



**MIXING BRANDS AND BEHAVIOUR: UNVEILING
THE POWER OF MARKETING MIX AND BRAND AFFINITY
IN MOBILE PHONE CHOICES IN KLANG VALLEY, MALAYSIA**

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Abstract:

The purpose of this study is to examine the influence of the marketing mix (product, price, place, and promotion) on consumer behaviour, particularly the importance of the moderating effect of brand affinity in the mobile phone market in Klang Valley, Malaysia. The consumer landscape is changing within the context of technological development and the COVID-19 pandemic, and, for this reason, understanding the peculiarities of consumer preference and purchasing patterns is critical. The elements of the marketing mix can have a significant effect on consumer decisions, including the product value and quality, the brand image, and such environmental concerns as the product and place of purchase. In these circumstances, the current study examines the relationship of the marketed product features, price elements and strategies, distribution channels, and promotional activities, with brand affinity as a moderating variable. It is demonstrated that all of the effects are related to consumer behaviour in a manner different from the major moderating variable. It contributes to the implementation of strategic marketing and suggests that the marketing mix needs to be harmonized with brand affinity to help consumers improve their engagement in the online environment and increase their loyalty and choices in the conditions of the current digital economy situation.

Keywords: marketing mix, consumer behaviour, brand affinity, consumer engagement, diversification preference, psychology

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1. Introduction

In today's world, mobile phones have become a tool that greatly influences various aspects of consumer behaviour. With the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, many established businesses are struggling to adapt to the conditions (Baker & Judge, 2020). At the time, some entrepreneurs are looking to start ventures while established companies aim to expand their reach into different areas. Understanding customer buying patterns is crucial for a company's health. Before entering the market, it is important for a business to take the time to fully understand consumer preferences (Tien & Ngoc, 2019). The marketing mix, as described by (Hanaysha *et al.*, 2021), comprises four elements: product, price, place, and promotion. These elements play roles in understanding and influencing customer purchasing decisions (Oliynyk, 2019; Lim, 2023). Brand affinity measures how strongly individuals feel connected or loyal to a brand. It reflects customers' emotional attachment and loyalty towards a brand or company (Cha & Seom, 2019).

Moreover, (Saydan & Duleks, 2019) found that for a business to build customer loyalty, it is crucial to boost brand recognition by actively promoting its existence. This study's goal is to explore the relationship between consumer behaviours when purchasing phones (dependent variable) and the effects of the marketing mix (4Ps) as an independent variable. Moreover, this study seeks to assess how brand affinity acts as a moderating factor which influences customers' purchasing habits.

2. Research Problem Statements

This study aims to delve into understanding how consumers make purchasing decisions in the mobile phone market with a focus, on the Klang Valley region in Malaysia. One of the issues raised is how the marketing mix influences consumer behaviour. The marketing mix, encompassing price, product, place and promotion, plays a role in shaping what consumers prefer and choose. According to (Sirajuddin *et al.*, 2023) consumer behaviours have an impact on product demand. It is suggested that factors like perceived value, product quality, brand image and environmental concerns influence consumers choices when buying online or offline (Wang *et al.*, 2016). There is also a need to explore how consumer preferences and buying decisions are affected by a combination of product features, design aesthetics, overall quality of products and broader economic factors (Chen *et al.*, 2022). Pricing has emerged as a factor affecting the adoption of fashion and may also influence how affordable mobile phones impact consumer purchasing patterns. Furthermore, studies have extensively examined consumer preferences for distribution channels—such as stores, carrier outlets or online platforms—in relation, to mobile phone purchases.

Additionally, (Hobson *et al.*, 2017; Holmes *et al.*, 2013) have highlighted how consumers' attitudes and engagement during the shopping experience can be influenced by factors like product accessibility, display placement and distribution.

On the contrary, there is a decreasing reliance on stores due to the convenience of transactions and easy access to product details on the internet as noted by (Tekkali & Vijaya, 2021). Researchers have been exploring the impact of promotions on consumer decisions regarding phone purchases for many years. They have looked into how personalized mobile marketing strategies and promotional efforts can influence buying choices according to (Tong *et al.*, 2020). Furthermore (Mauryas, 2022) suggests that marketing campaigns emphasizing product quality and brand identity could sway consumer decisions within the mobile phone industry. Further studies could delve into methods through which factors like product features, pricing, place and promotions affect consumers' mobile phone buying decisions.

Another crucial aspect involves examining how brand affinity influences consumer purchasing behaviour within the context of marketing mix components. Brand affinity reflects consumers' emotional connection and loyalty toward a brand. The interplay between marketing mix strategies, demographics, consumer behaviour shaping and brand loyalty plays a role in influencing purchasing decisions. These tactics help in enhancing customer interaction, loyalty, recognition and confidence all of which contribute to the objective of increasing sales revenue (Dewi *et al.*, 2022; Khammuang *et al.*, 2019). This study can also offer businesses an insight into how to nurture customer loyalty and drive sales growth. Moreover, in industries where there are innovations or changing trends lesser-known companies might have the opportunity to challenge conventional wisdom, about brand awareness by quickly capturing market share through their ability to adapt and meet new customer needs.

However, there are still gaps in our knowledge of this field. For instance, research on the foundations of belief in misinformation and its resistance to correction is insufficient (Ecker *et al.*, 2022). Additionally, existing research does not fully address the nature of consumer preferences in the mobile phone industry. It is vital to understand how shifts in norms and technological advancements influence changes in consumer preferences over time (Döpfer *et al.*, 2021). The relationship between brand affinity and its moderating impact is further complicated by the evolution of the digital landscape.

As a result, researchers need to create ideas and models that consider how digital aspects affect how customers view brands and their relationships with them. To put it simply, further research is needed to bridge the gaps in knowledge and enhance our understanding of the factors that impact consumers' choices when purchasing phones.

3. Research Questions

The following research questions intend to answer the impact of the marketing mix (price, product, place, and promotion) on consumer purchasing decisions related to mobile phones, emphasising the moderating role of brand affinity in the Klang Valley area. Therefore, the research questions are as follows:

RQ1: Is there a significant relationship between the product element and mobile phone purchasing decisions?

RQ2: Is there a significant relationship between the price element and mobile phone purchasing decisions?

RQ3: Is there a significant relationship between the place element and mobile phone purchasing decisions?

RQ4: Is there a significant relationship between the promotion element and mobile phone purchasing decisions?

RQ5: Does brand affinity moderate the relationship between the product element and mobile phone purchasing decisions?

RQ6: Does brand affinity moderate the relationship between the price element and mobile phone purchasing decisions?

RQ7: Does brand affinity moderate the relationship between the place element and mobile phone purchasing decisions?

RQ8: Does brand affinity moderate the relationship between the promotion element and mobile phone purchasing decisions?

4. Research Objectives

The study aims to offer valuable insights for mobile phone marketers in the Klang Valley region, focusing on effective strategies and the integration of the Customer-Based Brand Equity model to understand brand affinity's influence on consumer behaviour and purchasing decisions.

RO1: To investigate if there is a significant relationship between Product element and mobile phone purchasing decision.

RO2: To scrutinize if there is a significant relationship between Price element and mobile phone purchasing decision.

RO3: To examine if there is a significant relationship between Place element and mobile phone purchasing decision.

RO4: To study if there is a significant relationship between Promotion element and mobile phone purchasing decision.

RO5: To explore if brand affinity moderates the relationship between Product element and mobile phone purchasing decision.

RO6: To investigate if brand affinity moderates the relationship between Price element and mobile phone purchasing decision.

RO7: To scrutinize if brand affinity moderates the relationship between Place element and mobile phone purchasing decision.

RO8: To examine if brand affinity moderates the relationship between Promotion element and mobile phone purchasing decision.

