Information Management and Business Review (ISSN 2220-3796)
Vol. 16, No. 2, pp. 68-81, SI(2) 2024

A Study of the Factors that Influenced Smartphone Purchases among UiTM Students in Malaysia

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Abstract: The global surge in smartphone adoption experienced remarkable expansion, establishing itself as a fundamental component of contemporary living. With ongoing technological progress, smartphones have transformed from simple communication tools into versatile devices with a multitude of features. The decision-making process for smartphone acquisitions was complicated and influenced by a diverse range of factors that differed among individuals, demographics, and cultural settings. This research explored the diverse elements influencing consumers' smartphone purchase decisions, affected by numerous factors ranging from individual preferences and needs to more significant societal trends. Through unraveling these factors, the study aimed to offer valuable insights into the dynamics of the smartphone market, facilitating businesses in adapting to and addressing the evolving demands of consumers. The factors under study were country of origin, product features, brand image, product price, and social influences. Pearson correlation and regression analyses were conducted and the result showed that Product Features and Country of Origin were significant predictors.

Keywords: *Smartphone purchases, UiTM, students, Malaysia.*

1. Introduction and Background

According to a recent report by CounterPoint Research (2023), the worldwide smartphone market experienced a further decline in the opening quarters of 2023, with a 14% decrease in shipments compared to the previous year. This marked the third continuous quarter of decline, which indicated the formidable challenges confronting the industry. Smartphone marketers consistently encountered challenges such as introducing new functions, enhancing product quality, improving appearance, ensuring high-quality services, and utilizing the latest software to remain competitive in the ever-changing and dynamic market. Most individuals use smartphones for internet browsing, social media communication, information retrieval, and video game playing (Tanil & Yong, 2020). Many studies indicated that approximately 35% of the population utilized smartphones. Among these individuals, 94% used their phones to search for local information, 91% conducted product research, and 42% purchased through their devices (Wong, 2022). The determinants affecting customer preference towards smartphones were intricate, as numerous other factors could impact their purchasing decision. In addition, we identified the factors that influenced smartphone purchases among students at the University of Technology Mara (UiTM) campus in Puncak Alam, and the factors that we used as our independent variables were (i) country of origin, (ii) product features, (iii) brand image, (iv) product price, and (v) social influences. The results obtained from our research offered valuable insights into the determinant factors that influenced smartphone purchases. Our study contributed to the existing body of research by investigating comparable independent variables, strengthening the overall validity and support for our findings.

The research objectives for this study are:
RO1: To examine the relationship between country of origin and smartphone purchases.
RO2: To examine the relationship between product features and smartphone purchases.
RO3: To examine the relationship between brand image and smartphone purchases.
RO4: To examine the relationship between product price and smartphone purchases.
RO5: To examine the relationship between social influences and smartphone purchases.
RO6: To examine the relationship between the most significant factors influencing smartphone purchases.

2. Literature Review

Dependent Variable

Purchase intention will determine how likely and ready a customer is to buy a certain brand or product. A consumer's decision-making process and choice among the many options on the market will be affected by this important factor in their buying behavior. Purchase intention will be a very important factor in a consumer's choice to buy a smartphone, according to Alrwashdeha, et. al. (2019). When people have a strong purchase desire, it will mean that they will be set on buying a certain brand of smartphone, even though there will be other options on the market. Electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) contact will be one of the things that can change someone's decision to buy. Online reviews and tips will be examples of eWOM communication that will give customers useful information and change how they think about a brand. Positive eWOM will be able to make people more likely to buy by lowering doubt and building trust in the choice to buy. In addition, according to Wibowo, et. al. (2021), people will want to buy a certain smartphone when they have a high purchase intention. For instance, if people think that a certain brand of smartphone will have high quality and new features, that will make them more likely to buy that brand. In the same way, a good company image, which will include things like character, trustworthiness, and recognition, will also get people interested and make them more likely to buy. Overall, purchase intention will show how much people will want to buy smartphones. It will be affected by many things, such as the country of origin, the product's features, the brand's image, the price of the product, and social influences. Marketers will be able to use these factors to change people's minds about what to buy and come up with good ways to get and keep customers in the smartphone market (Rakib et. al. 2022).

