

Factors Influencing Consumer Loyalty: A Study in the Tech Industry

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ABSTRACT

Since Apple's 2010 release of the revolutionary iPhone 4, the brand has become a dominant force in the tech industry, fostering high customer loyalty through its integrated, secure ecosystem. This study aims to explore the factors driving Apple's consumer loyalty in Malaysia, focusing on brand experience, brand innovativeness, social influence, perceived value, and brand trust. Primary and secondary data were collected, and a digital survey of 150 Malaysian Apple users provided insights into their loyalty determinants. Using regression analysis, the findings reveal that perceived value and brand trust significantly and positively impact consumer loyalty, while brand experience, brand innovativeness, and social influence show minimal influence. With an R-squared value of 0.596, the model suggests that nearly 60% of loyalty variance is explained by these factors, highlighting perceived value and trust as critical components. These results imply that Apple should prioritize enhancing perceived value and maintaining brand trust to strengthen consumer loyalty in competitive markets. Future research could explore additional factors like sustainability and community engagement to provide a fuller understanding of loyalty drivers in the tech industry.

Keywords: Brand Experience; Brand Innovativeness; Brand Trust; Consumer Loyalty; Perceived Value

INTRODUCTION

Founded on April 1, 1976, Apple Inc. has become a formidable force in the technology sector, gradually capturing half of the mobile phone market by 2010 with the launch of the iPhone 4. This smartphone, powered by an enhanced iOS system derived from Mac OS 10, was pivotal in allowing Apple to effectively compete against a myriad of devices utilizing the Android operating system. In the computer market, Apple's Mac OS stands out for its clear and concise internal logic, which has significantly challenged Microsoft's Windows operating system and the myriad of computers running on it.

Consumer loyalty is defined as the tendency of customers to repeatedly purchase a specific brand within a particular product category (Nandhini & Vanaja, 2020). This loyalty is not merely a matter of preference; it can yield a host of benefits for companies, including enhanced word-of-mouth marketing, increased profitability, expanded market share, and improved customer retention rates. In the case of Apple, the brand's global success is a testament to its ability to cultivate consumer loyalty, a benchmark that many other brands aspire to achieve. Apple has established itself as a household name, known for flagship products such as the Mac, iPad, iPhone, and Apple Watch. This reputation for quality and innovation is mirrored in the substantial growth of the company's market value.

Under the leadership of Tim Cook, Apple made history in 2018 by becoming the first publicly traded company in the United States to reach a valuation of over \$1 trillion (Vega, 2021). This impressive figure doubled by 2020, reaching \$2 trillion, and as of 2022, Apple's brand value soared to an astounding \$3 trillion, solidifying its status as one of the world's most valuable brands (Balu & Randewich, 2022). Given this remarkable trajectory, fostering strong consumer loyalty is essential for Apple to sustain and enhance its market value.

Guy Kawasaki, a noted Apple evangelist, described the brand's appeal as "a serendipitous discovery" (McConnell & Huba, 2003). Jonathan Ive emphasized the deep, personal relationship consumers have with Apple's products, indicating that this connection is a crucial element of the brand's success (Arlidge, 2014). The phenomenon is evident during product launches and the openings of Apple Stores, where enthusiastic consumers often line up days in advance. This level of engagement is a direct result of Apple's commitment to exceeding consumer expectations through innovative product development, which harmonizes software and hardware design to meet current needs. This product innovativeness not only impacts the mobile phone industry but also sets a benchmark that competitors strive to emulate (Aliakperov, 2019).

Statista's Global Consumer Survey reveals that Apple garners the highest ratings for brand loyalty among smartphones in the United States, with 48% of iPhone users indicating they are unlikely to switch to other brands (Richter, 2022). The objective of this research is to investigate the key factors that influence consumer loyalty among Apple users in Malaysia, focusing specifically on brand experience, brand innovativeness, social influence, perceived value, and brand trust. This study is significant as it provides a comprehensive analysis of the elements that contribute to brand loyalty within the competitive technology sector, where customer retention is essential for long-term success. The novelty of this research lies in its localized approach, offering insights specific to the Malaysian market and highlighting how Apple's brand dynamics influence loyalty in this context. By identifying the primary drivers of consumer loyalty, this study contributes valuable knowledge to both academic and practical discussions on brand management. The findings can inform strategic decisions for technology brands aiming

to enhance customer engagement and loyalty, providing a foundation for further research on loyalty determinants in emerging markets and the technology sector.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Consumer Loyalty

