ETHNOCULTURAL EMPATHY AND ELECTRONIC WORD-OF-MOUTH TRUST: SHAPING CONSUMER BOYCOTT INTENTION

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that:

1. This research paper is original and was done wholly based on my personal knowledge and research.

2. None of any part of this paper has not been submitted or presented for any reason, neither by me nor by any other student for any other qualification.

3. The word count of this research report is 27,172 words.

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"Success is earned, not given". I could not have gained the success that I have today without the help of all those mentioned above.

DEDICATION

To my family, for their unending affection and support,

To my supervisor, for her continuous guidance and motivation,

To my friends, for their constant advice and encouragement,

To myself, for my unwavering passion and patience,

And finally,

To those who would find this dissertation beneficial.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

EFE   : Empathic Feeling and Expression

EPT   : Empathic Perspective Taking and Acceptance of Cultural Differences

EA   : Empathic Awareness

EE   : Ethnocultural Empathy

EWOMT : Electronic Word of Mouth Trust

ATT   : Attitude towards boycott

SN   : Subjective Norms on Boycott

PBC   : Perceived Behavioral Control on Boycott

BI   : Boycott Intention

Abstract

The purpose of this research is to investigate the extent to which attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control (independent variables) influence the intention to boycott (dependent variable) in light of the conflict between Israel and Palestine, while also being moderated by ethnocultural empathy and electronic word of mouth trust (moderating variables).

The research design that was chosen for this research was quantitative research since the findings can be generalised. There were 300 respondents that participated in this research. Data was collected from the respondent through the use of a questionnaire that was rated on a Likert scale with five points, and the reliability of the questionnaire was found to be high. For the purpose of putting the hypothesis of the research to the test, the Pearson correlation coefficient was utilised. In addition to that, Multiple Regression analysis is utilised in order to investigate the connection between the independent variables and the dependent variable. In addition, multiple regression analysis is also utilised in order to investigate whether or not the relationship between independent variables with the dependent variable is moderated by ethnocultural empathy and eWOM trust. The findings of this research includes establishing that there is a significant relationship between attitude and perceived behavioural controls and boycott intentions. It is also found that eWOM trust and ethnocultural empathy has a moderating effect on the relationship between perceived behavioural control and boycott intentions. Following the conclusion of this research, a summary of the statistical analyses, a discussion of the most important findings, a discussion of the consequences of the research, limitations, and recommendations for further research were presented.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

Chapter 1 will provide the overview of the whole research and establish the fundamental context for the research project. The first phase in this research will be to discuss the research background and problem statement before delving into the research objectives and research questions of this research project. Last but not least, the significance of this research would be explained, as would the flow of the following chapters of the research.

1.1 Research Background

Against the conflict between Israel and Palestine as the research background, within the Malaysian context, this research looks into the relationship between attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control with consumer boycott intentions. Within the Malaysian context, this research further investigates the moderating effect of ethnocultural empathy and electronic word of mouth (eWOM) trust on the relationship between attitude, subjective norms, perceived behavioural control, and consumer boycott intentions.

Having been widely employed as a framework in social and behavioural science studies, the theory of planned behaviour (TPB) has found successful applications across various contexts such as health behaviours, substance use, and environmental issues (Bosnjak et al., 2020). In the area of consumer boycott intentions, in order to comprehend and predict the variables influencing consumers' decisions to boycott products and services, the TPB has been utilised effectively, and a research by Delistavrou (2021) has shown that boycott intentions is significantly influenced by subjective norms. Other than that, ethnocultural empathy and eWOM trust can influence consumer behaviour as they are related to the attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control of the consumers. For example, high ethnocultural empathy levels can lead to attitudes that are positive towards minority groups and increased willingness to engage in prosocial behaviours (Wang et al., 2003). eWOM trust can also influence subjective norms, as people may be more likely to consider eWOM before finalising a decision (Mohd Azhar et al., 2022). As per Wayne (2022), subjective norms encompass a person's belief regarding whether most individuals would approve or disapprove of their behaviour, while attitude pertains to their inclination towards performing the behaviour, and the concept of perceived behavioural control revolves around individuals' perceptions regarding the difficulty or ease in executing a specific behaviour.

Ethnocultural empathy entails perceiving and empathising with individuals' feelings from diverse cultural backgrounds. Osman et al. (2021) demonstrated its significant impact on consumer attitudes and behaviours, indicating that higher ethnocultural empathy levels are linked with attitudes that are more positive towards diversity and a greater willingness to engage in prosocial behaviours. Therefore, the ability to understand and share the feelings of people caught in the conflict between Israel and Palestine is a key component of ethnocultural empathy. Other than that, according to Dickinger (2010), empathy has been shown to motivate individuals to engage in prosocial behaviours and altruistic tendencies, thereby influencing consumers to engage in acts that have a positive impact on the welfare of those who are affected by the conflict. Decety et al. (2016) showed that empathy can be a source of altruistic motivations and drive pro-social behaviour. This can lead to consumers deliberately counteracting their negative tendencies and engaging in

activities that are targeted at reducing the suffering of others and improving their well-being (Akbar et al., 2020). In simple terms, consumer behaviour can be influenced by ethnocultural empathy, as individuals are more inclined to support businesses and products that show a commitment to cultural awareness and sensitivity. Furthermore, the complicated historical and cultural interaction of the conflict between Israel and Palestine has elicited a wide range of emotional responses from Malaysians, invoking their ethnocultural empathy. Recent events included Malaysia's prime minister Anwar Ibrahim calling out Israeli actions "the height of barbarism" and expressing his unity with the Palestinians, criticising Israel's offensive in Gaza (Chew, 2023; Yaacob, 2023). Other than that, following Friday prayers, thousands of Malaysians rallied at mosques across the country in public demonstrations, expressing support for Palestine and condemning Israel's military action in Gaza (Azmi & Sipalan, 2023; Buheji et al., 2024). Additionally, the Muis advisory where Singapore's Religious Leadership Forum develops an advisory to guide Muslims on their response to overseas conflicts like the Israel-Hamas war, with an aim to help the Muslims process information related to such conflicts and how to manage their emotions in a constructive way (Abdullah, 2023; Norena Abdul Karim Zamri et al., 2021). Considering that Malaysia is well-known for its diverse cultural traditions, it is possible for the Malaysians' ethnocultural empathy to influence their boycott intentions. To be precise, the ethnocultural empathy will sway their decisions regarding items and businesses that are associated with the conflict and as a result of this empathy with the lived experiences of those who are involved in the conflict, consumer behaviours and support for businesses may be significantly influenced (Akbar et al., 2020).

In the context of the Israel-Palestine conflict, ethnocultural empathy signifies the emotional assimilation with the sentiments of the people who have been afflicted by this conflict and the demonstrations of ethnocultural empathy will influence consumer views, which will in turn sway Malaysian consumers' decisions about products or businesses involved in this ongoing conflict. According to Hassali and Al-Tamimi (2015), this emotional understanding and shared feelings towards comprehending the conflict between Israel and Palestine would impact consumer behaviours significantly, which

includes their purchasing decisions and support for businesses that are tied to organisations involved in the conflict. The increasing importance of consumer empathy is being recognised as a crucial element in fostering and creating a strong emotional bond between businesses and customers (Hassali & Al-Tamimi, 2015). In today's interconnected world, businesses have the responsibility to understand and connect with their consumers on a personal and human level and this entails considering the consumers' demands, desires, grievances, and frustrations (Hassali & Al-Tamimi, 2015). The focus on ethnocultural empathy highlights the need of sustaining emotional connections and understanding when looking into consumer behaviours, especially in sensitive areas like the Israel-Palestine conflict (Akbar et al., 2020).