Independent Variables

Country of Origin: When it comes to smartphones, Wibowo et. al. (2021) will say that the country of origin will affect how people will buy them. The country of origin will be important because it will have a big effect on how people will think about and judge goods. People's ideas about the quality, dependability, and validity of a product will be affected by how that country is known and pictured. Consumers will often connect certain countries with certain traits, like technological progress, economic growth, or skill in a certain field. Furthermore, the country of origin can still affect what people will buy. Researchers will find that a product's good image in its home country will help people think that the product is of high quality. If a smartphone name is linked to a country that is known for making high-quality goods, it will get people interested and make them more likely to buy. Hence, the country of origin can help people decide how good it will be, how well it will be made, and how much it will be worth overall. It will also change how emotionally connected and proud people will be to buy goods from their own country or countries they admire (Anwar, Yasin, Iqbal, Sajid, 2018). Businesses will carefully place their products and will take advantage of the good feelings that will come with certain countries when they know how important the country of origin will be. It will help build a brand's image, bring in the right customers, and change people's minds about buying. It will also help with marketing plans, making new products, and communicating with customers so that everything will fit with how they think about and like products from a certain place. Overall, the country of origin will affect what people will buy by changing how they think about the quality of smartphones. A good image from the country of origin will make people more interested in smartphones and more likely to buy them (Parkvithee & Miranda, 2022).

Product Features: The product features of smartphones will be anticipated to satisfy the evolving needs and desires of customers. Customers will be empowered to select smartphones that offer diverse features, catering to their individual preferences. It will be asserted that customers, each with distinct priorities, will be able to choose smartphones equipped with cutting-edge features aligned with future technologies, enabling them to seamlessly adapt to the latest advancements. Moreover, features will be classified into two main categories: external and internal attributes of smartphones. External considerations will encompass aspects such as body design, size, and weight, while internal factors will involve a comparison of the programs or software, as exemplified by Apple's iOS. These attributes will significantly influence customers, becoming key factors in their decision-making process when making a purchase. According to Ngian, et. al (2023), the age variable will play a statistically significant role in considering product features, particularly those related to technology. Customers are likely to adjust their perspectives based on the technological advancements offered by a brand. The more advanced the technology a brand provides, the greater trust customers will place in that brand. This trend will be notable among both Millennials and Generation Z, who will prioritize superior technology as it

significantly shapes their perceptions (Hallak & Zeid, 2022). As a result, it will be inferred that product features will play a crucial role in positively impacting a brand's image. The enhanced features of smartphones will contribute to elevating the brand image and creating a favorable perception among consumers. The combination of product features and brand image will play a significant role in shaping future purchasing decisions for smartphones. Other studies also stated that factors that influence the purchase intention of mobile phones, features, and design are one of the main factors (Dziwornu, 2023).

Brand Image: The brand image of a smartphone will be critical for its long-term success. It will serve to strengthen, support, and define the brand in comparison to its competitors. Research will continue to show that brand image plays a major role in influencing the intention to purchase a smartphone. Customers will have the flexibility to choose the brand that aligns with their preferences (Mustafa & Al Rifat, 2019). It will be observed that brands with a larger user base and satisfied customers will contribute positively to the brand image, enhancing the likelihood of customers choosing that brand. Users will experience uncertainty, concern, fear, and a sense of threat regarding missing out on information if they do not use the trending smartphone brand. The societal discourse around a particular brand will continue to influence people's comfort levels with their chosen brand. The discussion of smartphone brands in society will impact individuals' feelings of comfort or discomfort. There will be a connection between regular internet usage and the smartphone brand discussed in society, with people feeling uncomfortable if they are not using the brand that is currently popular or being talked about. The research conducted by Song and Kim (2022) suggests that users will not only consider the features and performance of a smartphone but also the brand image, societal trends, and the fear of missing out on information. The findings will highlight the complex interplay of psychological and social factors in consumer decision-making related to smartphones. In addition, the country of origin will have a strong connection with the brand image, wherein a country that produces high-quality smartphones will create a positive brand image for its products. These two independent variables will have a significant impact on the future purchase intention of buying smartphones. It will be evident that the brand image of the smartphone will attract more customers to purchase the smartphone when they can provide strong branding with high quality, and customers will not doubt their decision to purchase the smartphone (Ganlari, Deka & Dutta, 2016).

Product Price: According to Pakola, Pietila, Svento, and Karjaluoto (2023), many customers consider pricing while selecting a mobile phone model. Research by Suki (2023) suggests that young college students' smartphone selection and purchase behavior are greatly influenced by product prices. This implies that while buying a mobile phone, young consumers will take prices into account in addition to technological advancement (Leppaniemi & Karjaluoto, 2015). The cost of a product is a big factor in how people decide if they want to buy it. Some think the price reflects how good the product is, while others might not see it that way. When there are discounts, more people might want to buy, especially if the discounts are big. But, in the case of smartphones, people often care more about how useful the phone is and what features it has, even if the price is a bit higher. Researchers found that the price of smartphones matters when people decide to buy them. Some studies say that the price has a big impact on how much people want a smartphone, while others say it's a main factor in whether people decide to buy one. It's not just about the price itself; it's also about how much people value smartphones and how much they are willing to pay for them (Levrini & Santos, 2021). When it comes to smartphones, the correlation between price and buying decisions is not simple. People prioritize the quality and features of the smartphone over the cost, even if it involves paying a little extra. This aligns with the researchers' proposal that the price of a smartphone significantly influences whether young customers choose to purchase it or not. Consequently, researchers will do a research method to find a deeper understanding of how the price of a smartphone impacts people's desire to buy it, particularly among young customers. In addition, Gaulari et al (2021) claimed that the factors that influence consumer buying design are pricing. Researchers conclude that if the product gives of offers a high price, then it will directly influence and stimulate the buying intentions.