In marketing, a key factor influencing a brand's future success is consumer loyalty. Loyalty represents a consumer's consistently positive evaluation of a brand, often reflected in their buying habits (Taufik et al., 2022). This loyalty is critical for a brand's sustainability and long-term growth, especially in highly competitive sectors like Information and Computer Technology (ICT), where products such as smartphones rely heavily on consumer retention for continued success (Kee et al., 2021; Shi et al., 2018). Consumer loyalty is characterized as a cyclical process in which a consumer repeatedly purchases a brand's products and is willing to recommend them to others (Arif & Syahputri, 2021; Taufik et al., 2022). Focusing on retaining current customers rather than solely seeking new ones is essential for long-term profitability, as efforts to attract new buyers can be costly and can be disrupted by competitors' sales promotions and innovations.

Consumer loyalty can be examined through both behavioral and attitudinal lenses. Behavioral loyalty involves actual repurchase actions, while attitudinal loyalty reflects a consumer's positive commitment toward the brand. For instance, a loyal consumer may exhibit behaviors such as repurchasing the brand's product when needed, recommending the brand to friends and family, and waiting for a brand's product if it is out of stock rather than switching to a competitor. These behaviors are pivotal in maintaining customer loyalty, as they reveal a consumer's underlying trust and commitment to the brand. For businesses, fostering loyalty is vital; when a company consistently provides superior products or services, it encourages consumers to remain faithful to the brand, even in the face of competitive alternatives (Yang & Peterson, 2004). The impact of loyal consumers extends beyond repeat purchases, as they contribute to a brand's resilience and longevity by acting as brand advocates and sustaining market share.

Brand Experience

To delve deeper into the concept of brand experience and its impact on consumer loyalty, it is essential to understand how the various components of brand experience work together to shape customer perceptions. Brand experience is a multidimensional construct that includes sensory, affective, intellectual, and behavioral dimensions (Brakus et al., 2009). Sensory experiences, such as product design, aesthetics, and packaging, serve as the consumer's initial point of attraction, appealing directly to the senses and drawing attention to the brand. Beyond this initial attraction, emotional experiences create a deeper connection by aligning consumer sentiments with the brand's values and mission, fostering a sense of belonging and attachment. Intellectual engagement, on the other hand, involves stimulating the consumer's mind and encouraging reflection on the brand's identity, purpose, and values, which can further strengthen long-term loyalty. Finally, behavioral experiences arise through the actual use of the product, reinforcing brand associations and perceptions of reliability through hands-on interaction.

In the modern, highly competitive marketplace, marketing strategies that focus on providing a cohesive brand experience across all touchpoints are critical. An effective brand experience transcends the product itself and involves a variety of stimuli, including online interactions, customer service, and physical retail environments. Creating a consistent and positive brand experience across these areas enhances customer trust

and reinforces loyalty, as it fosters a perception of the brand as reliable and satisfying. Research shows that positive brand experiences can have a lasting influence on consumer behavior, leading to higher rates of repeated purchases and increased brand advocacy (Iglesias et al., 2011). This consistent experience fosters not only loyalty but also an emotional connection that resonates with customers.

Social media and digital platforms have further expanded the reach and impact of the brand experience by enabling consumers to access brand information quickly and participate in online brand communities. This level of virtual interaction builds emotional attachment, making consumers feel more closely connected to the brand, which in turn positively affects loyalty. For example, a study by Rahman and Susila (2022) highlights how Apple's brand experience has fostered a loyal consumer base, with users consistently repurchasing products due to high levels of satisfaction and positive prior experiences. This example illustrates that brand experience can serve as a strategic tool for building enduring consumer relationships and driving business growth through increased loyalty. Consequently, the hypothesis arises that:

H1: Brand experience is positively related to consumer loyalty.

Brand Innovativeness

Expanding on the concept of brand innovativeness, it becomes evident that innovation is crucial in building both functional and emotional connections between consumers and brands. When consumers perceive a brand as innovative, they are more likely to associate it with advanced, solution-oriented offerings that promise to improve their daily lives or address specific needs in unique ways. This perception enhances customer satisfaction on multiple levels, meeting cognitive expectations by providing practical value while also fulfilling an emotional desire to be associated with progressive, forward-thinking brands (Kunz et al., 2011). For example, Apple's commitment to product innovation, exemplified by advancements in the iPhone series—such as the introduction of sophisticated camera technology, enhanced processing speeds, and user-friendly interfaces—demonstrates its dedication to delivering products that cater not only to current demands but also to future consumer expectations. Such continuous innovation strengthens consumer trust in the brand, as it reinforces a sense of reliability that Apple will continue to evolve in alignment with user needs.