In today's digitally linked environment, electronic word of mouth (eWOM) has evolved into a revolutionary force in shaping consumers' decision-making processes (Verma & Yadav, 2022). Previous research has shown that establishing consumer trust and mitigating potential boycotts by engaging in conversations with their consumers are crucial elements of modern business management. Hussain et al. (2020) highlights the importance of monitoring eWOM for businesses to improve their products or services by looking into the motivational involvement in eWOM of their consumer for adoption of information. Lasarov et al. (2023) suggests that maintaining a positive company image and addressing consumer concerns can help to mitigate consumer boycotts after researching consumer participation in boycotts. Kim et al. (2022) highlights the importance of addressing consumer concerns to mitigate boycotts when studying the impact of consumer animosity on boycott campaigns within a cross-cultural context. Additionally, the importance of cultural background in eWOM exchanges should not be overlooked. Previous research showed consumer responses to eWOM and the emotional or cognitive dissonance that results from these behaviours are all influenced by the consumers' cultural values and the individualistic or collectivist leanings of a society. Tao and Jin (2017) found that cultural differences have significant impacts on eWOM engagement. Luo et al. (2014) highlights that individualism-collectivism cultural orientation influences eWOM perception. The credibility of eWOM is becoming a crucial factor in influencing consumer behaviour as digital platforms provide the rapid

dissemination and exchange of user-generated information and reviews, which are becoming more prevalent. In Malaysia, the combination of economic growth and the extensive uptake of information and communication technology has sparked a greater interest in high-end premium brands and it has amplified the influence of eWOM, as consumers actively seek out and exchange opinions online about how brands engage with social and political matters (Hassali & Al-Tamimi, 2015; Jehangir et al., 2011). This is because consumers are seeking opinions and sharing experiences online regarding the engagements of businesses with socio-political issues. Other than that, eWOM trust refers to the trust consumers place in online reviews and recommendations. and research by Makarem and Jae (2016) found that eWOM trust influences consumer decision-making process on their product choice and brand loyalty. Wolny and Mueller (2013) found that when consumers are motivated to engage with fashion companies through eWOM on social platforms, there is evidence to suggest that a strong sense of trust with the fashion companies can result in consumers experiencing a rise in both the quantity and quality of interactions. Thus, eWOM trust can influence consumers' behaviour.

The interaction of ethnocultural empathy and eWOM trust appears to be a significant factor in the consumers behaviour (Keck, 2022; Zasuwa, 2022). To be specific, the degree to which consumers trust are influenced by online evaluations and shared experiences, particularly those that relates to the attitude and activities of businesses in regard to the conflict, might strengthen the impact of ethnocultural empathy has on consumers' behaviour. This interaction highlights the need for businesses to genuinely and compassionately connect with their consumers by demonstrating the significance of trust in how individuals perceive and respond to information (Dickinger, 2010). In a market that is becoming more connected and socially aware, businesses that navigate these sensitive global issues with transparency and empathy will have the ability to develop stronger and more trusting relationships with their consumers (Vredenburg et al., 2020). When it comes to consumer behaviour, the influence of eWOM trust and ethnocultural empathy interacts with the attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control of consumers as suggested by previous research. Martin and Lueg (2013) found that eWOM source with high expertise has more influence on consumer attitudes. Saleem &

Ellahi (2017) found that message provider's trustworthiness impacts the purchasing intention on eWOM platforms, indicating trust in the source of eWOM communication is a crucial factor in consumer decision-making. Examining cognitive, affective, and behavioural evaluations in service recovery influenced by co-creation, Gohary et al. (2016) propose that ethnocultural empathy may shape the perception and interpretation of eWOM, thereby potentially influencing customer behaviour. Additionally, the relationship of eWOM and ethnocultural empathy has been documented, with a positive link between consumers feeling an emotional connection to a business and their tendency to trust and share eWOM content (Sukati, 2018). Likewise, a business's reliable and compassionate position on controversial matters such as the Israel/Palestine conflict can greatly impact how its online content is perceived through eWOM channels and the trust in those eWOM.

The complex challenge businesses encounter when addressing ethical dilemmas and conflicts with worldwide ramifications, impacting consumer intention to boycott, is underscored by the moderation effect of ethnocultural empathy and eWOM trust on attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control. Identifying plus resolving the challenges is crucial for businesses that operate in culturally diverse countries like Malaysia. In order to remain pertinent and retain a customer base, it is crucial for businesses to exhibit cultural awareness and sensitivity towards socio-political matters that are of importance to their consumers (Kimotho, 2023). This aligns with TPB, which suggests that human behaviour is guided by behavioural intentions, which in turn is influenced by attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control concerning the behaviour (Hassan & Shiu, 2017). Hence, it is essential to examine the factors contributing to boycotting in Malaysia within the framework of attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control. Moreover, it is essential to consider the moderating influence of ethnocultural empathy and eWOM trust on the relationship between these variables and boycott intentions is crucial.

1.2 Problem Statement

In Malaysia, the complex socio-political landscape significantly influences consumer behaviours, especially in the context of the long-standing Israel and Palestine conflict (Hakim, 2023). Ethnocultural empathy and eWOM trust are crucial factors in this context. Although the importance of these factors on Malaysians' opinions and actions is undeniable, the precise effect of ethnocultural empathy and eWOM trust on attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control thereby influencing consumer boycott intentions in the context of the Israel and Palestine issue has not been thoroughly explored (Dickinger, 2010; Herabadi, 2003). Recent research in the context of Israel/Palestine conflict highlights the power of cultural boycotts in the context of supporting the Palestinian people's resistance against Israeli apartheid (Springer, 2021), emphasises the importance of empathy and understanding opposing perspectives in addressing the conflict between Israel and Palestine (Barron, 2023), and The Harvard College Palestine Solidarity Committee's campaign calling for a boycott of Harvard College's annual subsidised spring break trip to Israel and the West Bank sheds light on the impact of such initiatives on raising awareness about the Palestinian struggle (Lu, 2022). This research gap requires a more thorough investigation of the interaction of these factors and how they influence consumer behaviour in Malaysia's culturally diverse and technologically advanced culture as shown by Malaysia's strong infrastructure, stable economy, and the government's focus on digital transformation. The Malaysian Digital Economy Blueprint and the MyDIGITAL programme were launched as part of the government's plan to make Malaysia a digitally savvy, high-income country and a pioneer in the regional digital economy (INTAN, 2022). The information communication and technology industry, with a contribution to Malaysia's GDP in 2021 at 23.2%; the International Trade Administration (2024) projects that this percentage would rise to 25.5% by 2025. According to the International Trade Administration (2024), digital transformation is actively being adopted by both the government and commercial sectors across various fields, including cloud computing, big data analytics, and the Internet of Things (IoT).

To address the gap, future researchers may concentrate on carrying out comprehensive qualitative interviews or surveys to investigate the precise aspects that impact consumer behaviour about the Israel/Palestine conflict in Malaysia and this research has the potential to reveal the fundamental reasons and influences behind consumer boycott intentions in this specific context of Israel/Palestine conflict. This research can provide useful and valuable insights for businesses operating not only in Malaysia but also in similar socio-cultural contexts. Businesses can better understand and adjust to the unique dynamics of the Malaysian market by looking at how ethnocultural empathy and eWOM trust moderates the influence of attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control in relation to consumers' boycott intentions in the context of the Israel-Palestine conflict.

1.3 Research Objectives

1.3.1 General Objective

This research aims to examine the correlation between attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control with boycott intentions in the context of the Israel/Palestine conflict in Malaysia. Additionally, it seeks to explore the moderating effect of ethnocultural empathy and eWOM trust on this correlation.

1.3.2 Specific Objectives

1. To examine the correlation between attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control in connection to consumer boycott intentions in the context of the Israel/Palestine conflict in Malaysia.

2. To examine how ethnocultural empathy influences the correlation between attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control on consumer boycott intentions in the specific context of the Israel/Palestine conflict in Malaysia.

3. To examine how eWOM trust influences the correlation between attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control, and consumer boycott intentions in the specific context of the Israel/Palestine conflict in Malaysia.

1.4 Research Questions

1.4.1 General Question

How do attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control impact consumer boycott intention in the Malaysia-Israel/Palestine conflict context? How can ethnocultural empathy and eWOM trust influence or moderate this relationship?