Social Influences: Social influence refers to how people can be influenced by others, either intentionally or unintentionally, impacting their thoughts, feelings, attitudes, and actions. This plays a significant role in what customers decide to do and buy. It's about how other people shape our beliefs, emotions, and behaviors (Mason et al 2021).

Those around us, like family, friends, and peers, can influence what we choose to purchase. Social influence

comes from three connected social forces which are what people around us think, how much we desire something, and how we want others to perceive us. It occurs when people we know, such as parents, family, and friends, interact with each other. For example, when buying something, family can have a considerable influence on our choices. Some individuals may choose to buy an expensive smartphone to showcase their social status. The internet, especially through social media like Facebook and Twitter, has both positive and negative impacts on influencing purchase decisions. People can learn about different brands from online opinions, and social media platforms can sway their choices. Media, parents, and friends can significantly impact the smartphones people want to buy. Young individuals, especially students, often rely on suggestions from others when getting a smartphone. Even during the COVID-19 pandemic, advice from important individuals gained heightened importance in decision-making (Ahsan, 2019). Researchers believe that social influence has a substantial and positive impact on young customers deciding to buy smartphones, and they aim to explore this further through their research method (Rakib et al., 2022).

The Relationship Between Country of Origin and Purchase Intention: According to Wibowo, Rizan, and Febrilia (2021), the relationship between the Country of Origin (COO) and purchase intention is complex and not universally consistent. The COO can influence purchase intention positively or negatively, depending on the product, the country associated with it, and the consumer's perceptions. The literature suggests that some consumers are influenced positively by the COO, particularly when the product originates from a country with a strong reputation for quality production. This positive influence can arise from the "made in" label, which can serve as a stimulus that shapes consumer perceptions and influences their purchasing decisions. For example, products from countries like Japan or Germany might be perceived as high quality, which could lead to higher purchase intentions. However, the direct effect of the COO on purchase intention is a significant relationship. Some studies indicate that while the COO might have a positive effect on perceived quality, it does not necessarily translate into a significant direct effect on purchase intention (Yan et. al., 2019). This suggests that simply having a product from a country with an excellent reputation may not be enough to guarantee higher purchase intentions. Other factors, such as brand image and perceived quality, play crucial roles in influencing purchase intentions. In summary, while the COO can positively influence purchase intention due to its association with perceived quality, its direct effect on purchase intentions has a significant relationship, and the influence can vary across different products and consumer contexts.

The Relationship Between Product Features and Purchase Intention: According to Rakib et. al. (2022), the relationship between product features and purchase intention is a significant factor in the decision-making process of customers when considering the purchase of a smartphone. Product features, such as brand name, product price, social influences, and country of origin, have been found to influence the buying behavior of customers. These features play a crucial role in shaping the preferences and intentions of customers when choosing a smartphone. The study has confirmed that product features have a significant positive influence on customers' purchase intentions for smartphones. This suggests that the attributes and up-to-date features of a smartphone can impact the purchase intention of customers, indicating that customers are more likely to consider purchasing a brand if it offers more attributes and updated features. Therefore, the inclusion of more features and the upgrading of existing features to ensure better online connectivity can increase the purchase intentions of customers. Shahirah et. al (2021) revealed product features were the only factor that significantly influenced the intention of teenagers to purchase mobile phones. Furthermore, the study by Rakibul, Pramanik, Amran, Islam & Sarker (2022) revealed there is a significant effect of product features on purchases-on-purchase intention during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Relationship Between Brand Image and Purchase Intention: Despite the importance of a smartphone's brand image for its long-term success, the research suggests that, surprisingly, this brand image does not strongly influence people's intentions to buy the product. Customers will be able to select the brand that best fulfills their needs. Brands with a larger user base and satisfied customers will contribute favorably to the brand image, increasing the chance of people choosing that brand. However, the study found a connection between brand image and purchase intention but explained that the impact of brand image is relatively low in driving smartphone purchases. This is because a smartphone's brand image is more than just technical specifications. It's a narrative that extends beyond the device's specifications. Customers tend to associate a brand with certain values, attitudes, and experiences. When a company consistently presents itself as reliable, innovative, and customer-focused, it builds trust and loyalty among consumers. According to Wibowo et. al. (2021), since