5. Underpinning Theory: Customer-Based Brand Equity (CBBE)

This study is primarily based on the Customer-Based Brand Equity (CBBE) model (Keller, 2013) which serves as a foundational framework to investigate the relationship between

independent and dependent variables within the context of the study. This model is also known as Keller's Brand Equity Model (Keller, 2013). The CBBE model is structured as a 4-level pyramid guiding businesses from establishing a strong brand identity to achieving the pinnacle of brand equity, known as 'resonance.' At this apex, customers form a deep connection with the brand, becoming advocates. The model's relevance to this study lies in its focus on investigating how the marketing mix (product, price, place, and promotion) interacts with consumer purchasing decisions and the moderating effects of brand affinity.

6. Literature Review and Hypothesis Development

The following section discusses the dependent variable and the relationships between the independent variables and the dependent variable, which leads to the development of the hypothesis.

6.1 Consumer Purchasing Behaviour

The process of consumer behaviour involves five steps: recognising a problem, assessing information, deciding on options, completing the purchase, and evaluating the experience (Roy & Datta, 2022; Dewi *et al.*, 2022; Saeed, 2019). Both internal factors, such as preferences, and external factors, like influences, play vital roles in shaping consumer choices (Sundareswaran *et al.*, 2022; Roy & Datta, 2022; Kasirye, 2022).

Furthermore, product features, pricing strategies, promotional activities, and factors such as climate and economic conditions impact consumer preferences (Dewi *et al.*, 2022; Kasirye, 2022). Understanding consumer behaviour is vital for businesses to tailor marketing approaches by effectively evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of their operations, anticipating market shifts accurately, customising offerings to meet demand, and enhancing customer satisfaction levels, leading to brand loyalty.

6.2 Relationship between Product Element and Mobile Phone Purchasing Decision

According to studies by (Maheswari, 2023; Kasirye, 2022; Putra *et al.*, 2020), a product comprises both intangible aspects that cater to the needs and desires of customers. Factors such as product performance, quality attributes, characteristics, design and brand play a role in influencing consumer buying behaviour as noted by (Hassan *et al.*, 2022). Research by (Santoso *et al.*, 2020) suggests that product innovation can impact consumer purchasing decisions, while (Abdullah *et al.*, 2021) emphasize the significance of product features for consumers. Moreover, findings from (Shokouhyar *et al.*, 2021; Rambabu *et al.*, 2019) indicate that factors like mobile phone chip performance, camera features and design contribute to consumers' purchase choices.

Additionally, studies conducted by (Prahawan *et al.*, 2022; Thi *et al.*, 2020) reveal a significant relationship between the country of origin of a product, its quality, and consumers' intention to make purchases. Moreover, (Garga *et al.*, 2019) highlight how product quality can influence consumer decisions to switch products in the market.

Furthermore, research by (Makudza *et al.*, 2020; Budiani *et al.*, 2020) underscores how both product features and quality play vital roles in shaping consumers purchasing intentions.

However, (Grewal *et al.*, 2018; He *et al.*, (2021) highlight the significance of considering factors such as strategic decision-making processes that shape consumer buying behaviour. On the other hand, (Mainardes, 2023) highlights the significance of price and quality factors when it comes to influencing purchase decisions. Although the product holds importance, various other elements, apart from the product itself, play a role, in shaping consumer choices. Therefore, there exist gaps in the literature leading to the development of the following hypothesis:

H1: There is a significant relationship between product element and mobile phone purchasing decision.

6.3 Relationship between Price Element and Mobile Phone Purchasing Decision

The price of a product refers to the amount that a customer pays for it, which remains consistent for trading purposes (Maheswari, 2023). Determining the price involves taking into account factors such as production costs, market competition, perceived value and pricing strategies (Kasirye, 2022). Pricing plays a role in generating revenue for a company, while other aspects of marketing also contribute to its financial trajectory (Kasirye, 2022). The pricing of a product significantly influences consumer decisions, business profitability and long-term sustainability (Muhammad *et al.*, 2022). Consumer buying behaviour is strongly impacted by product prices, leading them to switch brands based on pricing considerations (Gikonyo, 2020). Pricing allows customers to allocate their purchasing power across products and services (Putra *et al.*, 2020). The price of smartphones greatly influences consumer decision-making processes (Bugyei, 2020). Additionally, (Thi *et al.*, 2020) emphasize that the price of smartphones plays a significant role as the product features in shaping consumer purchase intentions.

According to cognitive process comprehension, students in China make a smartphone purchase decision based on the price of the product alone (Rai, 2021). Moreover, (Ahmad, 2020) mentions that smartphone manufacturers use the pricing strategy to target Malaysian students. Additionally, (Halim *et al.*, 2021) have indicated that consumers become more receptive to a product with lower cost and show signs of satisfaction.

On the other hand, providing product information can diminish the emphasis placed on pricing (Molitor *et al.*, 2019). A study in Oyo State, Nigeria, conducted by (Ajayi *et al.*, 2021), revealed an insignificant relationship between price and the younger population. The influence of price on consumer purchasing behaviour depends on product quality (Wang & Li, 2023). While price is an important factor in buying decisions, brand reputation, product features, and personal preferences also play significant roles (Smith & Johnson, 2018). Building upon the findings in the literature, therefore, there exist gaps in the literature leading to the formulation of the following hypothesis:

H2: There is a significant relationship between price element and mobile phone purchasing decision.

6.4 Relationship between Place Element and Mobile Phone Purchasing Decision

In the marketing mix, the place element focuses on how a company gets its products or services to its target customers. Having distribution systems is crucial for consumers to access offerings while also enhancing business efficiency and effectiveness (Maheswari, 2023). A well-thought-out distribution strategy helps in minimising challenges, cutting costs, and optimise resource allocation, thus improving the company's responsiveness to market needs (Kasirye, 2022). As a result, an effective distribution system does not benefit consumers by making products easily accessible. It also enhances the company's operational efficiency and competitiveness in the market (Kennedy *et al.*, 2023). Additionally, a planned placement strategy not only attracts customers by offering products in convenient locations but also emphasizes the importance of creating a welcoming and well-maintained environment (Kennedy *et al.*, 2023).

Moreover, (Balgomera *et al.*, 2022; Sarma, 2019; Rambabu *et al.*, 2019) have revealed that consumers still prefer brick-and-mortar stores when purchasing smartphones. These findings suggest that consumers value purchase service and tactile experience provided by physical retail locations.

According to (Vukasović & Jagodič, (2021), the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has caused a change in how consumers shop, with a preference for online rather than a physical place. Additionally, older individuals tend to stick to brick-and-mortar stores, while the younger generation leans towards online shopping, as pointed out by (Zaware, 2020).

In contrast (Kasirye, 2022) suggests that even the perfect placement of a product may not yield benefits without cohesive integration with the other marketing mix elements. Additionally, (Chen & Wang, 2019) indicates that although the physical location of a purchase does have some influence on consumers initially, factors such as reviews and recommendations play a significant role in their final buying decisions. Moreover, (Johnson & Patel, 2021) also highlighted how the importance of store locations in consumer choices has diminished due to the increasing popularity of e-commerce platforms and online marketplaces. Consumers now have access to options. Customers can now make informed decisions based on product details, reviews from other customers, and competitive prices, without being restricted by where they make their purchase. Building upon the findings in the literature, therefore, there exist gaps in the literature leading to the derivation of the following hypothesis:

H3: There is a significant relationship between place element and mobile phone purchasing decision.