1.4.2 Specific Questions

1. What is the impact of attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control on consumer boycott intentions in Malaysia regarding the Israel/Palestine conflict?

2. What is the impact of ethnocultural empathy on the correlation between attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control in relation to consumer boycott intentions in Malaysia, specifically in the context of the Israel/Palestine conflict?

3. What is the impact of eWOM trust on the correlation between attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control in relation to consumer boycott intentions in Malaysia, specifically in the context of the Israel/Palestine conflict?

1.5 Significance of Research

1.5.1 Theoretical Significance

There is a scarcity of research that includes the integration of ethnocultural empathy, eWOM trust, attitude, subjective norms, perceived behavioural control, and consumer boycott intentions within a comprehensive framework. Most research has examined these aspects separately, neglecting their possible interaction and collective impact on customer behaviour.

The current body of literature lacks sufficient empirical research that particularly examines the impact of ethnocultural empathy and eWOM trust on the correlation between attitude, subjective norms, perceived behavioural control, and consumer boycott intentions. Theoretical support exists for the influence of these variables, however there is minimal actual data.

TPB is not fully exploited in analysing the impact of ethnocultural empathy and eWOM trust on the correlation between attitude, subjective norms, perceived behavioural control, and consumer boycott intentions. Prior studies have mostly concentrated on TPB to individual variables, rather than taking into account their collective impact.

From an academic standpoint, the empirical evidence adds to the existing knowledge body and serves as a foundation for future research endeavours. Many existing researchers have focused on examining factors such as ethnocultural empathy and eWOM trust in isolation, overlooking their potential interplay and influence on consumer behaviour. This research departs from this trend by exploring the interconnectedness of these factors by looking at how ethnocultural empathy and eWOM trust influence the correlation between attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control in relation to consumer boycott intentions. This research aims to offer a more nuanced and comprehensive comprehension of the complexities influencing consumer boycott intentions by examining the interplay between ethnocultural empathy and eWOM trust.

Moreover, the research employs the TPB as an underpinning framework to understand the influence of ethnocultural empathy and eWOM trust on how attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control shapes consumer boycott intention. Unlike previous research that applied TPB to individual factors, this research integrates these variables of ethnocultural empathy and eWOM trust within the TPB framework, contributing to a more holistic analysis. By doing so, this could contribute to addressing gaps in the current existing literature, fostering a more thorough understanding of the factors influencing behaviour across diverse contexts (Ryan & Worthington, 2021).

1.5.2 Practical Significance

The literature gap pertains to the practical consequences for businesses and marketers. Research is required to develop theoretical knowledge and provide practical insights for businesses dealing with consumer behaviour in culturally varied and digitally linked marketplaces.

From a practical standpoint, the research's empirical investigation into the influence of ethnocultural empathy and eWOM trust on consumer boycott intentions holds valuable

implications for both academia and industry. Regarding industry applications, the research findings hold promise for guiding businesses. By comprehending how ethnocultural empathy and eWOM trust influences the correlation between attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control in relation to consumer boycott intentions, businesses can adapt their strategies more adeptly to culturally diverse and digitally connected markets.This understanding is particularly crucial in navigating the complexities of consumer behaviour in the current digital age, where eWOM trust and ethnocultural empathy plays a significant role.

Furthermore, the research's practical significance extends to societal impact. The findings derived from the research can assist businesses in proactively addressing factors that may lead to consumer boycott. This proactive approach not only helps in maintaining positive relationships with consumers but also contributes to the broader goal of effectively managing potential negative consequences associated with boycotts.

1.6 Summary

Chapter 1 of this research project delineates the overall structure and research background. Within this chapter, readers can find the problem statement, research questions, research objectives, and the research significance. These will ensure the main focus and objective of this research are understood by its readers.

Subsequently, the purpose of Chapter 2's review of related journal articles is to understand how similar research has developed in the past. The chapter's literature review identifies the methodology used and insights gained from earlier research. Nevertheless, the chapter will develop this research's theoretical framework and further discuss the independent variable, moderating variable, and dependent variables.

Moving forward to the research methodology, taking into account the design of the research, techniques for gathering data, strategy to select the sample, and instruments

used in the research will be described in chapter 3. Other than that, Chapter 3 will also cover the methods for measuring, processing, and analysing the variables.

Data analysis will be performed and explained in Chapter 4. The respondents' demographic structure will be described, and the measurement of the main trends of the variables will be analysed. Additionally, the findings of the inferential analysis and reliability analysis are further explored.

Finally, Chapter 5 presents a summary of all descriptive and inferential analyses, together with discussions of the main research results. This brings up the usefulness of this research for academicians and practitioners. On the other hand, the research's limitations are discussed along with recommendations and suggestions for future research.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

A thorough assessment of prior research was conducted on all subjects addressed in this research project encompassing ethnocultural empathy, eWOM trust, attitude towards boycott, subjective norms of boycott, perceived behavioural control of boycott, and boycott intentions. Under the literature review, the existing literature on each variable and the interplay of these variables with consumer boycott intentions are explained. The research methodology and insights gained from the existing literature are also explored. Hypothesis will then be formed. By utilising the TPB framework, the research introduces this research's conceptual framework and underscores the research gap in existing literature.

2.1 Literature Review

2.1.1 Underpinning Theory: Theory of Planned Behaviour

2.1.1.1 Overview of the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB)

Ajzen (1991) developed TPB to attempt to understand and predict human behaviour, suggesting that behavioural intention is influenced by attitude towards that behaviour, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control. TPB is a psychological theory that claims that a person's desire to engage in a particular action might predict that person's decision to do so (Brookes, 2023). This theory aims to clarify and predict human social behaviour by proposing that the majority of human actions are driven by a level of reasoning and planning, as evidenced by the concepts of "reasoned actions" and "planned behaviour" (Tornikoshi & Maalaoui, 2019). This theory states that three main elements influence intentions: one's attitude towards the behaviour, subjective norms, and one's perception of behavioural control. In Kan and Fabrigar's (2017) study and Wayne's (2022) research, it is outlined that the perception of social pressure to engage in a behaviour are referred to as subjective norms, an individual's evaluation of the behaviour either positive or negative, are signified by attitude, and the perception of the difficulty or ease in performing the behaviour are indicated by perceived behavioural control.

2.1.1.2 Application of TPB in Previous Consumer Behavior Research

TPB has been extensively utilised in consumer behaviour research to understand and predict consumer intentions and behaviour. TPB has been utilised to predict consumer intentions regarding purchasing environmentally friendly products, adopting new technologies, and engaging in healthy behaviours (Kan & Fabrigar, 2017). TPB has been utilised to explore consumer attitudes and behaviours regarding social issues like fair trade, animal welfare, and sustainability (Rozenkowska, 2023).

2.1.1.3 Relevance of TPB to Understanding and Predicting Consumer Intentions, Including Boycott Intentions

By looking at the application of TPB in previous research, it is undeniable that TPB is crucial for understanding and predicting consumer boycott intentions. According to Smith (1987), boycotting is considered the most deliberate form of ethical consumer behaviour. Boycotting is a deliberate and ethically driven behaviour, as highlighted by Delistavrou et al. (2020). According to TPB, intentions, which are impacted by attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control, are the most accurate indicator of behaviour. Thus, understanding the factors that influence these three components can help in predicting consumer intentions and behaviour, which includes boycott intentions. Parisa Ahmmadi et al. (2021) highlighted various factors such as attitudes towards a company's practices, subjective norms related to social pressure for boycotting, and perceived behavioural control on consumer intentions to boycott.

2.1.1.4 Literature Review on Theory of Planned Behaviour

Ajzen's (1988) model, renowned as one of the most significant and esteemed theories in consumer behaviour, suggests human behaviour is influenced by three primary variables: beliefs regarding their expected behaviour, beliefs concerning others' expectations, and beliefs about their control over their actions. These elements ultimately translate into attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control, expecting individuals to promptly execute their goals when they have the opportunity and authority to regulate their actions (Kan & Fabrigar, 2017; Ajzen, 1991). Examining the TPB assists in predicting an individual's behavioural inclination in a specific circumstance (Ajzen, 2012). The concept was established to clarify all actions that individuals believe they can proficiently perform and this hypothesis has the ability to predict behaviours in various contexts, including substance use, drinking, smoking, shopping activity, and boycotting (Brookes, 2023).