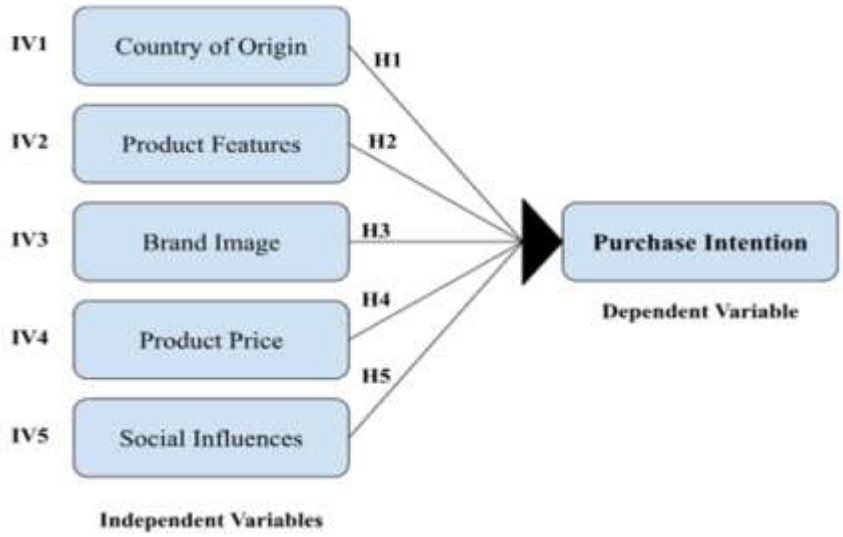
smartphones play a significant role in people's lives, the positive feelings and trust linked to a strong brand image do affect purchase intention. However, the study emphasizes that the impact of brand image, while present, is not as high as other factors like trust and quality when individuals decide to buy a smartphone. Azira et. al (2016), found out brand image has a significant relationship with purchasing intention among university students.

The Relationship Between Product Price and Purchase Intention: The price of a smartphone plays a crucial role in shaping consumers' intentions to buy it. Research consistently indicates that product price is a significant factor influencing purchasing decisions in the smartphone market. The relationship between price and purchase intention is often complex and multifaceted, but this finding shows that there is a positive relationship between product price and purchase intention. This is because price plays a vital role for people when purchasing a smartphone. The price must be aligned with their budget, which means if the price is more than their budget, it can reduce their intention to buy a smartphone. Besides that, lower-priced models may attract budget-conscious buyers or those seeking value for money, influencing their intention to make a purchase. On the other hand, premium-priced smartphones may appeal to consumers who associate higher prices with superior quality, advanced features, and prestige. Moreover, the perceived value of a smartphone about its price is critical. Customers assess whether the features and capabilities offered justify the cost. A favorable balance between price and perceived value positively influences purchase intention. According to Rakib et. al. (2022), customers are more likely to buy a product if the discount rate is more substantial. For example, promotional strategies, discounts, and special offers can sway consumer decisions. Limited-time price reductions or bundled deals often create a sense of urgency, prompting potential buyers to act on their purchase intentions.

The Relationship Between Social Influences and Purchase Intention: Social influence is about how people can be influenced by others, either intentionally or unintentionally, affecting what they think, feel, and believe. Studies show that there's no link between social influence and the intention to buy a smartphone. However, people frequently discover that their choices when buying smartphones are shaped by the people around them. This social influence takes different forms, like suggestions from friends and family, online reviews, or trends promoted by influencers. The desire to fit in with societal expectations or gain approval from others can greatly affect whether someone plans to buy a smartphone. Moreover, the exchange of experiences and viewpoints among social groups builds a shared knowledge pool that guides individuals in picking a device that fits with current preferences or what is seen as socially accepted standards.

Based on the findings of this study, suggest that the influence of smartphone purchases is not universal and affects only a specific group of individuals. The impact of such influence seems limited since people predominantly rely on the opinions of their close relatives rather than being significantly swayed by broader external factors. In other words, the research indicates that some individuals may be susceptible to the influence of external sources. When it comes to buying smartphones, the majority tend to base their decisions more heavily on the recommendations and preferences of their immediate family members. This implies that the impact of external influences on smartphone purchasing behavior might be relatively modest, with personal connections exerting a more substantial effect on individuals' decision-making processes. In addition, Azira et. al (2016), show social influence has a significant relationship with the purchasing intention of smartphones among university students. However, in contrast, the study by Rakibul (2022) et. al. the finding of this study shows social influences have no significant impact on young customers' purchase intentions on smartphones during the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, with the literature reviewed, the theoretical framework and hypotheses were developed as follows (Table 1 below).