6.5 Relationship between Promotion Element and Mobile Phone Purchasing Decision

Promotion refers to marketers' communication methods to promote products and services, create awareness, encourage purchases, and retain customers (Maheswari, 2023;

Kasirye, 2022; Kennedy *et al.*, 2023). The promotional mix includes advertising, personal selling, sales promotion, public relations, direct marketing, celebrity endorsements, and corporate image (Maheswari, 2023; Kasirye, 2022; Kennedy *et al.*, 2023). Effective promotional strategies are essential for expanding service reach, engaging customers, and increasing awareness (Adeleh *et al.*, 2021). Considering this, (Santoso *et al.*, 2020) found a positive relationship between advertisement creativity and consumer purchasing decisions. Likewise, (Darma & Hartati, 2021) also found a positive relationship between promotion and purchasing decisions for mobile phones. Similarly, (HuiFeng & Ha, 2021) found that mobile phone promotions bundled with network packages increased repurchase intentions. Comparably, (Khalid & Yasmeen, 2019) found a positive effect of celebrity appearance on consumer purchasing intention for mobile phones. Additionally, (Chine *et al.*, 2019) found that product advertising and peer influence are essential in shaping consumers' purchasing behaviours. However, (Smith *et al.*, 2019) found that promotions do not significantly influence consumer buying decisions. Similarly, (Johnson & Brown, 2020) suggested that discounts and freebies do not substantially shape consumers' decisions in the mobile phone market. Moreover, (Kim *et al.*, 2021) found that consumers heavily rely on online reviews and recommendations from peers when making purchase decisions instead of promotions. Thus, based on the above literature, the following hypothesis was developed:

H4: There is a significant relationship between promotion element and mobile phone purchasing decision.

6.6 The Moderating Effect of Brand Affinity on the Relationship between Product Element and Mobile Phone Purchasing Decision

According to (Sirajuddin, 2023), in the mobile phone industry, buyers lean towards reputable brands due to their perceived assurance and reliability, as supported by research by (Laequddin *et al.*, 2019). According to (Johnson *et al.*, 2019), while brand affinity can positively influence consumer attitudes, it may not translate into actual purchase behaviour. Likewise, (Chen & Wang, 2020) conducted a study examining the correlation between brand affinity and consumer loyalty in the mobile phone market. The findings suggested that although brand affinity may play a role in fostering consumer loyalty, it does not directly influence purchasing behaviour. Therefore, it is evident that there are gaps in the literature. Hence, the following hypothesis was proposed:

H5: Brand affinity significantly moderates the relationship between Product element and mobile phone purchasing decision.

6.7 The Moderating Effect of Brand Affinity on the Relationship between Price Element and Mobile Phone Purchasing Decision

Brand affinity is a crucial factor in consumer purchasing decisions, particularly in relation to pricing. Consumers with a high level of brand affinity are less sensitive to price fluctuations and remain committed to the brand despite negative publicity. This emotional connection and perceived value offered by the brand influence consumer

decisions and foster brand loyalty (Al-Azzawi & Al-Tamimi, 2023; Hassan & Hussain, 2022; Khan & Gupta, 2021; Singh & Singh, 2020). Consumers with strong brand affinity become brand advocates and are willing to pay premium prices, influencing market dynamics (Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2020; Chen & Chen, 2019; Lee, 2023). However, research by (Son & Jin, 2019) suggests that factors like product quality and perceived value may have a stronger influence on consumer decision-making than brand affinity alone. Similarly, (Hoang *et al.*, 2020) found that brand awareness does not mediate the relationship between corporate social responsibility associations and purchase intention, indicating the influence of other factors. Moreover, (Rambocas *et al.*, 2018) discuss the impact of customer age and education on customer satisfaction-switch relationships, suggesting that demographic and situational factors can influence consumer intentions, potentially diminishing the role of brand affinity. Additionally, (Tsaur *et al.*, 2021) highlight the influence of brand personality and self-congruity on consumer behaviour, indicating that brand affinity may have limitations as a moderator. Thus, based on the above literature, the following hypothesis was developed:

H6: Brand affinity significantly moderates the relationship between Price element and mobile phone purchasing decision.

6.8 The Moderating Effect of Brand Affinity on the Relationship between Place Element and Mobile Phone Purchasing Decision

According to a study by (Smith & Johnson, 2018), the physical location of a purchase has a weak correlation with consumer decision-making in the mobile phone industry. Factors such as brand reputation have a more significant influence on consumer choices. However, a study by (Lee & Kim, 2023) found that the physical place of purchase plays a significant role in establishing trust and fostering loyalty among consumers. Positive shopping experiences and reliable customer service in physical stores lead to repurchases. Additionally, (Raza *et al.*, 2018; Arujunen *et al.*, 2022); Aydin & Ünal, 2020) highlight the limitations of relying solely on brand affinity to understand and influence consumer behavior. Furthermore, (Raza *et al.*, 2018) introduces entrepreneurial marketing as a moderator, indicating that factors beyond brand affinity can have a more significant impact on purchase intention. Moreover, (Arujunen *et al.*, 2022) reveal the significant role played by other moderators besides brand affinity. Likewise, (Aydin & Ünal, 2020) found that compared to brand affinity, the role of both negative and positive emotions shapes consumers' decisions. This collective body of research emphasizes the complexity of consumer behavior and advocates for a holistic approach that considers multiple variables. Moreover, (Zhu & Wang, 2019) highlighted the importance of sufficient stocking levels in online purchasing to increase customer confidence and satisfaction, compared to brand affinity, which indicated the least influence. Based on the gaps in the literature above, the following hypothesis was drawn:

H7: Brand affinity significantly moderates the relationship between Place element and mobile phone purchasing decision.

6.9 The Moderating Effect of Brand Affinity on the Relationship between Promotion Element and Mobile Phone Purchasing Decision

The role of brand affinity is important in moderating the influence of promotion elements on purchasing intentions and adjusting the strength of the association between these elements and consumer behavior (Al-Azzawi & Al-Tamimi, 2023; Hassan & Hussain, 2022; Khan & Gupta, 2021; Singh & Singh, 2020). Consumers with high brand affinity are more receptive to promotional messages and are more likely to overlook negative publicity associated with the brand (Al-Azzawi & Al-Tamimi, 2023). Brand affinity has a profound impact on shaping consumer attitudes and behaviors in promotional strategies (Hassan & Hussain, 2022; Khan & Gupta, 2021; Singh & Singh, 2020). Promotion is a vital facet of marketing communication, aiming to elevate brand recognition, influence consumer perspectives, and stimulate brand engagement (Hassan *et al.*, 2022). Electronic word of mouth also influences consumer purchasing decisions (Jiayu *et al.*, 2021). Contrarily, (Chen & Lee, 2018) found that consumers consider factors beyond promotion, such as brand reputation and perception when making purchase decisions. The overall brand image and reputation play a significant role in influencing consumer behavior according to (Chen & Lee, 2018).

However, a meta-analysis conducted by (Li *et al.*, 2021) revealed that the effect of brand affinity on consumer purchasing behaviour is relatively weak and can be influenced by other factors such as product attributes, marketing strategies, and social influence. Furthermore, (Gupta, 2021; Witek *et al.*, 2020) found that young consumers are paying attention to a company's environmental welfare and are more willing to spend on companies that indulge in green initiatives. These studies suggest that brand affinity may not have a significant effect on consumer purchasing decisions (Li *et al.*, 2021; Gupta, 2021; Witek *et al.*, 2020). Therefore, the following hypothesis H8 was proposed:

H8: Brand affinity significantly moderates the relationship between Promotion element and mobile phone purchasing decision.