TPB is a widely used framework in the field of social science, employed to elucidate the factors influencing human behaviour. TPB was extended from Theory of Reasoned

Action via integrating the concept of perceived control as an additional predictor, over behaviour performance (Wayne, 2022). According to this theory, an individual's volitional conduct is primarily driven by their desire to participate in an activity (Patterson, 2001). An individual's intentions are a manifestation of their drive, exhibited through their deliberate choice and exertion to participate in a specific action (Brookes, 2023). TPB aims to predict involuntary actions by using an additional predictor of the perceptions of control over the behaviour's execution (Patterson, 2001). According to TPB, behaviour is shaped by both the intention and the perceived ability to engage in and control that behaviour. Thus, attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control influences consumer intention (Asare, 2015). To expand more on TPB, the attitude component is shaped by an individual's fundamental behavioural beliefs, which mirror their anticipated outcomes or characteristics of the behaviour (Brookes, 2023). Normative views will influence subjective norms, and these views are formed based on individuals' assessments of the preferences of influential individuals regarding participation in the activity (Brookes, 2023). Perceived Behavioural Control is the subjective evaluation made by an individual regarding the degree of effortlessness or difficulty involved in carrying out a specific action (Brookes, 2023). The concept of perceived behavioural control closely resembles Bandura's self-efficacy concept (Ajzen, 2002; Mcleod, 2023). The TRA/TPB provides a concise explanation of behaviour and intentions, but relying exclusively on these models to predict intentions and behaviour has limitations. Improving the accuracy and logical coherence of the model can be accomplished by integrating unique concepts and taking into account the emotional and ethical considerations (Brookes, 2023). Researchers must conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the methods that are employed to extract beliefs in order to guarantee that they accurately reflect beliefs that hold significance for individuals (Brookes, 2023).

Utilising TPB is a widely used method for assessing and predicting consumers' tendencies to boycott products or services. TPB states that attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control determines the behavioural intentions. Various studies across different contexts have employed TPB to investigate boycott behaviour. Delistavrou et al. (2021) conducted a thorough investigation on the TPB model, examining the impact of politics

and demographics on consumers' inclinations to boycott unethical supermarket products. Hamzah and Mustafa (2019) included the TPB framework with the transtheoretical model to investigate factors influencing the boycott intentions of Malaysian consumers towards businesses supporting Israel. Palacios-Florencio et al. (2019) performed an in-depth examination of the elements that impact attitude towards boycott, including perceived legitimacy, ethical idealism, and ethical relativism. Li and Gong (2013) found that consumers' willingness to engage in green boycott behaviour was affected by their environmental consciousness, subjective standards, and perceived ability to control their actions. In predicting pro-environmental behaviours such as ethical investing and boycotting, The significance of attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control was underlined by Conner and McMillan (2004).

2.1.1.4.1 Attitude towards Boycott

Ajzen (2002) asserts that people who have a positive attitude towards a behaviour are more likely to be successful in pursuing it. This is so because a person's attitude increases their potential to pursue that behaviour (Ajzen & Fishbein, 2005; Ajzen, 2002). The way that each person assesses their own behaviour may help or impede how it is carried out. Consumers are less inclined to buy specific products if they hold an unfavourable view towards them. Conversely, people are more inclined to buy consumer goods they view favourably (Ajzen & Fishbein, 2005; Ajzen & Fishbein, 2000) . Consumers will be able to more accurately articulate their behaviour model and make well-informed decisions while purchasing consumer things if they possess an attitude. Whether the consumer will have boycott intentions depends significantly on their attitude towards the business.

According to Akintimehin et al. (2022), Palacios-Florencio et al. (2019), and Pratiwi et al. (2021), an individual's attitude towards boycott can be influenced by various factors such as perceived legitimacy of behaviour, ethical idealism, ethical relativism, animosity, intrinsic religious motivation, self-enhancement, brand distrust, and product judgement. Forno (2022) states that the importance of legitimacy processes in the relationship between a company and its customers influences their attitude towards boycott intentions. The intention to boycott French goods is greatly influenced by elements including

antagonism, self-enhancement, and attitude towards boycotting, as stated by Palihawadana (2016). According to Palihawadana (2016), in a developing economy, adopting a corporate social responsibility mindset fosters a positive outlook on ethical consumer behaviour and encourages ethical consumption. Anger and ethnocentrism can directly lead consumers to participate in boycotts (Palihawadana, 2016). Ethnocentrism can reduce consumers' willingness to follow through with their plans to boycott. The research's findings contribute to a more profound understanding of how attitudes influence boycotts and the resulting implications for businesses.

2.1.1.4.2 Subjective Norms on Boycotts

Subjective norms are the beliefs about how other people—friends, family, classmates, and others—affect a person's behaviour. According to Ajzen (1991), subjective norms are the perceived pressures from others to participate in a specific conduct. Afendi et al. (2014) found that in Malaysia, friends, family, and coworkers are important sources of subjective norms.

Research by Delistavrou (2021) has shown that buyers' tendency to boycott unethical products is greatly impacted by subjective norms. Furthermore, Song (2010) provides additional evidence for the notion that consumers' intention to engage in a boycott against immoral products is mostly shaped by subjective norms. Research has demonstrated that subjective norms are more likely to influence consumers with lower policy control scores on their intentions (Kim et al., 2022). Subjective norms can impede actual purchase behaviour by raising the chances of boycotting a product or service (Sukirman et al., 2019). Maher et al. (2010) found that boycott intentions are partially mediated by the influence of subjective norms on purchase intentions where subjective norms linked to purchasing specific items have been found to reduce the desire to purchase those items.

2.1.1.4.3 Perceived Behavioral Control on Boycott

Perceived behavioural control, which Ajzen (1988) included in the TPB, affects behaviour as well as intention. This concept came into the framework when it was discovered that the way how perceived behavioural control is defined and how Bandura

(1997) defined self-efficacy as the conviction that one can do a particular action or behaviour, were comparable to each other. Perceived behavioural control focuses on task difficulty, while self-efficacy focuses on a person's capability to perform a specific action successfully. This perceived behavioural control is a crucial component that can impact a consumer's decision to make a purchase or to boycott.

Perceived behavioural control, as defined by Nadia Ayu Safira and Fanni Putri Diantina (2021), pertains to the individual's perception of their capacity to exert control over a specific behaviour. It encompasses assessing how easy or difficult it is to perform that activity, considering internal and external obstacles. It has been studied in several contexts, including social media addiction, entrepreneurial intentions, and nutritional changes. In the context of social media addiction. research has demonstrated that the perceived control to manage behaviour significantly influences college students' intention to reduce the time they spend on Instagram (Idrees et al., 2022). Perceived behavioural control in entrepreneurial intention serves as both an antecedent and a mediator among personal traits, psycho-sociological variables, and entrepreneurial objectives (Perlmuter et al., 1983). A research by Maness et al. (2017) demonstrated that the Rejection Behavioural Monitoring method, a mindfulness-inducing strategy, is effective in enhancing perceived control in the context of improved control. Research by Sparks (1997) indicates that within nutritional changes, perceived difficulty and perceived control have distinct effects on behavioural intentions.