Figure 1: Theoretical Framework



H1: There is a positive relationship between Country of Origin and Purchase Intention.
H0: There is no relationship between Country of Origin and Purchase Intention.

H2: There is a positive relationship between Product Features and Purchase Intention.
H0: There is no relationship between Product Features and Purchase Intention.

H3: There is a positive relationship between Brand Image and Purchase Intention.
H0: There is no relationship between Brand Image and Purchase Intention.

H4: There is a positive relationship between Product Price and Purchase Intention.
H0: There is no relationship between Product Price and Purchase Intention.

H5: There is a positive relationship between Social Influences and Purchase Intention.
H0: There is no relationship between Social Influences and Purchase Intention.

Research Methodology

Introduction: The research design functions as a strategic roadmap, directing the choice of methods and approaches to adeptly analyze data and tackle the research problem. Within this comprehensive framework, we delved into six critical components which are the purpose of the study, type of investigation, extent of researcher interference with the study, study setting, unit of analysis, and time horizon.

Purpose of the study: The purpose of the research is to delve into the factors influencing smartphone purchases among students at UiTM Puncak Alam. The study is to investigate the relationship between Country of Origin (IV1), Product Features (IV2), Brand Image (IV3), Product Price (IV4), and Social Influences (IV5) on Purchase Intention (DV). To achieve this, we adopted a quantitative research approach, employing a correlational investigation design.

Types of Investigation: Besides that, in the construction of this study, a correlational relationship has been explored, examining how one variable moves in conjunction with others that impact smartphone purchases. The data collection method involves surveys, with stratified sampling conducted through online platforms like Google Forms. The collected data was analyzed using the Pearson Correlation Coefficient.

Extent of Researcher's Interference with the Study: Then, the extent of researcher interference in this study has been minimal, as respondents largely remain anonymous, and questionnaires have been distributed through Google Forms. The study setting is characterized as a non-contrived, field experiment, aligning with

correlational studies. This approach ensures that the environment is maintained as naturally as possible.

Study Setting: The investigation unfolded in a genuine setting, devoid of artificial manipulations, adhering to a non-contrived approach where no intentional alterations were made throughout the research. The procedures were characterized by minimal intervention, allowing the factors under scrutiny to remain uncontrolled and unmodified. Data acquisition occurred through a manual administration of an online survey to participants, with the overarching objective of delving into what are the factors that influence smartphone purchases.

Unit of Analysis: The unit of analysis is aligned with the research objective, focusing on identifying the factors influencing smartphone purchases based on respondent preferences. Therefore, individuals were selected as the study unit of analysis.

Time Horizon: A cross-sectional study, a research design employed here, involves simultaneous data collection from numerous individuals. Adequate respondent data is imperative for unraveling the intricate relationships between variables and psychological adjustment. Gathering the necessary information for the theoretical framework might span approximately a month, contingent on the appropriateness of individuals for the research goals. Occasionally, data may be procured periodically to more effectively align with the overarching research objectives.

Population and Sampling: The research population of the study focused on the student community at UiTM Puncak Alam, specifically students from the semester 5 Human Resource (HR) program, PERSENI club, SPORTS community, RESO FBM club, HURES club, and iBEAST club that consisted of 400 members.

Sampling Frame: The sampling frame for this study was obtained in the diverse student community, specifically in Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), Puncak Alam.

Sampling Size: As a sample for our study, we chose students from a diverse student community at UiTM Puncak Alam. This study required a minimum of 196 respondents due to the use of stratified sampling, which is a type of probability sampling. However, the total sample size achieved was 400 as shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Sample size

No.	Community	A proportionate Number of Students
1	Part 5 HR Students	155
2	PERSENI club	111
3	SPORTS community	66
4	RESO FBM club	16
5	HURES club	25
6	iBEAST club	27
TOTAL		**400**

Questionnaire Design: The questionnaire designed as shown in Table 2, for this research, was based on two related journals that are also related to the research objective. Following that, we then compiled a list of all questions from those two journals for the lecturer to review before we began collecting data. Furthermore, the questionnaire has included related questions that are based on the factors that influence smartphone purchases. Finally, the Likert scale was used in the selection of elaboration on the variables section.