7. Proposed Conceptual Framework

The proposed framework in Figure 1 provides insights into the relationship between consumer perception, brand equity, and the marketing mix. It demonstrates how elements such as product, price, place, and promotion influence consumer perceptions and purchasing decisions. By incorporating the CBBE model (Keller, 2013) into the marketing mix, companies can gain a better understanding of consumer behaviour and align their marketing strategies with customer preferences. This understanding allows companies to tailor promotions to build brand awareness and positive associations. Ultimately, integrating the CBBE model (Keller, 2013) enhances comprehension of consumer behaviour and guides the development of effective marketing strategies that leverage brand equity to drive preference.

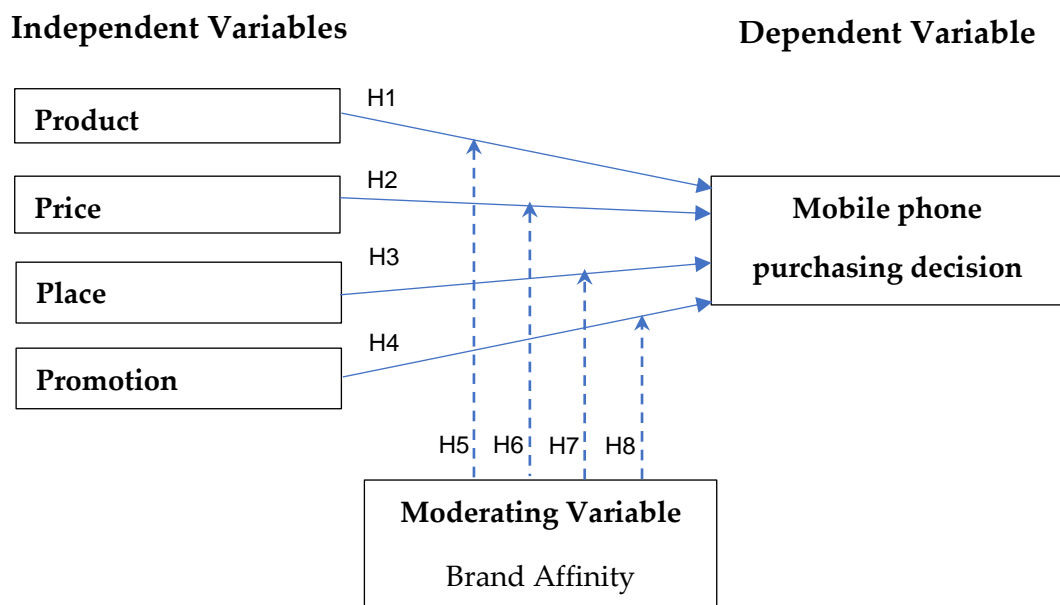


Figure 1: Proposed Conceptual Framework

8. Methodology

The research methodology employed in this study is rooted in a quantitative approach, aiming to delve into the intricate dynamics between marketing mix elements (product, price, place, promotion) and brand affinity and how these factors collectively influence consumer purchasing behaviour. The study is set within the vibrant landscape of the Klang Valley area, known for its diverse population, which is estimated to be 9.21 million people (DOSM, 2023). By focusing on this specific region, the research seeks to capture the interactions and preferences of consumers within this dynamic market environment.

8.1 Population, Sampling and Measurements

The study targets the diverse population of the Klang Valley area in Malaysia, estimated at 9.32 million residents (DOSM, 2023), characterized by varying socioeconomic backgrounds and cultural influences. This region's competitive and ever-evolving mobile phone market makes it an ideal setting for examining consumer behaviour related to mobile phone purchases. Following (Krejcie & Morgan, 1970) guidelines, the sample size for this study is set at 384 to ensure statistical significance and representativeness. Convenience sampling was employed, and individuals from the Klang Valley who had purchased a mobile phone within the past year were selected using a random selection method to maintain regional representativeness. Data collection utilized Google Forms, targeting individuals aged 18 to 60 with mobile phones in the Klang Valley and focusing on generational differences in purchasing behaviour. Questionnaires, structured into demographic information, marketing mix, brand affinity, and consumer behaviour sections, utilized closed-ended statements with a 5-point Likert scale to explore the interplay of these factors in mobile phone purchases within the Klang Valley.

9. Findings and Interpretation

The following section provides the findings and the interpretation of this study.

9.1 Reliability Analysis

Table 4.1: Reliability Analysis (N = 30)

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
IV - Product element	0.837	7
IV - Price element	0.766	7
IV - Place element	0.704	7
IV - Promotion element	0.868	7
DV - Mobile phone purchasing decision	0.899	7
MV - Brand affinity	0.728	7

The study thoroughly assessed its variables for reliability, understanding their stability and consistency. Findings, including independent and dependent variables and their interaction with moderating factors, are detailed in Table 4.1. The study also broke down Cronbach's alpha coefficients to delve deeper into construct robustness. These coefficients, measuring internal consistency, revealed strong reliability in consumer purchasing behaviours related to mobile phones, with values ranging from 0.704 to 0.868. Additionally, Cronbach's alpha values for consumer behaviours and brand affinity were 0.899 and 0.728, respectively, further confirming the study's instrument reliability and validity. Following Edwin's 2019 work, the study adhered to established criteria for reliability assessment, ensuring robustness and credibility and laying a strong foundation for subsequent research stages.

9.2 Normality

Table 4.2: Normality Test (N = 281)

Shapiro-Wilk	Statistic	df	Sig.
Product element	0.990	281	0.097
Price element	0.990	281	0.126
Place element	0.989	281	0.074
Promotion element	0.991	281	0.146
Brand affinity	0.991	281	0.159
Mobile phone purchasing decision	0.990	281	0.114

Figure 4.1 – 4.6 histograms visually depicted data distribution, particularly focusing on independent variables related to the marketing mix (product, price, place, and promotion), the dependent variable of mobile phone purchase decisions, and the moderating variable of brand affinity. The aim was to identify any anomalies that could affect analysis, emphasizing data integrity in empirical research (Mishra *et al.*, 2019).