Beyond product features, brand innovativeness also shapes consumer loyalty by cultivating an image of leadership and modernity that appeals to consumers' sense of self. Brands serve as a medium for self-expression, and affiliating with an innovative brand allows consumers to project an identity of modernity and adaptability. This alignment deepens brand attachment, as customers feel a personal stake in the brand's achievements and development. Research by Wong and Haque (2021) highlights that brands characterized by innovation are better equipped to differentiate themselves in crowded markets, capturing consumer attention through novel offerings that make the brand appear dynamic and continuously relevant. This ongoing reinvention not only maintains consumer interest but also solidifies loyalty, as consumers find a renewed sense of value in staying engaged with the brand.

Moreover, brand innovativeness fosters word-of-mouth advocacy, as consumers are inclined to recommend brands they perceive as pioneers. Satisfied consumers, who feel their needs are met both practically and emotionally, often become brand advocates, extending the brand's reputation through personal recommendations and thereby expanding its market reach. Advocacy amplifies the brand's image as a leader in its field, which can attract new consumers and strengthen the loyalty of existing ones. These dynamics suggest that brand innovativeness not only drives consumer loyalty through

individual satisfaction but also contributes to the brand's overall visibility and appeal in the marketplace. Based on these observations, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H2: Brand innovativeness is positively related to consumer loyalty.

Social Influencing

Social influence plays a vital role in shaping consumer decisions by utilizing the power of social connections and trust within interpersonal networks. When individuals receive product recommendations or observe usage among trusted sources like family, friends, or colleagues, they are more likely to perceive those products or services as reliable and trustworthy. This effect, known as "social proof," drives consumers to align their choices with those of people they respect or trust, leading them to adopt similar purchasing decisions or behaviors (Wang & Chou, 2014). Social proof not only validates the brand but also reduces the perceived risk associated with trying new products, as consumers view popular choices among their peers as safer and more favorable.

The impact of social influence is further amplified by the omnipresence of social media and digital platforms, where users are regularly exposed to brand endorsements and recommendations from influencers, celebrities, and peers. Social media interactions serve as a form of modern word-of-mouth, increasing the reach of social influence and providing consumers with an ongoing stream of social cues that impact their buying choices. For instance, seeing favorable reviews or endorsements from admired figures online can encourage users to try a product themselves. These digital interactions shape consumer perceptions by enhancing brand credibility, as products with positive social media presence are often perceived as trustworthy and desirable. As a result, consumers develop a preference for brands popular within their social circles and online communities, further reinforcing the notion of social proof.

Social influence also has a notable impact on brand loyalty. Repeated exposure to positive feedback within social groups strengthens brand preference and fosters customer retention. When consumers witness ongoing satisfaction with a brand among their peers, this shared experience not only validates their own choices but also builds a sense of community around the brand, intensifying emotional attachment. According to research by Ruiz-Mafe et al. (2016), social influence substantially contributes to customer loyalty, as consumers feel more assured in their purchasing decisions when they align with the preferences of their social networks. This collective validation can lead to increased brand loyalty, as individuals feel part of a shared experience that reinforces their connection to the brand.

Additionally, the sense of belonging that social influence fosters is crucial for developing lasting brand relationships. When consumers see that a brand is widely accepted and admired by their peers, it often enhances their personal identity and pride in using the brand, further solidifying their loyalty. The feeling of being part of a brand community, where choices are socially validated and widely endorsed, cultivates a deeper commitment to the brand over time. This research supports the hypothesis that social influence is a powerful force in building consumer loyalty, suggesting that:

H3: Social influencing is positively related to consumer loyalty.

Perceived Value

The concept of customer perceived value is a multifaceted evaluation that plays a crucial role in consumer loyalty, extending beyond a mere comparison of cost and benefit. Customer perceived value encompasses emotional, social, and functional dimensions that collectively shape a consumer's overall experience and satisfaction with a brand

(Ganatra et al., 2021). Emotional value, for instance, involves the feelings and satisfaction a product evokes, which profoundly influences the depth of attachment a consumer feels toward a brand. When a product resonates emotionally—through its design, brand prestige, or sensory appeal—it creates a lasting impression that builds brand affinity and fosters loyalty (Servera-Francés & Piqueras-Tomás, 2019). This connection is not only about the functionality of the product but also about the emotional response it elicits, such as joy, excitement, or nostalgia, which enhances the consumer's bond with the brand.

