordin, N. B. A. (2024). The Role of Hedonic Motivation in Social Commerce toward Consumer Purchase Intention. *International Journal of Business and Society*, 25(2), 592–612. <https://doi.org/10.33736/ijbs.7619.2024>
- 28) Lan, R. (2024). *Research on Innovative Paths of Brand Marketing in the New Consumption Era from the Perspective of Brand Touchpoints*.
- 29) Lee, C., & Penyelidikan, C. J. (2006). *Sample Size Estimation Using Krejcie and Morgan and Cohen Statistical Power Analysis: A Comparison*.
- 30) Li, F., & Yi, Z. (2017). Trial or No Trial: Supplying Costly Signals to Improve Profits. *Decision Sciences*, 48(4), 795–827. <https://doi.org/10.1111/dec.12233>
- 31) Liu, H. (2023). Cultural Influence on Consumer Behavior: Strategies for Adapting Marketing Campaigns in a Globalized World. In *International Journal of Education, Humanities and Social Sciences Int. J. Educ. Humanit. Soc. Sci* (Vol. 1, Issue 1). <https://soapubs.com/index.php/IJEHSS>
- 32) Maity, M., Dass, M., & Kumar, P. (2018). The impact of media richness on consumer information search and choice. *Journal of Business Research*, 87, 36–45. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2018.02.003>
- 33) Matatu, L. T. (2019). Determinants of Consumer's Online Purchase Behavior in Zimbabwe. *Journal of Management and Humanity Research*, 1, 1–10. <https://doi.org/10.22457/jmhr.v1a01101>
- 34) Merabet, A. (2020). The Effect of Country-of-Origin Image on Purchase Intention. The Mediating Role of Perceived Quality and Perceived Price. *European Journal of Business and Management Research*, 5(6). <https://doi.org/10.24018/ejbmr.2020.5.6.589>
- 35) Morel, K. P., & ThH Pruyn, A. (2003). *Consumer Skepticism Toward New Products*.
- 36) Nainggolan, F., & Hidayet, A. (2020). The Effect of Country of Origin, Brand Image, Price Fairness, and Service Quality on Loyalty toward iPhone Mobile Users, Mediated by Consumer Satisfaction. *European Journal of Business and Management Research*, 5(1). <https://doi.org/10.24018/ejbmr.2020.5.1.233>

- 37) Osmanova, I., Ozerden, S., Dalal, B., & Ibrahim, B. (2023). Examining the Relationship between Brand Symbolism and Brand Evangelism through Consumer Brand Identification: Evidence from Starbucks Coffee Brand. *Sustainability (Switzerland)*, 15(2). <https://doi.org/10.3390/su15021684>
- 38) Permadi, A., & Silalahi, S. (2021). The Effect of Customer Experience and Customer Engagement Through Customer Loyalty on Sales Revenue Achievement at PT United Tractors. *Emerging Markets: Business and Management Studies Journal*, 9(1), 1–17. <https://doi.org/10.33555/embm.v9i1.194>
- 39) Rosenkrans, G. (2009). The Creativeness and Effectiveness of Online Interactive Rich Media Advertising. *Journal of Interactive Advertising*, 9(2), 18–31. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15252019.2009.10722152>
- 40) Sarim Nadeem, M. (2024). Omnichannel Strategies in Retail: Integrating Online and Offline Channels to Enhance Customer Experience. *International Journal of Science and Research (IJSR)*, 13(3), 1350–1353. <https://doi.org/10.21275/es24309141013>
- 41) Sheer, V. C., & Chen, L. (2004). Improving media richness theory: A study of interaction goals, message valence, and task complexity in manager-subordinate communication. *Management Communication Quarterly*, 18(1), 76–93. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0893318904265803>
- 42) Sie, K. (2022). *The Analysis of Smartphones' Operating System and Customers' Purchasing Decision: Application to HarmonyOS and Other Smartphone Companies*.
- 43) Singh, A. G. (2024). *An Analysis of Consumer's Concerns in Digital Economy and Effectiveness of Consumer Protection Laws* (Vol. 5, Issue 4). www.ijfmr.com
- 44) Subedi, D. (2016). *Explaining Innovation Using a Supply Chain Framework*.
- 45) Swaminathan, Prof. F. (2013). *Cultural Dimensions in Malaysian Brand Communications*.
- 46) Taifi, N. (2014). After-Sales Services: Technology Management and Beyond. *Journal of Information and Knowledge Management*, 13(1). <https://doi.org/10.1142/S021964921450004X>
- 47) Tang, R., Inoue, Y., & Tsujimoto, M. (2025). Synergy Effect in Platform Ecosystem: A Quantitative Analysis of Smart Home Products. *IEEE Access*, 13, 13482–13506. <https://doi.org/10.1109/ACCESS.2025.3531993>
- 48) Truong, V. A., Lang, B., & Conroy, D. M. (2022). When food governance matters to consumer food choice: Consumer perception of and preference for food quality certifications. *Appetite*, 168. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.appet.2021.105688>
- 49) Wang, Chunzhi., & Chen, Hongwei. (2010). *Effects of Indicators o Trustworthiness on Overall Brand Trust in Customer Relationship Management*. IEEE.
- 50) Wang, X. (2024). Digital Marketing Strategies and Consumer Engagement: Unveiling TikToks E-Commerce Dynamics. *Advances in Economics, Management and Political Sciences*, 103(1), 183–190. <https://doi.org/10.54254/2754-1169/103/20242445>
- 51) Wen, E. C. Y., Hoo, W. C., Lee, A., & Cheng, A. Y. (2023). Mobile Banking Application (App) Adoption Behaviour Amongst Malaysian Consumers. *WSEAS Transactions on Business and Economics*, 20, 759–769. <https://doi.org/10.37394/23207.2023.20.70>
- 52) Zhou, F., Jiao, R. J., Xu, Q., Chen, S., Qu, X., & Helander, M. G. (2009). *An affective-cognitive framework of product ecosystem design*. I E E E.
- 53) Zimmermann, V., Gerber, P., & Stöver, A. (2022). *That Depends - Assessing User Perceptions of Authentication Schemes across Contexts of Use*. <http://arxiv.org/abs/2209.13958>