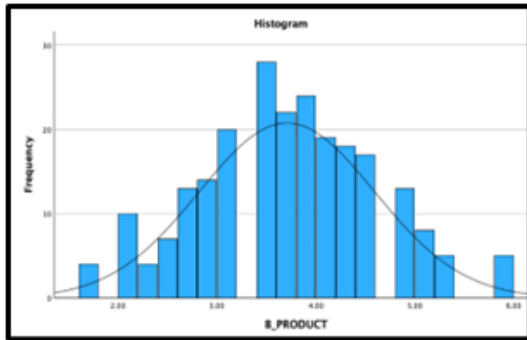


Figure 4.1: Histogram chart for Product element

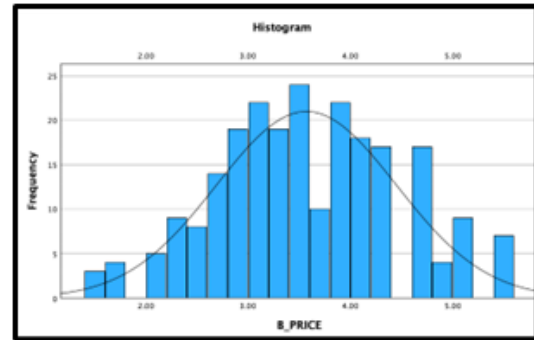


Figure 4.2: Histogram chart for Price element

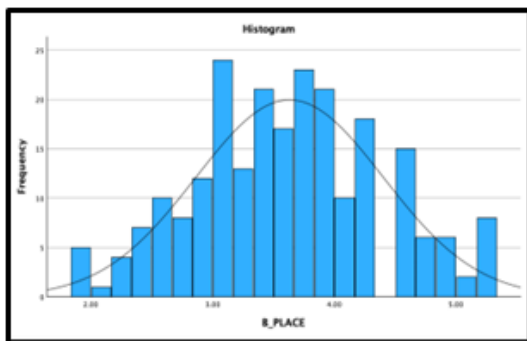


Figure 4.3: Histogram chart for Place element

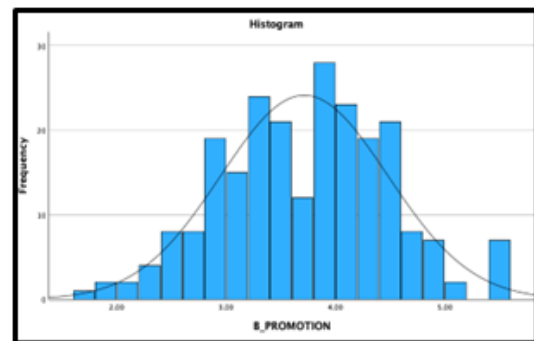


Figure 4.4: Histogram chart for Promotion element

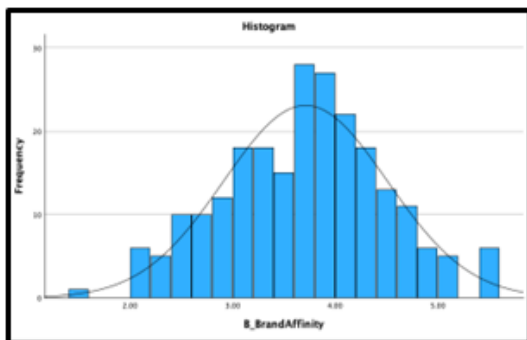


Figure 4.5: Histogram chart for Brand affinity

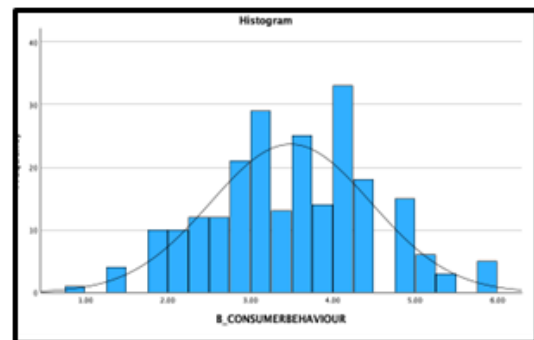


Figure 4.6: Histogram chart for mobile phone purchasing behaviour

Examination of Figures 4.1 to 4.6 confirmed normal distribution across tested variables, leading to the adoption of Pearson's Correlation analysis to explore the association between the marketing mix and mobile phone purchase decisions. Additionally, Table 4.2's Shapiro-Wilk tests with a significance level of $\alpha > 0.05$ further validated data normality. The combined evidence from visual representations and statistical analysis supported the premise of normal distribution within the dataset.

9.3 Pearson's Correlation Coefficient Analysis

Table 4.3: Pearson's Correlation (N = 281)

	Consumer Behaviour	Product Element	Price Element	Place Element	Promotion Element	Brand Affinity
Consumer Behaviour	1					
Product Element	0.966**	1				
Price Element	0.922**	0.927**	1			
Place Element	0.959**	0.960**	0.916**	1		
Promotion Element	0.715**	0.707**	0.678**	0.711**	1	
Brand Affinity	0.963**	0.960**	0.914**	0.956**	0.713**	1

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

The analysis of different elements within the marketing mix reveals strong correlations and interrelationships with other variables. The product element shows a significant influence on consumer behaviour, pricing, place, promotions, and brand affinity, with correlations ranging from ($r = 0.707$ to 0.966 ; $p < 0.001$). Similarly, the price element's correlations range from ($r = 0.678$ to 0.927 ; $p < 0.001$), highlighting its strategic importance in shaping consumer behaviour, product, place, promotional effectiveness, and brand affinity. The place element's correlations, ranging from ($r = 0.711$ to 0.959 ; $p < 0.001$), underscore the critical role of place decisions in influencing consumer behaviour, product, pricing, promotions, and brand affinity. Likewise, the promotion element's correlations, ranging from ($r = 0.678$ to 0.715 ; $p < 0.001$), emphasize the substantial impact of promotional strategies on consumer decision-making, product image, pricing dynamics, distribution effectiveness, and brand affinity.

Furthermore, consumer behaviour demonstrates significant correlations ranging from ($r = 0.713$ to 0.966 ; $p < 0.001$), highlighting its intricate interplay with all elements of the marketing mix. This comprehensive understanding emphasizes the need for a holistic approach integrating consumer behaviour with product strategies, pricing decisions, distribution channels, promotional efforts, and brand affinity to effectively manage consumer preferences and drive business success.

Lastly, brand affinity's robust correlations, ranging from ($r = 0.713$ to 0.963 ; $p < 0.001$), underscore its critical role in influencing consumer behaviour, product preferences, pricing strategies, place choices, and promotional effectiveness. These findings collectively emphasize the interconnectedness and strategic significance of each element within the marketing mix, shaping consumer perceptions, driving customer engagement, and fostering sustained growth in a competitive market environment.

9.4 Multiple Regression Analysis

Table 4.4.1: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.939	0.881	0.879	0.406

In Table 4.4.1 Model Summary, the analysis focused on the correlation coefficient (R), which indicates the strength and direction of the linear relationship between predictors and the dependent variable. The (R = 0.939) suggests a strong positive correlation. The (R Square = 0.881) reveals that 88.1% of the variation in dependent variable (consumer behaviour) can be explained by the predictor variables (product, price, place, and promotion). The adjusted R square, accounting for the number of predictors, is 0.879, providing a refined measure of the model's explanatory power. The SE of the estimate, at 0.406, gives an idea of the typical difference between observed and predicted consumer behaviour values. Overall, the model demonstrates a strong fit, as evidenced by its high R square value, indicating that the predictors effectively explain a significant portion of the variability in the dependent variable (consumer behaviour).

Table 4.4.2: ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	337.398	4	84.349	511.751	< 0.001b
	Residual	45.492	276	0.165		
	Total	382.890	280			

Table 4.4.2 presents the ANOVA table summarizing a multiple regression analysis with "consumer behaviour" as the dependent variable and the four predictors: product, price, place, and promotion. The (F = 511.751; p < 0.001), signifies a significant relationship between these predictors and the dependent variable, mobile phone purchase decision. A higher F-value indicates a stronger association. The associated (p < 0.001), strongly rejects the null hypothesis, providing strong evidence for the model's predictive power regarding consumer behaviour. In conclusion, the regression model, incorporating product, price, place, and promotion as predictors, effectively predicts the outcome variable (consumer behaviour).

Table 4.4.3 Regression Coefficients highlight the effect of product, price, place, and promotion on customers' behaviour when purchasing mobile phones. The intercept of the model, also known as the constant, (-0.139; SE = 0.115). This value, associated with (t = -1.205; p = 0.001), suggests a statistically significant negative baseline of consumer behaviour when all independent variables are zero. This implies that the absent positive influences from the marketing mix, consumer behaviour tends towards a lower starting point.

Table 4.4.3: Regression Coefficient

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error (SE)	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-0.139	0.115		-1.205	0.001
	Product	0.301	0.051	0.297	5.861	< 0.001
	Price	0.157	0.056	0.131	2.827	0.005
	Place	0.458	0.054	0.462	8.445	<0.001
	Promotion	0.127	0.031	0.114	4.096	<0.001

Firstly, the product element has an unstandardized coefficient (B = 0.301; SE= 0.051, yielding a standardized coefficient (Beta = 0.297; t = 5.861; p < 0.001), the product's influence on consumer behaviour is highly significant, indicating that enhancements in product quality or features lead to a substantial increase in consumer engagement.