Social value, meanwhile, is derived from a product's capacity to enhance a customer's social standing or to facilitate their inclusion in particular social groups. Products perceived as socially valuable contribute positively to a consumer's self-image and social identity, making them more likely to remain loyal to brands that align with their social aspirations. For example, owning an Apple product, which is often seen as a status symbol, enables consumers to connect with a community that values innovation, sophistication, and style, thereby reinforcing their loyalty. This social connection strengthens the perceived worth of the brand in the eyes of consumers who see it as a representation of their social values and identity.

Functional value is also integral to perceived value, focusing on the practical benefits of product quality, utility, and performance in relation to cost. Consumers evaluate functional value by assessing whether a product meets or exceeds their expectations in quality and usability while offering long-term cost-effectiveness. This value-driven assessment is a critical factor in determining consumers' likelihood of repurchasing or recommending a brand. For instance, Lew (2022) found that Apple's commitment to delivering high functional value—through reliable performance, user-friendly interfaces, and durability—has significantly bolstered brand loyalty. Consumers who believe that a brand consistently provides value across emotional, social, and functional dimensions are more inclined to stay loyal, as they perceive the brand as continuously meeting and fulfilling their expectations.

Understanding the impact of perceived value on consumer loyalty highlights its essential role in brand strategy. By delivering perceived value that satisfies emotional, social, and functional needs, brands can cultivate a loyal consumer base that views the brand as a comprehensive solution to their various demands. This multifaceted approach ensures that the brand remains competitive by appealing to the diverse motivations that drive consumer loyalty. Based on this understanding, the hypothesis is formulated as follows:

H4: Perceived value is positively related to consumer loyalty.

Brand Trust

Expanding on the concept of brand trust, it is evident that trust forms the foundation for lasting relationships between a brand and its customers. Brand trust is built on the confidence that a brand will consistently deliver on its promises, meet customer needs, and maintain high-quality standards (Qualtrics, 2021). When a brand continuously fulfills these expectations, it not only proves its reliability but also strengthens its credibility in the eyes of consumers. This consistency in delivering value helps shape the perception that the brand genuinely prioritizes its customers' satisfaction and well-being, which in turn fosters an emotional connection capable of transforming occasional buyers into long-term, loyal advocates.

The role of brand trust extends beyond simple purchase decisions; it also significantly influences how customers perceive and manage risks associated with choosing a particular brand. A strong sense of trust mitigates perceived risks and uncertainties,

providing consumers with a sense of security even in competitive markets where other similar options exist. This feeling of security often leads to repeated choices in favor of the trusted brand, reinforcing brand loyalty over time. For instance, [Hokky and Bernanto \(2021\)](#) have shown that brand trust has a direct influence on loyalty, as customers who have confidence in a brand are more likely to remain loyal, endorse it to others, and even overlook occasional lapses in service. The forgiving nature of these loyal consumers highlights the resilience of trust as a factor in maintaining positive brand relationships despite challenges or mistakes.

In the context of the digital era, brand trust is also increasingly shaped by online interactions, peer reviews, and the transparency of brand practices. The modern consumer has access to a vast amount of information and is likely to seek validation through online reviews, testimonials, and social proof before fully committing to a brand. Brands that uphold transparency, ethical practices, and engage authentically with their customers tend to cultivate higher levels of trust. Digital transparency—such as clear communication about product sourcing, corporate values, and responses to customer feedback—demonstrates the brand's commitment to integrity. This perceived openness reassures consumers and makes them more inclined to support the brand. Studies indicate that consumers today highly value these attributes and are increasingly loyal to brands that consistently display authenticity and ethical behavior.

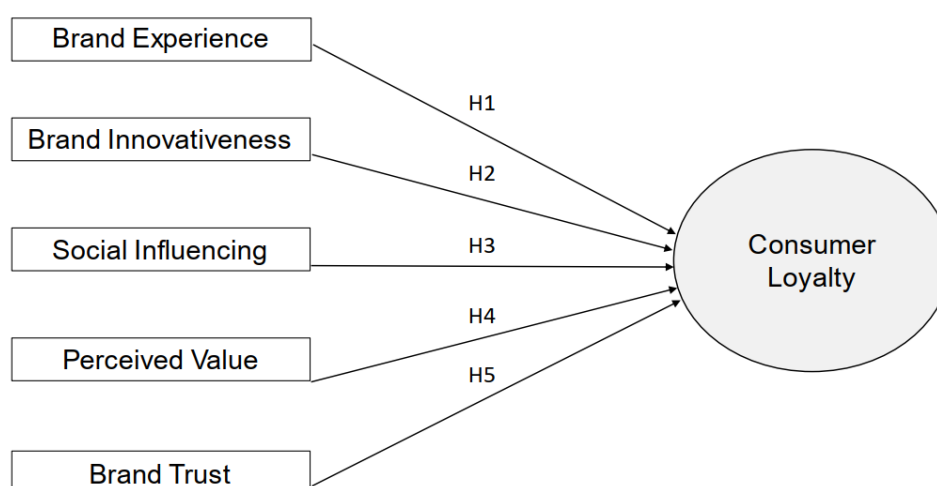
Moreover, brand trust is often reinforced by the consistency of the brand's message and values across all platforms and interactions. When customers experience a coherent and reliable brand message, they feel that they are engaging with a stable, predictable brand, which strengthens their loyalty. Brands that are perceived as trustworthy benefit from stronger customer commitment, reduced churn rates, and increased advocacy, as loyal customers become informal brand ambassadors, sharing their positive experiences with others. This form of organic endorsement not only widens the brand's reach but also solidifies its standing in the marketplace.