2.1.1.4.4 Consumer Boycott Intentions

<u>Definition and Significance of Consumer Boycott Intentions</u>

Consumer boycott intentions are the conscious decisions made by customers to abstain from buying or utilising goods or services from a certain business or nation as a form of protest or activism according to few researches. According to Shim et al. (2021, blame attributions and anger as moral outrage are antecedents to consumer boycotts, indicating a conscious decision to abstain from supporting a company due to perceived unethical behaviour. One important factor is the perception that a firm's actions or policies are

wrong and harmful, such as negatively affecting the environment, workers, or society at large (Hoffmann, 2022). Consumer cynicism, which includes distrust and dissatisfaction towards businesses, also plays a role in boycott participation (Keser & Söğütlü, 2023). The ideological incompatibility between a brand and consumers can lead to boycott action, especially when consumers consider the opinions of themselves and others. (Wang er al., 2021). Susceptibility to interpersonal influence, animosity, and perceived egregiousness are additional factors that influence consumers' willingness to boycott (Tariki & Shukor, 2019). Social capital, including social ties, generalised trust, and social networks, also affects consumer decisions to participate in boycotts (Zasuwa, 2019). This choice may be made in response to a variety of issues. In the market, this action is important because it has the potential to have an effect on the reputation as well as the company's financial performance that is being targeted by the boycott (Friedman, 2010). According to Klein et al. (2002), consumer boycotts are a strong instrument for consumers to voice their concerns and impact change. This is because consumer boycotts have the capacity to affect business policies, practices, and social responsibility.

Factors Influencing Consumer Boycott Intentions

According to research conducted by Klein et al. (2002), there are a number of variables that impact the intentions of consumers to boycott a product or service which includes values held by prospective players in the consumer market, how well the objectives of the boycott align with the sentiments of the participants, costs associated with participation, tensions from society, and regarding the credibility of the leadership of the boycott.

Furthermore, research has been conducted to investigate the dynamic psychological features of boycott intention. These research have shown that expressive and instrumental drivers impact consumers' inclination to boycott over the course of time (Lasarov et al., 2023). For example, self-enhancement, fairness, reciprocity, game theory, and social dilemma are all examples of social sciences and economic theories that are included in this category of drivers. A research on consumer boycott intelligence examines whether direct measures of attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control can predict consumers' boycotting intention, shedding light on the psychological aspects

influencing boycott decisions (Farah & Newman, 2010). In the context of political consumerism, research delves into experimentally motivating intentions to boycott and buycott, emphasising the psychological underpinnings of consumer actions and the interplay between negative and positive motivations in shaping consumer behaviour (Kam & Deichert, 2020). Researches on the dynamics of consumer boycotts provide insights into the factors influencing individuals' intentions to participate in boycotts, including elements like animosity towards specific entities and intrinsic motivations, highlighting the psychological and personal values that drive individuals to engage in boycott activities (Suraji et al., 2023).

Existing Research on Antecedents and Predictors of Consumer Boycott Behaviour

Makarem and Jae (2016) used content analysis of social media feeds, research has investigated the reasons, causes, and targets of consumer boycott behaviour and this research has been conducted in several other research. Furthermore, research has been conducted to explore the effect of people' moral foundations on perceptions and reactions to a business's crisis and this research has shed light on the significance of moral ethics on customers' intents to boycott a business (Shim et al., 2021).

Literature Review on Boycott Intentions

Boycott intentions are influenced by contexts. The research conducted by Pratiwi et al. (2021) found that the inclination to boycott French products is significantly and positively impacted by feelings of wrath, self-improvement, and innate religious drive and on the other hand, brand mistrust, product judgement, and intention towards boycotting do not significantly impact the outcome. Xie et al. (2023) discovered that brand animosity directly and positively influences intentions to boycott, with this impact being mediated through cognitive-affective assessments, cognitive product assessment does not directly affect tendencies to boycott goods and the research found that xenocentrism acts as a moderator in the correlation between animosity and cognitive judgement. Forno (2022) states that boycotts aim to stimulate political engagement through economic strategies and this is achieved by urging citizens to refrain from purchasing specific things or

utilising particular services. Zhang et al. (2017) found that ethical consuming propensity and unpleasant expected feeling indirectly influence the urge to boycott, which then affects the intention to boycott where there is a lack of public motivation. An investigation conducted by An (2020) shows that the factors affecting the decision to continue or end a boycott differ depending on the duration and intensity of consumer participation in the boycott. However, there is yet to be research that integrates ethnocultural empathy and eWOM trust as a moderator to explore its effect on the relationship between attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control with consumer boycott intentions.

2.1.1.5 Interplay between attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control and consumer boycott intention

The purpose of Delistavrou's (2021) research is to investigate the TPB's ability to predict consumers' boycott intention for "unethical" supermarket products. Moreover, TPB is expanded by investigating how politics and certain demographics affect the development of behavioural intentions. Personal interviews and a two-stage area combined with stratified sampling were used to collect 420 usable questionnaires for the survey, which was carried out in Thessaloniki, Greece. According to the findings, customers allow themselves to be most affected by subjective norms when it comes to engaging in boycott campaigns against "unethical" items when they are shopping at supermarkets. The moderation analysis results indicate that subjective norms has a more evident influence among consumers who have lower policy control scores, whereas the attitudes influence is more obvious among higher leadership competence consumers. Other than that, the influence of attitudes on intentions is heightened among male, persons under the age of 44, have a greater level of education, and have relatively higher earnings.

Using TPB as a lens, Li et al. (2013) investigates the environmental boycott behaviour of consumers. Li's research builds on previous research already published in the field. This research employs an empirical research approach to assess the variables influencing judgments regarding green consumption decisions. The results indicate that consumers' decisions about whether or not to engage in boycott activities and make green purchases

are positively influenced by their perceptions of environmental protection, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control. Conversely, the perceived cost significantly influences the likelihood of boycotting the product or service in a negative manner. This research presents an important contribution to the field by showcasing a creative application of the TPB in analysing and forecasting consumer behaviours related to environmental consciousness.

Farah (2014) performed research to investigate the factors influencing Lebanese consumers' propensity to boycott American goods in protest of American actions in the Middle East. The research investigated the beliefs that customers have about their intentions to boycott a product or service by using TPB. Subjective norms, perceived behavioural control, and customer attitudes about boycotting were all taken into account in the research. Employing a thorough quantitative methodology, the research investigated the expectancy theory within the TPB framework and identified belief targets that may guide countermeasures to deter customers from boycotting American enterprises in the Arab World. Based on the findings, it was determined that the perceived egregiousness of an entity's actions is the key motivator for boycotting, whereas significant cost-related factors might be a barrier to participation. In the research, which included the participation of 500 Lebanese consumers, a multistage sampling approach was used, and specific belief targets were chosen for the purpose of developing persuasive techniques with the idea of mitigating the intention to boycott American goods in the region.

The TPB significantly influences consumers' boycott intentions on products. The main variables influencing this phenomenon are attitudes, perceived behavioural control, and subjective norms (Delistavrou, 2021; Li et al., 2013; Farah, 2010). Sociopolitical control, demography, and environmental concerns are all areas in which these factors have a very significant impact (Delistavrou, 2021; Li et al., 2013). According to Farah (2010), attitude is a particularly powerful predictor of intentions to boycott, and the formation of boycott intentions is significantly influenced by perceived behavioural control. Specific beliefs have been identified as possible targets for treatments, and Farah (2014) discovered that

the expectancy-value model that is included within the TPB is a reliable predictor of boycott intentions.

Table 2.1: Summary of literature review of attitude, subjective norms, perceived behavioural control and consumer boycott intentions

Citation	Insights gained	Relation to this research
Delistavrou (2021)	TPB influences consumers' boycott intentions	Confirms TPB's impact on consumer behaviour
Li et al. (2013)	Attitudes, perceived behavioural control, and subjective norms influence boycott intentions	Highlights key factors in consumer boycott decisions
Farah (2010)	Attitude is a strong predictor of boycott intentions	Emphasises the role of attitude in consumer behaviour
Farah (2014)	Expectancy-value model within TPB predicts boycott intentions	Demonstrates a reliable predictor within the TPB framework

Thus, this research hypothesised that

H1a: There is a relationship between consumer boycott intentions and attitude.

H1b: There is a relationship between customer boycott intentions and subjective norms.

H1c: There is a relationship between customer boycott intentions and perceived behavioural control.