Table 2: Questionnaire Sources

Variable	No. of Question	Sources
Purchase Intention (DV)	10	(Rakibul, Pramanik, Amran, Islam & Sarker, 2022). Factors affecting young customers' smartphone purchase intention during the Covid-19 pandemic.
Country of Origin (IV1)	7	(Wibowo, Rizan & Febrilia, 2021). The influence of country of origin and brand image on purchase intention of Oppo smartphones with perceived quality as intervening variables.
Product Features (IV2)	5	(Rakibul, Pramanik, Amran, Islam & Sarker, 2022). Factors affecting young customers' smartphone purchase intention during the Covid-19 pandemic.
Brand Image (IV3)	3	(Rakibul, Pramanik, Amran, Islam & Sarker, 2022). Factors affecting young customers' smartphone purchase intention during the Covid-19 pandemic.
Product Price (IV4)	3	(Rakibul, Pramanik, Amran, Islam & Sarker, 2022). Factors affecting young customers' smartphone purchase intention during the Covid-19 pandemic.
Social Influences (IV5)	3	(Rakibul, Pramanik, Amran, Islam & Sarker, 2022). Factors affecting young customers' smartphone purchase intention during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Table 3 shows the response rate of the respondents of the study.

Table 3: Response Rate of The Study

Total E-Questionnaires Distributed	Total Questionnaires Collected	Overall response rate (%)
400	400	100%

4. Data Analysis

The data was analyzed with SPSS version 28 and the demographic analysis was as in Table 4 below.

Table 4: Demographic Analysis

Variable	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender:		
Female	301	75.3%
Male	99	24.8%
Age:		
19 – 25 years old	378	94.5%
26 – 30 years old	13	3.3%
31 years old and above	9	2.3%
Marital Status:		
Married	21	5.3%
Single	379	94.8%

Types of Respondents:		
HURES Club	25	6.3%
iBEAST Club	27	6.8%
Part 5 HR Students	155	38.8%
PERSENI Club	111	27.8%
RESO FBM Club	16	4.0%
SPORTS Community	66	16.5%

Table 5: Descriptive Analysis

Variables	Mean	Standard Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
Purchase Intention (DV)	4.1627	0.66486	-1.276	3.027
Country of Origin (IV1)	4.0621	0.64700	-.525	0.525
Product Features (IV2)	4.3405	0.61343	-1.154	2.086
Brand Image (IV3)	3.8919	0.82434	-.597	0.335
Product Price (IV4)	3.9358	0.71234	-.749	1.261
Social Influences (IV5)	3.4083	0.99059	-.179	-.497

Table 5 above shows the descriptive analysis. Product Features (IV2) had the highest mean score of 4.3405, while Social Influences (IV5) had the lowest at 3.4083. The descriptive analysis table above reveals that all of the variables achieved a maximum value of 5.00, while Purchase Intention (DV), Brand Image (IV3), Product Price (IV4), and Social Influences (IV5) had the lowest minimum value of 1.00. The analysis unveiled intriguing findings, highlighting a notable score for Purchase Intention (DV) with a mean (M) of 4.1627 and a standard deviation (SD) of 0.66486. Turning our attention to the independent variables, Country of Origin (IV1) demonstrated a respectable mean (M) of 4.0621, accompanied by a standard deviation (SD) of 0.64700. Product Features (IV2) emerged with a robust mean (M) of 4.3405 and a standard deviation (SD) of 0.61343, positioning it as a significant factor. On the other hand, Brand Image (IV3) exhibited a mean (M) of 3.8919, revealing nuances in consumer perceptions, with a standard deviation (SD) of 0.82434. The analysis further uncovered Product Price (IV4) with a mean (M) of 3.9358 and a standard deviation (SD) of 0.71234, indicating its role in shaping consumer decisions. Finally, Social Influences (IV5) garnered attention, showcasing a mean (M) of 3.4083 and a standard deviation (SD) of 0.99059, suggesting its varied impact on Purchase Intention (DV).

Examining the skewness distribution, it is noteworthy that all variables displayed pronounced skewness, with values falling well below the range of 3 to -3 considered indicative of a moderately skewed distribution. Each variable exhibited skewness values surpassing the -3 threshold, underscoring the considerable asymmetry in the data distribution across the board.

Reliability Analysis: The qualities of measuring scales and the items that comprise the scales can be studied using reliability analysis. The Reliability Analysis process computes a variety of regularly used measures of scale reliability as well as information about the relationships between particular scale items. Inter-rater reliability estimates can be computed using intraclass correlation coefficients. In this research, we use Cronbach's Alpha Test. It is because Cronbach's Alpha is a measure of internal consistency, or how closely linked a group of things is. It is regarded as a scale reliability metric. A "high" alpha value does not mean that the metric is unidimensional. Additional analyses can be undertaken if, in addition to testing internal consistency, you want to give proof that the scale in question is unidimensional. Therefore, Cronbach's Alpha supports the creation of reliable evidence for perceived (i) country of origin, (ii) product features, (iii) brand image, and (v) social influences with our Dependent Variable except for (iv) product price that influenced smartphone purchases as shown in Table 6.