Given the critical role of trust in fostering brand loyalty, the relationship can be hypothesized as follows:

H5: Brand trust is positively related to consumer loyalty.

[Figure 1](#) illustrates the research model. Five hypotheses were developed in all.

Figure 1. Research Model



RESEARCH METHOD

The research approach applied in this study involved quantitative analysis through regression to examine the factors influencing consumer loyalty among Apple users in Malaysia. Data were collected via a digital questionnaire, resulting in 150 valid responses. Each response was analyzed to determine the strength and significance of five predictor variables—brand experience, brand innovativeness, social influencing, perceived value, and brand trust—on consumer loyalty. Multiple regression analysis was performed, providing standardized beta coefficients to show the effect size of each predictor.

Measures

This study utilizes a structured approach to evaluate the relationships between Apple's brand experience, brand innovativeness, social influence, perceived value, and brand trust with consumer loyalty. Each variable was assessed through carefully selected items to ensure comprehensive measurement, enabling accurate analysis of how each factor contributes to loyalty. The items were adapted from established studies, reflecting a strong foundation in validated research scales and enhancing the reliability of our findings.

Brand experience was evaluated using items adapted from [Sahin et al. \(2011\)](#), such as “I am satisfied when I use Apple products” and “Apple’s features meet my expectations,” which together form a measure with a high internal consistency ($\alpha = 0.95$). For brand innovativeness, items like “I feel the Apple product is an innovative product compared to its competitors” from [Gözükara and Çolakoğlu \(2016\)](#) ($\alpha = 0.92$) captured consumers' perceptions of Apple’s innovative edge. Social influence was measured through statements regarding the recommendations of close friends and family, reflecting the role of social approval in purchase decisions.

Perceived value was assessed by items like “The price of Apple products corresponds to its value,” evaluating consumers’ cost-benefit perception of Apple’s offerings. Brand trust, based on [Hokky and Bernanto \(2021\)](#), included items such as “Apple's brand and products are trustworthy,” reflecting reliability (AVE = 0.60). Lastly, consumer loyalty items like “I consider myself as a loyal consumer of Apple” showed strong reliability with a Cronbach’s alpha of 0.900. The high Cronbach’s alpha values for all constructs indicate robust internal consistency, suggesting that the items accurately represent the intended dimensions and are reliable for analyzing factors that influence loyalty in Apple’s target market. This structured approach, with a five-point Likert scale, allows for nuanced insights into the role of each factor in fostering Apple’s consumer loyalty.

RESULTS

Table 1. Summary of Respondents’ Demographic Characteristics (N=150)

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	93	62
Female	57	38
Age		
18-22 years old	70	46.7
23-27 years old	40	26.7
28-32 years old	20	13.3
33-37 years old	12	8
38-42 years old	5	3.3
Above 42 years old	3	2

Ethnicity		
Malay	33	22
Chinese	102	68
Indian	11	7.3
Other	4	2.7
Education Level		
Secondary School	13	8.7
Diploma	21	14
Bachelor's Degree	110	73.3
Master's Degree	5	3.3
PhD	1	0.7
Occupation		
Student	84	56
Self-employed	10	6.7
Employed	48	32
Unemployed	4	2.7
Homemaker	4	2.7
Monthly Household Income		
B40: Below RM 4,850	68	45.3
M40: RM 4,581- RM 10,970	64	42.7
T20: RM 10,971 and above	18	12
Apple product(s) currently using		
iPhone	116	77.3
iPad	92	61.3
Apple Watch	37	24.7
Mac	40	26.7
AirPods	48	32
Apple TV	9	6
Other Apple Accessories	12	8

The survey results in Table 1 provide a snapshot of Apple users' demographic profile in Malaysia, offering insights into the characteristics of the respondents who participated in the study. The sample, primarily young adults aged 18-22 years (46.7%), reflects a demographic inclined towards technology-savvy products. With a high percentage of respondents having attained tertiary education (91.3%), it indicates that the sample is likely familiar with digital trends and potentially holds a preference for premium technology brands such as Apple. The M40 income category (42.7%), representing Malaysia's middle-income group, suggests a substantial portion of respondents with sufficient disposable income to invest in higher-end devices.