2.1.2 Electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM) Trust

2.1.2.1 Definition and Elaboration of Electronic Word of Mouth (eWOM) and Trust in the Digital Context

The term electronic word-of-mouth, or eWOM, describes how information about a good or service spreads via social media recommendations, online reviews, or content shared by well-known people (Siebert, 2022). This information is shared through several channels, such as social networking platforms, popular applications, eCommerce websites, and search engines. eWOM's influence has grown over the past few years, serving as a potent conduit between online searches and actual purchase activity.

Trust in the digital environment is the term used to describe a consumer's confidence in the accuracy and reliability of information delivered online. As stated by Raed Khamis Alharbi (2022), it plays a crucial role in e-commerce by influencing consumer behaviour and their intention to make purchases. The trustworthiness of the source, the accuracy of the information, and the perceived level of risk associated with the product or service all play a role in the building of that trust.

2..1.2.2 Literature Review on eWOM and Trust in the Context of Consumer Decision-Making

Research has shown that eWOM has a substantial influence on the decision-making process of customers, since people depend on online evaluations and suggestions to make well-informed decisions (Huete-Alcocer, 2017). Both the legitimacy of the source and the quality of the information that is communicated are very important factors in the process of establishing trust and influencing the behaviour of consumers. According to research by Huete-Alcocer (2017), eWOM has the potential to have a more significant impact on customer behaviour than conventional advertising does since it is regarded to be more credible and trustworthy.

2.1.2.3 Role of eWOM Trust in Shaping Consumer Perceptions and Actions

There has been research that has studied the impact that eWOM trust plays in changing the attitudes and behaviours of consumers. Lis (2013) showed that consumers are more likely to make purchases when they have eWOM trust, and that trust in information provided by eWOM is mostly related to the usefulness and quality of the information. The link between trust and the credibility of eWOM may also be moderated by engagement, according to Zhao et al. (2020). Numerous elements, including competence, trustworthiness, and aggregate rating, all play a role in determining how credible eWOM is judged to be.

2.1.2.4 Interplay between eWOM Trust and Consumer Boycott Intentions

Wang (2016) discusses the rising relevance of user-generated content, which is made possible by information and communication technology, as a vital component that influences consumer decision-making. This is especially true in the tourism and hospitality sector, which is recognized for intangible and experiential aspects of the business. Wang (2016) combined two well-established frameworks, namely the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) and the TPB, into a model with the purpose of gaining an understanding of the influence that eWOM has on the choices that travellers make about their trip destinations. The moderating influence of the cultural component of uncertainty avoidance is included into the model.

The factors that influence customers' inclination to participate in either positive or negative electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) communication are examined by Fu et al. (2015). The research uses the TPB, justice theory, and social psychology literature to examine the distinct antecedents for both positive and negative eWOM intentions. However, social pressure is more likely to have an impact on customers who are thinking about posting unfavourable eWOM. Based mostly on attitude, the data indicates that customers who intend to post positive eWOM are motivated. On top of that, the perceptions of distributive justice are the primary factor that determines the level of dissatisfaction in bad shopping experiences. On the other hand, the perceptions of

interactional and procedural justice have a substantial impact on satisfying good shopping experiences. It sheds light on the subtle reasons and antecedents that shape customers' choices to share both good and bad buying experiences in the online environment.

Cheng (2013) investigates the elements that affect consumers' intents to take part in online group-buying groups, taking into consideration both new and existing customers. The research model incorporates TPB, eWOM, network embeddedness, and website quality attitude. The results of a survey conducted with 373 registered users of the ihergo website are analysed in this study using the partial least squares method. The findings indicate that the relational embeddedness of the initiator, attitudes towards service quality, and exposure to eWOM all impact potential customers' intentions to engage in online group buying. The purpose itself has a positive influence on the behaviour of current customers who participate in online group purchasing. It is influenced by the structural and relational embeddedness of the initiator as well as a positive attitude towards the quality of the system. Through the application of the network embeddedness viewpoint and the introduction of a novel classification of eWOM, this research contributes to a deeper understanding of these concepts in relation to online group purchasing contexts. Taking into account the competitive nature of the e-commerce environment, the practical implications provide managerial suggestions that may improve the marketing effectiveness of online group-buying businesses.

Within the context of Malaysian tourists, Zainal (2017) investigates the relationship between trusting eWOM sources and attitude, as well as the desire to follow eWOM. There was a substantial relationship between confidence in the honesty, competency, and friendliness of eWOM sources and the attitude towards eWOM as well as the desire to follow it, according to the results of an online survey that collected 280 questionnaires. Furthermore, the findings imply that attitude plays a role in mediating the relationship between the intention to follow eWOM and trust in its sources. It is significant to remember that the tourism industry will be impacted by the research's conclusions. These implications highlight the significance of trust and attitude in determining whether or not passengers intend to follow suggestions made via eWOM.

Rahman (2020) analyses the factors that influence consumers' intentions to buy products from Malaysian online markets, with a focus on eWOM, brand image, and trust. Partial least square structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM), a cross-sectional design, was used to analyse the data. 350 respondents in Malaysia provided quantitative data for the research. A considerable and favourable influence on online purchase intention (OPI) is exerted by eWOM, brand image, and trust, according to the results. According to the findings of the research, there are strong mediating effects, with trust acting as a mediator between eWOM and OPI, as well as between brand image and OPI relationships. The relationship between eWOM and trust is also shown to be mediated by the brand image. The research recommends giving eWOM a higher priority in advertising efforts in order to boost product sales. Additionally, the research highlights the significance of establishing eWOM trust and a positive brand image for online merchants who are targeting the Malaysian market.

Within the background of the continuing conflicts in the Middle East, Abdul-Talib (2017) conducted research to determine whether or not Malaysian consumers are prepared to boycott surrogate items linked with Israel. Following the selection of a number of surrogate items associated with Israel for the purpose of research, a total of 468 respondents from a variety of backgrounds participated. Data analysis for the research was carried out using a technique known as multiple regression analysis (MRA). Anger, subjective norms, and product assessments were shown to be important predictors of the readiness to boycott surrogate goods, but predicted emotions (both positive and negative) were found to be inconsequential in affecting this intention. The data demonstrated that these phenomena were significant predictors. In view of the current conflict between Israel and the Palestinians, this research makes a contribution by resolving the issue of boycott intentions in Malaysia, which is characterised by a varied population. The findings have repercussions for international corporations, particularly those that are seen to have direct relationships with the entities with whom they are considered to be at odds.

Both Wang (2016) and Fu et al. (2015) acknowledge the important influence that eWOM has on consumer behaviour. Wang focuses on the role that eWOM plays in the process of

decision-making on vacation destinations, while Fu et al. looks into what influences customers' intention to engage in eWOM communication. Using the TPB to investigate the factors that influence customers' intentions to boycott and participate in online group purchases, respectively, Farah (2010) and Cheng (2013) provide further contributions to this discussion which is already underway. The findings of these research together highlight the significance of taking into account the trust that consumers have in eWOM when attempting to understand and predict consumer behaviour.

It was shown that customer attitudes partly mediate the link between eWOM trust and consumer intentions (Zainal, 2017). eWOM trust has been demonstrated to strongly impact consumer intentions. This trust also acts as a mediator in the relationship between eWOM and the intention to make an online purchase, as is the relationship between brand image and the intention to make a purchase online (Rahman, 2020). Attitudes towards boycotting, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control all have an impact on consumer boycott intentions in the context of the conflict between Israel and Palestine, as described by Hamzah (2019). Furthermore, according to Abdul-Talib (2017), those who are inclined to boycott surrogate items linked with Israel are far more likely to be motivated by hatred, subjective standards, and product assessments. In the context of the Israel-Palestine conflict in Malaysia, consumer boycott intentions might possibly be influenced by eWOM trust. From these insights, eWOM trust serves as a crucial moderator that influences the relationship between consumer attitudes, subjective norms, perceived behavioural control, and boycott intentions, highlighting the intricate interplay between trust, psychological factors, and consumer decision-making in the context of boycotts.