Secondly, price, with an unstandardized coefficient (B = 0.157; SE = 0.056; Beta = 0.131). The (t = 2.827, p = 0.005) affirming that price changes significantly impact consumer behaviour. This relationship suggests that higher prices, possibly reflecting better quality or prestige, positively affect consumer perceptions and behaviours.

Thirdly, place demonstrates the most robust impact among the variables, with an unstandardized coefficient (B = 0.458; SE = 0.054; Beta = 0.462), and it indicates (t = 8.445; p < 0.001), indicating a very strong positive influence on consumer behaviour. This may be attributed to effective distribution and accessibility, which are critical, significantly enhancing consumer purchasing behaviour.

Finally, the promotion has an unstandardized coefficient (B = 0.127; SE = 0.031; Beta = 0.114. With a (t = 4.096; p < 0.001), indicating that promotional activities also significantly contribute to improving consumer behaviour, though its effect is slightly less distinct compared to place and product elements.

9.5 Moderation Analysis - Two-way interaction

Table 4.5: Summary of Moderation for brand affinity between Marketing Mix (4P) and mobile phone purchasing decision

	Coefficient	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
Product element	-0.034	0.019	-1.765	0.078	-0.071	0.004
Price element	-0.102	0.020	-5.201	0.000	-0.140	-0.063
Place element	-0.057	0.017	-3.340	0.001	-0.090	-0.023
Promotion element	-0.104	0.021	-5.066	0.000	-0.145	-0.064

Table 4.5 Moderation Analysis, utilizing Hayes Process Macro (Hayes, 2013), shows how brand affinity influences the relationship between each marketing mix element (product, price, place, and promotion) and consumer behaviour in purchasing mobile phones.

Firstly, the product element, shows a negative coefficient of -0.034; SE = of 0.019. The (t = -1.765, p = 0.078), indicating an insignificant negative relationship. This suggests that increases in product quality or features do not necessarily lead to enhanced consumer behaviour when brand affinity is considered. The confidence interval ranging

from -0.071 to 0.004 further emphasizes the uncertainty around this effect, where the value of zero is present between the LLCI and ULCI, highlighting its statistical insignificance.

Secondly, the price element presents a more pronounced negative effect with a coefficient of -0.102; SE = 0.020, and a significant ($t = -5.201$, $p < 0.001$). This significant finding suggests that higher prices negatively impact consumer behaviour, a relationship that remains robust even when accounting for brand affinity. The confidence interval from -0.140 to -0.063, where the value of zero is not present between the LLCI and ULCI confirms the reliability of this negative impact.

Thirdly, the place element's coefficient is -0.057; SE = 0.017. The ($t = -3.340$; $p = 0.001$) indicates a significant negative influence, implying that the effectiveness of place strategies may be adversely affected without sufficient brand affinity. The confidence interval from -0.090 to -0.023, where the value of zero is not present between the LLCI and ULCI, which reinforces the strength and significance of this relationship.

Finally, the promotion element also shows a significant negative coefficient of -0.104, SE = 0.021 and ($t = -5.066$, $p < 0.001$). This indicates that promotional activities may decrease consumer behaviour if not supported by a strong brand affinity, as reflected in the confidence interval from -0.145 to -0.064, where the value of zero is not present between the LLCI and ULCI.

Thus, this moderation analysis reveals that while the product element does not significantly impact consumer behaviour under varying levels of brand affinity, the other elements—price, place, and promotion—demonstrate significant negative effects. These findings highlight the crucial role of brand affinity in moderating the effects of the marketing mix, suggesting that without strong brand affinity, even well-planned marketing activities may fail to positively influence consumer behaviour.

9.10 Simple Slope Test

Figures 4.7 to 4.10 examine the moderation effect using the simple slope test. Initially, for the product element, based on Table 4.5, Hayes's Process Macro (Hayes, 2013) showed no significant moderation relationship. However, a closer look at the simple slope analysis Figure 4.7 reveals that there is an overall positive trend of consumer behaviour with respect to the product level for both low and high-brand affinity consumers. In such a way, these results can be interpreted as the product's practical, although insignificant (coefficient = -0.034; $p > 0.05$), influence on consumer behaviour, which is both an expected and striking finding. The graph visually maps the incompatibility of the statistical and graphical data, demonstrating that even if the product's quantitative impact is not significant, the product is capable of influencing consumer behaviour in a certain market sector, segment, or conditions whereby each unit increase in the interaction term led to a decrease of 0.034 units of the expected impact of the product element on consumers' decisions on mobile phone purchases. This emphasizes that brand affinity's a significant role in shaping consumers' behaviour regarding product choices, going beyond the initial insignificant outcome.

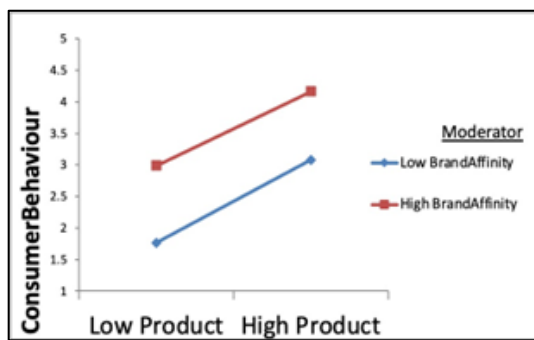


Figure 4.7: Simple Slope for Product element

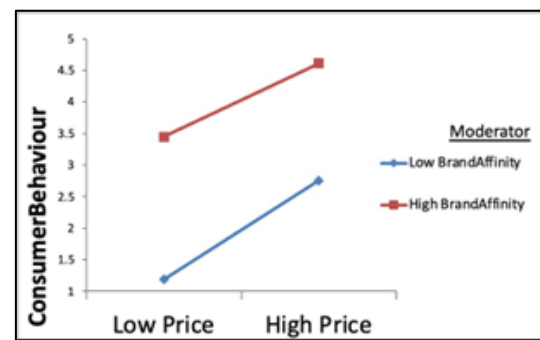


Figure 4.8: Simple Slope for Price element

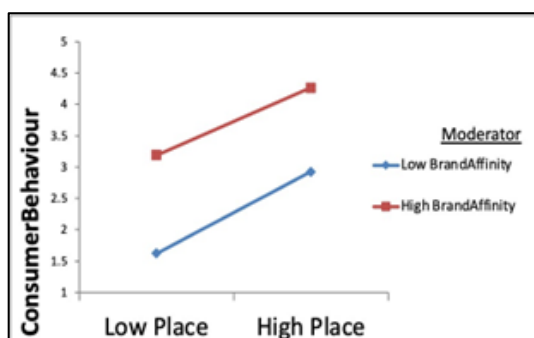


Figure 4.9: Simple Slope for Place element

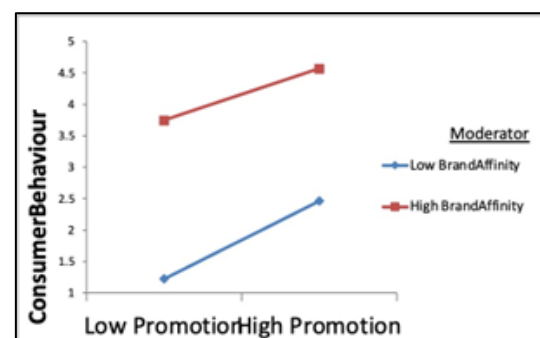


Figure 4.10: Simple Slope for Promotion element

Moving on to the price element, (coefficient = -0.102; $p < 0.05$) provides insight into how the interaction between variables changes across different levels of the moderator. Each unit increase in the interaction term corresponded to a decrease of 0.102 units in the expected impact of price on consumers' choices, maintaining other variables constant. This underlines brand affinity's intricate influence on price and consumer decision-making, introducing a dampening effect.