Moreover, the predominance of undergraduates (73.3%) in the survey sample underscores the popularity of Apple products among younger students, who may favor the brand for its functionality, design, and status. Additionally, the high usage rates for iPhones (77.3%) and iPads (61.3%) highlight these products as preferred choices within Apple's lineup among Malaysian consumers. This demographic breakdown aids in understanding the appeal and customer loyalty factors specific to Apple's target market in Malaysia, which will be further analyzed in this study.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics, Cronbach's Coefficients Alpha, and Zero-order Correlations for All Variables

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6
1 Brand Experience	0.839					

2	Brand Innovativeness	0.655**	0.825				
3	Social Influencing	0.427**	0.561**	0.763			
4	Perceived Value	0.578**	0.481**	0.406**	0.833		
5	Brand Trust	0.705**	0.542**	0.457**	0.755**	0.844	
6	Consumer Loyalty	0.540**	0.403**	0.387**	0.728**	0.713**	0.900
Number of items		5	5	5	5	5	6
Mean		4.61	4.51	4.5	4.47	4.62	4.41
Standard Deviation		0.45	0.47	0.56	0.55	0.50	0.63

Note: N = 150; *p < 0.05, **p < 0.01, ***p < 0.001. The diagonal entries represent Cronbach's coefficients alpha.

Table 2 provides a comprehensive overview of the descriptive statistics, reliability scores, and zero-order correlations for each of the variables in this study. The Cronbach's alpha scores for each variable fall between 0.80 and 0.90, indicating high reliability and strong internal consistency, essential for ensuring the validity of the findings. These scores confirm that the items used to measure brand experience, brand innovativeness, social influence, perceived value, and brand trust are consistently aligned with the intended constructs. The high reliability underscores the robustness of the questionnaire, with each variable demonstrating dependable measurement that minimizes random errors and enhances confidence in the data.

Moreover, the zero-order correlations reveal positive associations between all predictor variables (brand experience, brand innovativeness, social influence, perceived value, and brand trust) and consumer loyalty, suggesting that each factor has a potential influence on loyalty to the Apple brand. This consistency and reliability validate the scale's effectiveness, supporting the foundation for further analysis to understand the impact of each variable on consumer loyalty. The high internal consistency within these variables strengthens the study's framework, enabling a clearer interpretation of the relationships between brand-related factors and consumer loyalty.

Table 3. Regression Analysis

Variables		Consumer Loyalty (Standardized Beta)
1	Brand Experience	0.060
2	Brand Innovativeness	-0.073
3	Social Influencing	0.064
4	Perceived Value	0.437***
5	Brand Trust	0.351***
F-value		42.501
R Square		0.596
Adjusted R Square		0.582

Note: N = 150; *p < 0.05, **p < 0.01, ***p < 0.001.

Table 3 presents the results of a regression analysis examining the influence of several variables on consumer loyalty. The standardized beta coefficients indicate the strength and direction of each predictor's relationship with consumer loyalty, with statistical significance marked for each variable.

The analysis reveals that brand experience has a positive but statistically insignificant effect on consumer loyalty, with a standardized beta of 0.060. This result suggests that while brand experience contributes slightly to consumer loyalty, the impact is not strong enough to support Hypothesis 1 (H1), which proposed a significant positive relationship.

Similarly, brand innovativeness has a small, negative, and statistically insignificant relationship with consumer loyalty ($\beta = -0.073$). This finding does not support Hypothesis 2 (H2), which suggested that brand innovativeness would be positively related to consumer loyalty. It appears that brand innovativeness does not play a crucial role in driving loyalty among Apple users in the Malaysian market, potentially due to consumer prioritization of other brand qualities.

Social influencing shows a small, positive, yet statistically insignificant relationship with consumer loyalty, with a beta coefficient of 0.064. This result indicates that social influence has minimal impact on loyalty, failing to support Hypothesis 3 (H3). Despite the assumption that social influences would contribute positively to loyalty, the analysis suggests that consumers may rely more on personal factors like perceived value and trust rather than social cues when forming loyalty to Apple.