Table 2.2: Summary of literature review of the interplay between eWOM trust and consumer boycott intentions

Citation	Insights gained	Relation to this research

Wang (2016)	eWOM's role in decision-making on vacation destinations	Acknowledges eWOM's influence on consumer behaviour
Fu et al. (2015)	Factors influencing customers' intention to engage in eWOM communication	Highlights the importance of understanding eWOM impact
Farah (2010)	Factors influencing customers' intentions to boycott	Contributes to understanding consumer behaviour in online group purchases
Cheng (2013)	Factors influencing customers' intentions to participate in online group purchases	Adds to the ongoing discussion on consumer behaviour
Zainal (2017)	eWOM trust's impact on consumer intentions	Shows the mediating role of customer attitudes
Rahman (2020)	eWOM trust's influence on the intention to make online purchases	Demonstrates the mediating role of trust in consumer behaviour
Hamzah (2019)	Impact of attitudes, norms, and control on consumer boycott intentions	Discusses consumer behaviour in the context of conflicts
Abdul-Talib (2017)	Motivations behind boycotting surrogate items linked with Israel	Explores the psychological factors influencing boycott intentions
Abdul-Talib (2017)	Influence of eWOM trust on consumer boycott intentions	Highlights the role of trust in consumer decision-making

Therefore, this research hypothesise that

H2a: The relationship between attitude and consumer boycott intentions is moderated by eWOM trust.

H2b: The relationship between subjective norms and consumer boycott intentions is moderated by eWOM trust.

H2c: The relationship between perceived behavioural control and consumer boycott intentions is moderated by eWOM trust.

2.1.3 Ethnocultural Empathy

2.1.3.1 Definition and Explanation of Ethnocultural Empathy

Tafik (2019) describes ethnocultural empathy as the ability to comprehend and connect with others who have different cultural or ethnic backgrounds. The capacity to experience the world through the eyes of another individual, including the ability to take into account their racial or cultural background, is a necessary component. This concept is especially important when doing research that spans several cultures and ethnicities, as well as when attempting to comprehend the emotions of people who are culturally and/or ethnically distinct from oneself. The Scale of Ethnocultural Empathy (SEE) developed by Wang et al. (2003) measures the dimensions of ethnocultural empathy, including empathic feeling and expression (EFE), empathic perspective taking and acceptance of cultural differences (EPTACD), and empathic awareness (EA). These dimensions capture the essence of understanding and connecting with individuals from various racial or ethnic backgrounds, reflecting the core elements of ethnocultural empathy (Osman et al., 2021). Osman et al. (2021) found that individuals with empathic abilities influence helping behaviour, underscoring the role of empathy in promoting prosocial actions and interactions across different cultural contexts. Stuart (2022) delves into how ethnocultural empathy operates within multicultural environments, emphasising its role in promoting understanding, connection, and positive interactions among students from various cultural backgrounds,

highlighting the significance of empathy in diverse educational settings in the context of multicultural secondary schools in the United Kingdom.

2.1.3.2 Role of Empathy in Consumer Decision Making

The ability to empathise with customers is essential to the decision-making process of consumers because it enables businesses to comprehend the perspectives of customers, the thoughts that they have, and the emotions that they experience. Through this, businesses are able to enhance their operations, services, product packaging, and marketing efforts, as well as acquire a better knowledge of the kind of products that consumers demand. Furthermore, empathy is beneficial in the process of producing goods that better satisfy the requirements of consumers and in filling gaps in the market in a more expedient and superior manner than existing competitors.

2.1.3.3 Impact of Ethnocultural Empathy on Consumer Attitudes and Behaviours

It has been shown that the degrees of ethnocultural empathy vary depending on demographic characteristics and socioeconomic conditions (Cundiff et al., 2009). For instance, women are more likely than males to report greater levels of ethnocultural empathy (Cunfidd et al., 2008), and it has been shown that persons who are not White ethnically have a much higher level of both general and particular ethnocultural empathy (Newman et al., 2023). It has been shown that individuals who possess greater degrees of ethnocultural empathy also have higher behavioural intentions to participate in diversity initiatives (Cundiff et al., 2009; Boros & Brouwer, 2010).

2.1.3.4 Interplay between Ethnocultural Empathy and Consumer Boycott Intentions

The research conducted by Halimi (2017) explores the impact that empathy has on the choice of third-country nationals (TCNs) to boycott Israeli goods in the context of the animosity between Arab-Muslims and Israel. This research employs a qualitative grounded theory approach, involving the administration of twenty in-depth interviews with non-Arab, non-Muslim individuals originating from diverse backgrounds. According to the findings, the decision of TCNs to boycott Israeli products is not motivated by

animosity against Israel but rather by an empathic concern for the people of Palestine and Lebanon. The awareness of the animosity case, the reinforcement of self-transcendence or the universalism values, and the activation of empathy via interaction with the situation all contribute to the fostering of altruism for the residents of the countries that have been afflicted. The research places an emphasis on the unique emotional impact that the Arab/Muslim-Israeli animosity has had, underlining the fact that it has had a stronger influence on TCNs in comparison to previous conflicts. The contribution of the research is that it differentiates between feelings of empathy and animosity as a determining factor in the judgments that TCNs make toward countries that are involved in hostilities. The research offers insights that may be used by international marketers in order to design strategies that either support or counteract the boycott campaigns. This is particularly useful when the international boycott gets under way.

The research by Lee et al. (2017) investigates the relationship between consumer ethnocentrism and animosity. The authors suggest that both attitudes have their origins in semantic memory and episodic memory, respectively. In the first part of the research by Lee et al., an experiment was conducted to establish the correlation between ethnocentrism/animosity and semantic/episodic memory. The second part of the research consists of two quantitative surveys conducted in China and Japan, followed by follow-up surveys conducted six months later, with the intention of studying these attitudes' temporal characteristics. According to the results, ethnocentrism is more temporally stable than animosity, which is consistent with the memory theory. Furthermore, it has been discovered that the boycott intentions of consumers may be influenced by their animosity against a business during a dispute, but not after the dispute has been resolved.

Akintimehin et al. (2022) used the ethically minded consumer behaviour (EMCB) framework, researched the attitudes and intentions of consumers in a developing economy with relation to ethical consumption. Through the use of an online questionnaire, the research carried out a cross-sectional survey with 397 participants, employing a quantitative research methodology all along the process. The results of the data analysis showed that a corporate social responsibility-minded person's attitude

towards and intention to engage in ethical consumption were positively impacted. It came as a surprise that eco-mindfulness did not have any effect on either the attitude or the intention. The findings highlight the importance of having a good attitude when it comes to inspiring the intention to engage in ethical consumption. Particularly noteworthy is the fact that this is the first research in Sub-Saharan Africa to use the EMCB methodology, which has resulted in the contribution of significant insights on consumer behaviour within the setting of this developing economy.

The research that is covered by Farah (2010) encompasses a wide range of topics, such as the statistical comparison of reach trajectories, the intention to boycott and the TPB in Lebanon, social cueing and attention orienting, and the act-ability of a gaze cue model. In order to overcome the difficulty of normalising reach trajectories, the research makes use of parameterization using third-order B-splines, which are sampled at evenly spaced time stamps. Research conducted by Farah in Lebanon investigates the key elements that predict customers' boycott intentions on product or service. According to the research's findings, attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control all play a significant role in both the country's Muslim and Christian communities. The effects of visual cueing, particularly gaze and pointing cues, are the subject of another finding of the research. The findings indicate that gaze cues have an influence on attention, while pointing signals have an effect on both attention and action planning. In addition, an experiment delves into the act-ability of a gaze cue model in a manual reaching task. The results of this experiment demonstrate that gaze cues have an effect on action planning when the model has the capacity to interact with the target.