Similarly, for the place element, (coefficient = -0.057; $p < 0.05$) reveals how the relationship changes with each unit increase in the interaction term, leading to a reduction of 0.057 units in the expected impact of place element on consumers' choices, with other variables constant. This suggests that brand affinity shapes the dynamics between place and consumers' decision-making, suggesting a dampening effect.

Lastly, exploring the promotion element (coefficient = -0.104; $p < 0.05$) unveils the evolving dynamics, where each unit increase in the interaction term results in a reduction of 0.104 units in the expected impact of promotion on consumer choices, keeping other variables constant. This underscores that brand affinity's pivotal role in shaping the interplay between promotion and consumers' decision-making, displaying a dampening effect in this context.

10. Summary of Hypothesis Test

Table 4.6: Summary of Hypothesis Test

No	Hypothesis	Result
H1	There is a significant relationship between product element and mobile phone purchasing decision.	Accepted
H2	There is a significant relationship between price element and mobile phone purchasing decision.	Accepted
H3	There is a significant relationship between place element and mobile phone purchasing decision.	Accepted
H4	There is a significant relationship between promotion element and mobile phone purchasing decision.	Accepted
H5	Brand affinity significantly moderates the relationship between product element and mobile phone purchasing decision.	Rejected
H6	Brand affinity significantly moderates the relationship between price element and mobile phone purchasing decision.	Accepted
H7	Brand affinity significantly moderates the relationship between place element and mobile phone purchasing decision.	Accepted
H8	Brand affinity significantly moderates the relationship between promotion element and mobile phone purchasing decision.	Accepted

11. Discussion

The first research question was to investigate if there is a significant relationship between the product elements and mobile phone purchasing decisions in Klang Valley, analysing hypothesis H1: There is a significant relationship between product elements and mobile phone purchasing decisions whereby ($p < 0.05$). This finding aligns with (Kahawandala *et al.*, 2020), who discovered a significant influence of product elements on consumer purchasing behaviours regarding mobile phones. Consumers prioritize characteristics like specifications, design, brand reputation, and unique selling points when choosing a mobile phone. Moreover, (Abdullah *et al.*, 2021) also emphasized the importance of features, packaging, and phone generation in shaping consumer decisions. However, this study contradicts (Grewal *et al.*, 2018) suggestion that broader behavioural mechanisms, rather than product attributes, influence purchasing behaviours. Furthermore, it challenges (He *et al.*, 2021) assertion that consumer behaviours primarily stem from strategic decision-making processes rather than product features. Consequently, this study contributes to narrowing gaps in the existing literature by addressing the first research question effectively.

The second research question aimed to scrutinize if there is a significant relationship between the price elements and mobile phone purchasing decisions in Klang Valley, and tested hypothesis H2: There is a significant relationship between price elements and mobile phone purchasing decisions whereby ($p < 0.05$). This finding is parallel to (Muhammad, 2022), emphasizing the pivotal role of product or service cost in consumer choices. Moreover, (Gikonyo, 2020; Putra *et al.*, 2020) further support this, indicating that pricing components significantly influence consumer buying patterns,

particularly when considering mobile phone purchases. Consumers prioritize aspects like initial phone cost, available discounts, ongoing expenses like data plans, and maintenance costs. Additionally, they may be attracted to competitive pricing strategies that offer value for their money or fit within their budget constraints. However, this study contradicts (Wang & Li, 2023) findings, suggesting that as product quality increases, the significance of price in influencing consumer decision-making diminishes. Thus, this study contributes to filling the literature gap by addressing the second research question successfully.

The third research question aimed to examine the significant relationship between the place element and mobile phone purchasing decisions in Klang Valley, assessing hypothesis H3: There is a significant relationship between place elements and mobile phone purchasing decisions whereby ($p < 0.05$). This finding is supported by (Kennedy *et al.*, 2023), who noted a significant impact of distribution channels and accessibility factors on consumer purchasing behaviours. It suggests that consumers highly value the availability and convenience of purchasing options, such as proximity to retail stores, online accessibility, and ease of purchase. This contradicts with (Chen & Wang's, 2019) claim that physical stores are of minimal importance compared to online reviews and recommendations. Moreover, (Sarma, 2019) highlights the influence of after-sales support services' location and accessibility on consumer decisions, such as warranty services and technical support as crucial. This emphasizes the crucial relationship between place factors and consumer purchasing behaviours in the mobile phone market. Thus, this study contributes to bridging the literature gap by addressing the third research question efficiently.

The fourth research question sought to study the relationship between promotion elements and mobile phone purchasing decisions in Klang Valley, assessing hypothesis H4: There is a significant relationship between promotion elements and mobile phone purchasing decisions whereby ($p < 0.05$). This finding is supported by (Santoso *et al.*, 2020), indicating a positive relationship between consumer purchasing decisions and the effectiveness of advertising, emphasizing the impact of creative advertisements on consumer choices. Additionally, (HuiFeng & Ha, 2021) found that consumers prefer mobile phone promotions bundled with network packages, leading to increased intentions for repurchase. Contrarily (Smith *et al.*, 2019) suggested that promotions have little influence on purchase decisions. Thus, this study's results provide valuable insights that bridge the gaps in existing literature by answering the fourth research question.

The fifth research question aimed to explore if brand affinity significantly moderates the relationship between product elements and mobile phone purchasing decisions, testing hypothesis H5. However, contrary to expectations, the findings of this study, supported (Chen & Wang, 2020), which contradict the hypothesis ($p > 0.05$). They suggest that while brand affinity may enhance consumer loyalty, there is no direct evidence of its impact on purchase behaviours. This contradicts prior research by (Al-Azzawi & Al-Tamimi, 2023; Hassan & Hussain, 2022), who found that strong brand affinity leads consumers to overlook minor product flaws and negative publicity

associated with the brand. Despite the lack of significant moderation, the study's results provide insights into the interaction between these variables. Thus, the study contributes to addressing the fifth research question and narrowing the gaps in the literature.

The sixth research question investigates the moderating influence of brand affinity on the relationship between price and mobile phone purchasing decisions, as hypothesized in H6: Brand affinity significantly moderates this relationship between price and mobile phone purchasing decisions ($p < 0.05$). The study aligns with prior findings by (Chen & Chen, 2019; Lee, 2023), suggesting that consumers who have a strong brand affinity tend to become brand advocates, actively endorsing the brand and showing a willingness to pay higher prices for its products or services. This loyalty may reduce sensitivity to price changes, as noted by (Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2020). In spite of this, it clashed with the finding of (Hoang *et al.*, 2020), which emphasised that brand awareness does not moderate the relationship between perceptions of affinity in brands and the intention to make a purchase. Thus, emphasizing brand affinity's critical role in shaping consumer behaviours in the mobile phone market. Thus, this study answers the sixth research question and bridges the gaps in the literature.

The seventh research question intended to scrutinize the moderating effect of brand affinity on the relationship between place element and mobile phone purchasing decision and to examine hypothesis H7: Brand affinity significantly moderates the relationship between place element and mobile phone purchasing decision ($p < 0.05$). The outcome of this research has disputed (Smith & Johnson's, 2018) finding and supported the hypothesis that implies that brand loyalty influences how consumers perceive and react to various distribution channels and accessibility factors when purchasing. A study by (Lee & Kim, 2023) also indicates that consumers were more likely to return to a physical store that offered a positive shopping experience and dependable customer service when building trust and nurturing loyalty. Brand affinity can shape consumers' preferences for specific retail locations, online platforms, or other purchase points associated with their favourite brands. As a result, physical location in the mobile phone industry plays a key role in cultivating enduring relationships with consumers. Therefore, this study answers the seventh research question and narrows the gaps in the literature.