Table 6: Reliability Analysis

Variables	No. of Item	No. of Item Deleted	Cronbach's Alpha
DV: Purchase Intention	10	-	0.898
IV 1: Country of Origin	7	-	0.916
IV 2: Product Features	5	-	0.809
IV 3: Brand Image	4	-	0.797
IV 4: Product Price	3	-	**0.515**
IV 5: Social Influences	3	-	0.729

Perusing the table above, all Cronbach's Alpha coefficients exceed the 0.7 benchmark. Significantly, each variable delineated in the table exhibits a commendable reliability quotient surpassing the 0.7 standard, except for IV4, attesting to the online questionnaire items' reliability, comprehensibility, and relevance to the overarching studies. Remarkably, no items within the independent variables have undergone deletion, a strategic decision aimed at upholding the integrity of Cronbach's Alpha values, all of which stand resolutely above the commendable 0.7 threshold for every variable scrutinized. Therefore, IV4 was excluded for further analysis.

Correlation Analysis: We used Pearson correlation analysis to answer the first research question: "What factors influence smartphone purchases?" This analysis helps us understand how two variables are related. The result of the correlation can be either positive or negative, depending on whether the correlation coefficient is positive or negative. The correlation coefficient tells us about the direction, strength, and significance of the relationship between the measured variables. To gauge the strengths of the correlation, we looked at the correlation coefficient's value. If it's less than 0.3, it indicates a weak correlation, between 0.3 and 0.7 is considered a medium correlation, and anything above 0.7 suggests a strong correlation as in Table 8.

Table 7: Correlation Analysis

Variables	DV
DV: Purchase Intention	1
IV 1: Country of Origin	.645**
IV 2: Product Features	.672**
IV 3: Brand Image	.533**
IV 5: Social Influences	.385**

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

Phrasing Correlation

Country of Origin (IV1): We conducted a Pearson correlation to explore the connection between Country of Origin (IV1) and Purchase Intention (DV). The analysis revealed a moderate positive correlation, with r (398) = 0.645, P<0.01, signifying a noteworthy relationship between the two variables. This suggests that as the perception of country of origin increases, there is a concurrent enhancement in Purchase Intention. Product Features (IV2) We conducted a Pearson correlation to explore the connection between Product Features (IV2) and Purchase Intention (DV). The analysis revealed a moderate positive correlation, with r (398) = 0.672, P<0.01, signifying a noteworthy relationship between the two variables. This suggests that as the perception of Product Features increases, there was a concurrent enhancement in Purchase Intention.

Product Features (IV2): We conducted a Pearson correlation to explore the connection between Product Features (IV2) and Purchase Intention (DV). The analysis revealed a moderate positive correlation, with r (398) = 0.672, P<0.01, signifying a noteworthy relationship between the two variables. This suggests that as the perception of Product Features increases, there was a concurrent enhancement in Purchase Intention.

Brand Image (IV3): We conducted a Pearson correlation to explore the connection between Brand Image (IV3) and Purchase Intention (DV). The analysis revealed a moderate positive correlation, with r (398) = 0.533, P<0.01, signifying a noteworthy relationship between the two variables. This suggests that as the perception of Brand Image increases, there is a concurrent enhancement in Purchase Intention.

Social Influences (IV5): We conducted a Pearson correlation to explore the connection between Social Influences (IV5) and Purchase Intention (DV). The analysis revealed a moderate positive correlation, with r (398) = 0.385, P<0.01, signifying a noteworthy relationship between the two variables. This suggests that as the perception of Social Influences increases, there is a concurrent enhancement in Purchase Intention. In our research, we scrutinized four independent variables, namely Country of Origin (IV1), Product Features (IV2), Brand Image (IV3), and Social Influences (IV5). The correlation table presented earlier indicated that there were correlations among all four independent variables.

Regression Analysis

Regression analysis (Table 8) is a statistical method used to analyze or examine the relationship between dependent variables and independent variables. In this study, the dependent variable is purchasing intention, and the independent variables include country of origin, product features, brand image, and social influences. The table below presents the results of the regression analysis for this study. According to the results, the R2 value for this study was 0.571, indicating that the independent variables account for 57.1% of the variance in purchase intention. The remaining 42.9% represents unexplored variables not captured in this study. Therefore, it is recommended for future research to delve into these unexamined factors.