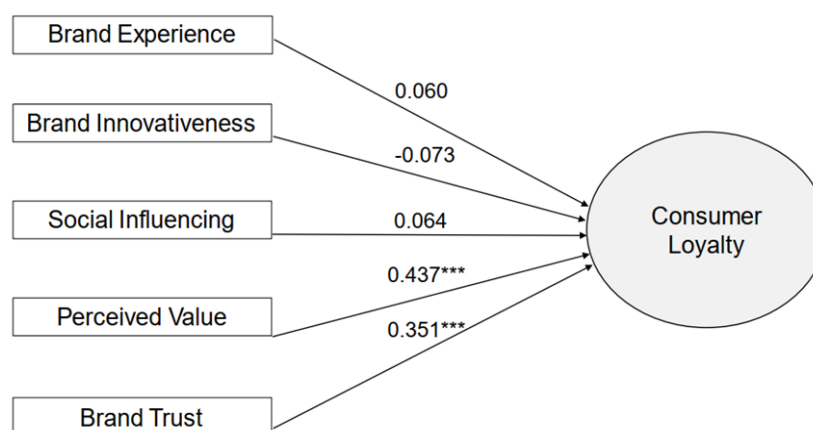
In contrast, perceived value demonstrates a strong, positive, and statistically significant relationship with consumer loyalty, with a standardized beta of 0.437 ($p < 0.001$). This substantial influence supports Hypothesis 4 (H4), confirming that perceived value is a key factor in fostering consumer loyalty. The result indicates that consumers who perceive high value in Apple's offerings are significantly more likely to remain loyal, emphasizing the importance of perceived value as a competitive advantage.

Brand trust also shows a strong, positive, and statistically significant effect on consumer loyalty, with a standardized beta of 0.351 ($p < 0.001$). This finding aligns with Hypothesis 5 (H5), which proposed a positive relationship between brand trust and loyalty. The significant impact of brand trust highlights its role in building long-term customer relationships, suggesting that Apple users' trust in the brand enhances their loyalty.

Overall, the regression model is statistically significant, with an F-value of 42.501, an R Square of 0.596, and an adjusted R Square of 0.582. These values indicate that approximately 59.6% of the variance in consumer loyalty can be explained by the predictors in the model. Perceived value and brand trust emerge as the most influential factors, while brand experience, brand innovativeness, and social influence show limited effects on loyalty. These findings suggest that Apple should focus on strategies that enhance perceived value and build brand trust to strengthen consumer loyalty in the Malaysian market.

The following [Figure 2](#) draws the hypothesized model of this study.

Figure 2. Hypothesized Model



Note: N = 150; * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$.

DISCUSSION

Based on the findings, perceived value and brand trust are the factors that significantly influence Apple's consumer loyalty. According to [Khalifa \(2004\)](#), perceived value is important and strongly linked to consumer loyalty. This is due to the fact that an unpredicted decline or increment in the cost or benefit after the purchase alters the perceived value, resulting in either lowered or improved consumer satisfaction ([Demirgüneş, 2015](#)). Consumer satisfaction and consumer loyalty have a significant relationship; therefore, consumer loyalty will come along when consumer satisfaction is improved. Functional value is the dimension of perceived value, and durability is regarded as one of the properties of functional values ([Le-Hoang, 2020](#)). It represents that the durability of a product may boost its reliability, thereby increasing its functionality and perceived value. Thus, consumers may want to continue purchasing the same brand's product in the future since a durable product offers good value for money. In addition, [Akoglu and Özbek \(2022\)](#) research indicated that consumer loyalty is directly influenced by brand trust. Higher consumer loyalty can be led by brand trust because trust fosters highly valued relational exchanges ([Morgan & Hunt, 1994](#)). When deciding to purchase a product again, consumers will constantly evaluate whether a brand follows through on its brand promise and delivers the ideal product quality, as they are willing to pay more for trusted brands. Otherwise, consumer loyalty will decline if the brand fails to meet its promises because customers might switch to a competitor's brand product ([Ahmed et al., 2014](#)).

In this research, the most dominant factor influencing Apple's consumer loyalty is perceived value. Most respondents stated that the value of Apple's products and services to them is high and that Apple products are durable. According to [Johnson et al. \(2012\)](#), Apple has improved the consumer experience by prioritizing and providing outstanding customer service to retain consumer loyalty. Outstanding customer service can be delivered because their service team members have adequately received training and are empowered to see the problem through to completion. As Apple's customer service is built around the company's core values of respect, compassion, and commitment, consumers can be confident that they will go beyond to assist with whatever problem they are experiencing. However, with well-trained service team members, customers can acquire a consistent and seamless experience from them and, as a result, help Apple gain more loyal consumers. Besides that, the durability of Apple products is another factor that derives perceived value and influences consumer loyalty. The Apple product is considered durable as its product has a 4.3-year average lifespan ([Matyszczyk, 2018](#)). The previous research from [Yusuf et al. \(2019\)](#) denoted that product durability is one of the main reasons consumers desire to purchase the product.