The final research question was to examine if there is a significant moderating effect of brand affinity on the relationship between promotion elements and mobile phone purchasing decisions and to examine hypothesis H8: Brand affinity significantly moderates the relationship between the promotion element and mobile phone purchasing decisions ($p < 0.05$). This analysis indicates that brand affinity significantly moderates the relationship between promotions and consumer behaviours, which implies that consumers' strong loyalty to specific brands influences how they perceive and respond to promotional activities. Studies supported by previous literatures (Al-Azzawi & Al-Tamimi, 2023; Khan & Gupta, 2021; Singh & Singh, 2020) showed that consumers form stronger emotional connections with brands and that their receptiveness to promotional efforts steers their buying decisions. Those with high levels of brand

affinity are believed to notice and respond positively to promotions from their favourite brands. In turn, this may increase their purchase intention and loyalty to their favourite brands. They may view promotional activities as opportunities to engage with and benefit from their favourite brands. Hence, this study answers the eight research question and reduces the gaps in the literature.

12. Conclusion

This study's primary focus lies in investigating the relationship between the marketing mix elements (product, price, place, and promotion) and consumers' choices when purchasing mobile phones and also explore the moderating effect of brand affinity on these relationships. The conclusion of this study has revealed several key findings:

Firstly, the relationship between the product element and consumer behaviour shows a significant relationship, indicating that consumers prioritize product characteristics when making mobile phone purchasing decisions. This aligns with the conclusions drawn by past researchers such as (Maheswari, 2023; Kasirye, 2022; Putra *et al.*, 2020; Santoso *et al.*, 2020; Abdullah *et al.*, 2021; Shokouhyar *et al.*, 2021; Rambabu *et al.*, 2019; Prahiawan *et al.*, 2022; Thi *et al.*, 2020; Garga *et al.*, 2019; Makudza *et al.*, 2020). Various product-related factors, including features, design, hardware capability, reliability, software stability, country of manufacture, connectivity options, and package completeness, impact consumer decisions in buying mobile phones. Providing mobile phones with attractive features, appealing designs, dependable performance, and effortless connectivity can increase the likelihood of consumers selecting their products over competitors'. Besides that, this discovery is consistent with the principles of Customer-Based Brand Equity (CBBE) model (Keller, 2013), where the product element plays a crucial role in shaping the brand's identity and meaning for consumers.

Secondly, the relationship between price element and consumer behaviour reveals a significant relationship. This is consistent with the discoveries made by previous scholars (Maheswari, 2023; Kasirye, 2022; Muhammad, 2022; Gikonyo, 2020; Putra *et al.*, 2020; Bugyei, 2020; Thi *et al.*, 2020; Rai, 2021; Halim *et al.*, 2021). Consumers have taken into account factors such as price sensitivity, price comparison, discounts, premium pricing, credit terms, various payment options, as well as discounts and promotions when they make purchasing decisions for mobile phones. Hence, this finding aligns with the principles of the Customer-Based Brand Equity (CBBE) model (Keller, 2013) on brand's meaning level, wherein pricing elements influence consumers' perceptions regarding a brand's value, affordability, and quality. A well-priced product can foster favourable brand associations and improve the overall brand experience, ultimately resulting in heightened customer loyalty and advocacy.

Thirdly, the relationship between the place element and consumer behaviour denotes a significant relationship. Factors including distribution channels, online platforms, availability, seasonal or regional events, cross-channel shopping, and multiple channels of accessibility and convenience were identified as influencers on consumer

choices in mobile phone purchases. This aligns with the findings uncovered by earlier researchers (Maheswari, 2023; Kasirye, 2022; Kennedy *et al.*, 2023; Putra *et al.*, 2020; Sarma, 2019; Rambabu *et al.*, 2019; Balgomera *et al.*, 2022; Vukasovic & Jagodic, 2021; Zaware, 2020). In the context of the Customer-Based Brand Equity (CBBE) model (Keller, 2013), the place element pertains to distribution channels and product availability. The ease of access and convenience in purchasing a mobile phone can greatly influence consumer behaviour and buying choices.

Fourthly, the relationship between Promotion Element and Consumer Behaviour yields results indicating that there is a significant relationship, highlighting the role of engaging marketing campaigns. This finding is in line with the conclusions drawn by previous researchers (Maheswari, 2023; Kasirye, 2022; Kennedy *et al.*, 2023; Adeleh *et al.*, 2021; Santoso *et al.*, 2020; Darma & Hartati, 2021; HuiFeng & Ha, 2021; Khalid & Yasmeen, 2019; Chine *et al.*, 2019). When integrating the Customer-Based Brand Equity (CBBE) model (Keller, 2013), it becomes clear that the promotion element, including branding and promotional activities, can significantly shape consumers' perceptions of mobile phone brands. Conventional promotional tactics, such as brand-specific sales promotions, campaigns, appealing promotional offers, and effective advertising strategies, hold the capacity to enhance brand recognition, cultivate favourable brand connections, and ultimately influence purchasing choices.

Finally, brand affinity's moderating role reveals that brand affinity does not moderate the relationship between product elements and consumer behaviour, which aligns with previous scholars' findings (Johnson *et al.*, 2019; Chen & Wang, 2020). This suggests that consumers' brand preference doesn't significantly affect their decision-making process when evaluating and selecting a mobile phone based on its features, design, and functionality. The product itself, including its features and design, primarily influences consumer behaviours, with brand affinity playing a minor role in this relationship.

On the other hand, brand affinity significantly moderates the relationships between price (Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2020; Chen & Chen, 2019; Lee, 2023), place (Lee & Kim, 2023), and promotion elements (Hassan *et al.*, 2022) and consumer behaviour. It is proven that consumers who have a strong connection to a brand are often swayed by pricing tactics like discounts and promotions when making buying choices, prioritizing their loyalty and emotional bond with that particular brand. Besides that, high brand awareness also boosts the probability of consumers factoring in the availability of mobile phones when making their decisions. Moreover, marketing campaigns that effectively integrate advertising, sales promotions, and public relations have a greater impact on consumers who possess a strong brand affinity. Therefore, leveraging brand affinity through marketing mix elements is crucial for businesses aiming to cultivate strong brand loyalty and exert a deeper influence on consumer behaviour in the mobile phone market.

13. Limitations and Future Research

Limitations in studies can affect the reliability, validity, and generalizability of findings. The study's limitations include its focus on the Klang Valley area and convenience sampling, which may limit the representation of the broader consumer base. The sample size was too small, and the researchers' limited expertise in advanced statistical analysis may have influenced the data analysis. Time constraints also restricted the scope. The reliance on self-reported data introduced potential biases. Future research should adopt a cross-cultural analysis approach, investigate the impact of emerging technologies, explore customer experience, satisfaction, brand loyalty, and advocacy, and explore alternative distribution channels. This knowledge can inform effective marketing strategies and contribute to the development of consumer-centric mobile phone products and services.

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Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors of this study affirm that there are no conflicts of interest in this research, and it did not receive any funding or support that might have influenced its findings. The researchers of this study attest to its originality, confirm that it has not been published before, and affirm that it is not under consideration for publication elsewhere.

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Kumaran Kanapathipillai, a prominent figure in academia, earned his PhD in Management and Business from Management and Science University (Malaysia). With an impressive tenure of 23 years in the academic world, he has honed expertise in areas such as management, marketing, supply chain management, and logistics management. Within academia, he plays a pivotal role in guiding and assessing both Masters and Ph.D. candidates. He also serves as an external examiner for several universities in Europe and Asia. Additionally, he is a peer reviewer for numerous academic journals. Beyond academia, he provides specialised training sessions on entrepreneurship, creative problem-solving, and project management across diverse industries. His scholarly pursuits predominantly concentrate on contemporary entrepreneurship, management, and marketing.

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