Table 8: Regression Analysis

Independent Variable	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	.299	.175		1.710	0.088
IV 1: Country of Origin	.339	.044	.330	7.712	0.000
IV 2: Product Features	.416	.049	.384	8.522	0.000
IV 3: Brand Image	.052	.037	.064	1.404	.1610
IV 5: Social Influences	.050	.027	.074	1.870	.0620
Dependent Variable: DV: Purchase Intention					
R^2	0.571				
F Value	104.774				
Significance	0.000				

Phrasing Regression: A multiple linear regression was calculated to predict purchase attention based on (i) country of origin, (ii) product features, (iii) brand image, and (v) social influences. These are the independent variables that will be examined in this research study. A significant regression equation was found, which was 104.774 (5,394) = 104.774, P < 0.001, with an R square of 0.571. Aside from that, the respondent's predicted variable was equal to DV: Purchase Intention = 0.299 + 0.416 (IV2: Product Features) + 0.339 (IV1: Country of Origin), where IV(s) were coded as 1 (strongly disagree) - 5 (strongly agree). Therefore, the independent variables IV2: Product Features and IV1: Country of Origin were significant predictors.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

This chapter explores the link between dependent and independent variables, based on the findings from the earlier chapter. This chapter addresses the research limitations identified during the study. In addition, we further discussed and made recommendations for the future use of other researchers. The statistical results from the previous chapter showed that the two independent variables of (i) brand image, and (ii) social influences carried no regression with purchase intention while the country of origin and product features were the factors that positively related to purchase intention.

The Relationship Between Country of Origin and Purchase Intention: Based on the results of this research, there was a significant relationship between country of origin and purchase intention among students in UiTM. The significant value of country of origin is 0.000, which is less than 0.05. Accordingly, H1 is accepted. Previous studies supported this finding, indicating that the country of origin is important since it determines how people perceive and evaluate goods. People's judgments of the quality, dependability, and validity of a product were influenced by how that country was known and portrayed. Consumers often connect certain countries with specific characteristics, such as technical advancement, economic growth, or expertise in a certain field (Wibowo, Rizan & Febrilia, 2021). This demonstrates that the country of origin shapes consumer perceptions of product quality, reliability, and overall value, as well as the way consumers react to and evaluate products.

The Relationship Between Product Features and Purchase Intention: Based on the results of this research, there was a significant relationship between product features and purchase intention among students in UiTM. The significant value of product features is 0.000, which is less than 0.05. Accordingly, H2 was accepted. Previous studies supported this finding, indicating that customers are likely to shift their perspectives based on technology advancements offered by a brand. Customers will place more trust in a brand that supplies modern technology. This trend will be seen among both Millennials and Generation Z, who value greater technology since it influences their perceptions (Kays, 2022). This demonstrated that product features of smartphones are anticipated to satisfy the evolving needs and desires of customers. Customers are empowered to select smartphones that offer diverse features, catering to their individual preferences.

The Relationship Between Brand Image and Purchase Intention: Based on the results of this research, there was a relationship between brand image and purchase intention among students in UiTM. The results in Table 16 reveal that brand image does not influence purchase intention. The significant value of brand image was 0.161, which was more than 0.05. Therefore, there was no significant relationship between brand image and purchase intention among students in UiTM. Thus, H3 was rejected.

The Relationship Between Social Influences and Purchase Intention: Based on the results of this research, there was a relationship between social influences and purchase intention among students in UiTM. The results in Table 16 reveal that social influences do not influence purchase intention. The significant value of social influences was 0.062, which is more than 0.05. Therefore, there was no significant relationship between social influences and purchase intention among students in UiTM. Thus, H5 was rejected.

Recommendations

The integration of smartphones into students' lives has transformed these devices from mere communication tools into essential instruments for learning, organization, and connectivity. As the factors influencing smartphone purchases among students are intricate and pivotal, smartphone manufacturers and educators alike must consider strategies that enhance the educational potential of the smartphone. To begin with, smartphone manufacturers should prioritize the development of education-centric features. Smartphones that offer enhanced access to educational resources, compatibility with learning applications, and features supporting collaborative tasks can significantly appeal to the student consumer base. By tailoring smartphones to meet the academic needs of students, manufacturers not only capture a specific market but also contribute to the educational journey of the users. Furthermore, affordability and accessibility are paramount considerations. Manufacturers and policymakers must collaborate on initiatives that make smartphones more affordable and accessible to students from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds.

Special pricing, discounts, or subsidized programs can play a pivotal role in ensuring that all students have

access to the technological tools necessary for their academic success. Moreover, the seamless integration of smartphones with collaborative platforms and communication tools is another key recommendation. Manufacturers should focus on developing devices that enhance students' ability to collaborate on projects, engage in study sessions, and communicate effectively with peers. A more connected and interactive learning environment can be fostered by ensuring that smartphones are not just individual learning tools but also facilitators of collective educational experiences. In conclusion, the integration of smartphones into the educational landscape requires a holistic approach. By incorporating these recommendations, manufacturers and educators can together shape an educational ecosystem where smartphones serve as powerful instruments, enriching students' academic journeys and preparing them for a digitally connected future. Through strategic collaboration and thoughtful design considerations, the potential of smartphones to positively impact education is not just a possibility but a shared commitment to fostering enhanced learning opportunities for students around the world.

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