The second significant factor influencing Apple's consumer loyalty is brand trust. Since Apple is a professional in the information technology industry, consumers believe that Apple's brand and products are trustworthy. Apple products like iPhone and iPad are well-known for their high build quality and as a reliable brand ([Jaiswal & Ngamkroekjoti, 2018](#)). On the other hand, consumers also trust that Apple products are safe to use, attributable to the offering of good data security on its devices with Data Protection. By enabling Advanced Data Protection on Apple's devices, most iCloud data will be protected with end-to-end encryption even if there is a data breach due to device theft ([Apple, 2022](#)). The previous research from [Andervazh et al. \(2013\)](#) concludes that brand trust and consumer loyalty have a positive relationship. As a result, the more consumers trust Apple, the more loyal consumers are, and vice versa.

This finding indicates that brand experience, brand innovativeness, and social influence do not influence consumer loyalty toward Apple. According to Yang (2020), even though brand innovativeness is vital in building consumer loyalty, and the price is also a significant consideration for consumers, former Apple users are willing to overlook Apple's shortcomings if the price is significantly lower. Thus, instead of useless tricks, consumers are likely to pay attention to the value they are promised. Although Lee (2011) revealed that brand innovativeness is the factor that can significantly impact consumer loyalty, our research fails to support the positive relationship between brand innovativeness and consumer loyalty. From two studies, the brand experience can be concluded to influence consumer loyalty positively (Brakus et al., 2009; Mostafa & Kasamani, 2020). A previous study from Jaiswal and Ngamkroekjoti (2018) shows that social influence also has a significant impact on Apple's consumer loyalty. Therefore, a limited sample size could be a possible reason our findings differ from previous studies.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study reveals significant insights into the factors shaping Apple user loyalty within the Malaysian market. Although brand experience, brand innovation, and social influence did not demonstrate statistically significant effects on consumer loyalty, the findings highlight the critical roles of perceived value and brand trust. The analysis shows that 59.6% of the variance in consumer loyalty can be attributed to these two dimensions, underscoring their importance in influencing consumer perceptions and behaviors.

This study aligns with prior research by Andervazh et al. (2013), which also identified a positive correlation between brand trust and consumer loyalty. This suggests that as consumer trust in Apple strengthens, so does their loyalty to the brand. Among the factors studied, perceived value emerged as the most influential, supporting the view that consumers who see high value in Apple's products are more likely to stay loyal.

To leverage these insights, it is essential for Apple to enhance perceived value by continuously innovating and improving product quality while providing exceptional customer service. By prioritizing customer experience and ensuring users feel valued, Apple can further strengthen consumer loyalty in a competitive market. Additionally, the data indicates a notable degree of loyalty among Apple users compared to other brands, suggesting that Apple's branding and customer engagement strategies have been effective.

In summary, to maintain and grow consumer loyalty, Apple should concentrate on enhancing perceived value and sustaining high levels of brand trust, both of which are pivotal for fostering long-term customer relationships. Future research could examine the influence of emerging factors, such as sustainability and community engagement, on consumer loyalty in the technology sector, offering a more comprehensive understanding of loyalty dynamics.

LIMITATION

In this study, several limitations should be acknowledged that may affect the generalizability and accuracy of our findings. Firstly, the online nature of the study, utilizing Google Forms to collect responses, resulted in a sample size of only 150 participants. This limited sample may not adequately represent the broader population of Apple users in Malaysia, potentially skewing the results and leading to less reliable conclusions.

Moreover, the distribution of the survey primarily through social media platforms such as Telegram, WhatsApp, and Instagram likely influenced the demographic profile of our respondents. With 46.7% of participants belonging to the young generation aged 18 to 22, the findings may not capture the perspectives of older Apple users or those from different socio-economic backgrounds. This age skew could limit the applicability of the results, as younger consumers might have different brand perceptions and loyalty drivers compared to older demographics. Future research should consider a more diverse sample and utilize various data collection methods to enhance the representativeness and accuracy of findings related to consumer loyalty across different age groups and demographic segments.

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DECLARATION OF CONFLICTING INTERESTS

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

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