Hamzah (2019) examines the elements influencing Malaysian consumers' intention to boycott products and services from companies seen to assist or fund Israel by integrating the transtheoretical model (TTM) into the TPB framework. The data given above was obtained through an online poll in which 177 employees of Malaysian companies with headquarters in Kuala Lumpur participated. According to the research, there is a moderate intention to take part in the boycott; nevertheless, this intention is strongly influenced by attitudes towards the boycott, the subjective norm, and the perceived behavioural control

of the boycott. Furthermore, the research reveals that there are large linear increases in TPB variables throughout all phases of transformation, which highlights the importance that these variables have at each point during the process. By contributing to a better understanding of consumer boycotts in Malaysia, this research provides significant insights that may be used by non-governmental organisations (NGOs) or associations that are working to design successful campaigns for promoting socially and morally responsible consumption.

Abdul-Talib (2016) explores the readiness and motivation of non-Muslim customers in Malaysia to boycott American-based businesses. The emphasis of the investigation is on the continuing boycott that was caused by the conflict between Israel and Palestine. The research focuses on two products that are selected based on their market availability, consumer familiarity, and financial affordability through the collecting of 340 completed questionnaires from university students who are not Muslim. The findings indicate that three major factors—self-enhancement, perceived egregious conduct, and the nation's image—may be used to predict the intention of boycotting. The findings of the research by Abdul-Talib add to enhanced comprehension of the many factors that non-Muslims in Malaysia have for participating in a boycott in relation to a Muslim-related problem. It is important to note that the findings have repercussions for consumers, non-governmental groups, legislators, and multinational corporations.

The research conducted by Tabassi (2012) examines the influence of ethnocentrism, religion, antagonism, and product image on the intention of Malaysian customers to buy European items. The study focuses on differentiating between products that need a low level of engagement and those that require a high level of involvement. The research demonstrates a substantial and unfavourable link between ethnocentrism, religion, and enmity and the inclination to purchase European items. The poll was conducted among 500 local customers in Malaysia, each of whom represented one of three ethnic groups. There is a clear indication that ethnocentrism is the most powerful factor in determining customer intention. The results highlight how important it is for European businesses to take into consideration ethnocentrism, religion, and antagonism in the context of the

shopping experience of Malaysian consumers. The research makes a contribution in two ways: first, it identifies critical characteristics that influence customers' propensity to purchase European items; second, it suggests that Malaysian businesses might improve consumer views of low involvement products by addressing ethnocentrism. Both of these contributions are theoretical and practical in nature.

In a nutshell, Halimi (2017) discovered that the choice to boycott products from a country that is involved in unfriendly acts is influenced by ethnocultural empathy, especially with regard to the residents of the countries that have been affected by the unfriendly act. According to Lee et al. (2017), who believe that consumer empathy, a crucial determinant in boycott intentions, is impacted by episodic memory. Further research on the role that corporate social responsibility-mindedness plays in creating attitudes and intentions towards ethical consumption, which may be related to ethnocultural empathy, is carried out by Akintimehin et al. (2022). In addition, According to Farah (2010), attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control are important indicators of the intention to boycott, and this implies that ethnocultural empathy may also contribute to the development of these indicators. Several critical characteristics have been found via research conducted on consumer boycott intentions in Malaysia, notably in relation to the conflict between Israel and Palestine. Hamzah (2019) found that attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioural control all had a significant impact on boycott intentions. According to Abdul-Talib (2016), self-improvement, perceived egregious conduct, and the image of the nation are major predictors of the readiness to boycott. Halimi (2017) highlighted the significance of empathy, namely empathic concern for the people of Palestine and Lebanon, as a driving force for choices to engage in a boycott. Last but not least, Tabassi (2012) found that ethnocentrism, religiosity, and anger are all characteristics that influence customer purchase intentions, with ethnocentrism being the most significant driver. The findings of these research together indicate that ethnocultural empathy, especially in relation to the conflict between Israel and Palestine, might have a major impact on the intentions of consumers in Malaysia to boycott products.

Through the promotion of mutual understanding between different racial and ethnic groups, it has been argued that ethnocultural empathy plays a crucial role in influencing the desire to boycott from a variety of different groups (Wang et al., 2003). Additionally, it has been shown that animosity has a considerable impact on the desire to boycott (Sun & Jun, 2022). The ability to empathise with people of other cultures might help foster a feeling of appreciation for variety and the relationship skills necessary to lessen prejudice, which in turn impacts the intention to boycott (Keck, 2022). Additionally, according to Wei et al. (2016), ethnocultural empathy is the ability to understand the feelings and ideas of persons from various ethnic backgrounds and to perceive things from their point of view. The incompatibility of consumers' opinions is a significant element that influences their desire to boycott, whereas the attention that people pay to social comparison information is a moderate effect (Wang et al., 2021). According to Zhang et al. (2017), the inclination to engage in ethical consumerism has a considerable impact on both the desire to boycott and the intention to boycott. "Ethnocultural empathy" is a taught capacity and a personal attribute associated with certain personality qualities that individuals of any race, ethnicity, or culture differ on (Taufik, 2019). It is described as a personal feature that is related to certain personality traits. According to Hong and Shim (2022), various sorts of publics respond differently when it comes to analysing a business crisis. This includes how they attribute blame for the crisis, how they express their emotional reactions, and how they demonstrate intentions to boycott the business.

Table 2.3: Summary of literature review of the interplay between ethnocultural empathy and consumer boycott intentions

Citation	Insights gained	Relation to this research
Halimi (2017)	The choice to boycott products from a country that is involved in unfriendly acts is influenced by ethnocultural empathy, especially with regard to the residents of the countries that have been affected by the unfriendly act.	Ethnocultural empathy influences boycott intentions

Lee et al. (2017)	Consumer empathy influenced by episodic memory, impacting boycott intentions	Episodic memory affects consumer empathy and in turn affects boycott intentions
Akintimehin et al. (2022)	Role of corporate social responsibility in ethical consumption attitudes and intentions	CSR and ethical consumption related to ethnocultural empathy
Farah (2010)	Attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control indicators of boycott intention	Ethnocultural empathy contributes to attitude development
Hamzah (2019)	Attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioural control impact boycott intentions	Significant impact of attitude, norm, and control on boycott intentions
Abdul-Talib (2016)	Self-enhancement, perceived egregious conduct, and country image predict willingness to boycott American businesses.	Predictors of readiness to boycott products
Tabassi (2012)	Ethnocentrism, religiosity, and anger influence customer purchase intentions	Ethnocentrism as a significant driver of purchase intentions
Wang et al. (2003)	Ethnocultural empathy promotes mutual understanding between different racial and ethnic groups, influencing the desire to boycott.	Highlights the role of ethnocultural empathy in fostering understanding and influencing boycott intentions.
Sun & Jun (2022)	Animosity significantly impacts the desire to boycott.	Emphasises the impact of animosity on boycott intentions.

Keck (2022)	Empathy towards people of other cultures can reduce prejudice and influence the intention to boycott.	Discusses how empathy for diverse cultures affects the decision to boycott.
Wei et al. (2016)	Ethnocultural empathy enables understanding of individuals from various ethnic backgrounds, impacting the intention to boycott.	Demonstrates the role of ethnocultural empathy in perceiving viewpoints and influencing boycott decisions.
Wang et al. (2021)	Incompatibility of consumer opinions and attention to social comparison information influence the desire to boycott.	Explores how consumer opinions and social comparisons impact the intention to boycott.
Zhang et al. (2017)	Ethical consumerism significantly influences the desire and intention to boycott.	Highlights the impact of ethical consumerism on boycott intentions.
Taufik (2019)	Ethnocultural empathy is a taught capacity and a personal attribute related to personality traits.	Describes ethnocultural empathy as a learned attribute linked to personality traits.
Hong & Shim (2022)	Different publics respond uniquely to business crises, affecting blame attribution, emotional reactions, and boycott intentions.	Discusses how diverse public responses to crises influence boycott intentions.

Therefore, this research hypothesised that

H3a: The relationship between attitude and consumer boycott intentions is moderated by ethnocultural empathy.

H3b: The relationship between subjective norms and consumer boycott intentions is moderated by ethnocultural empathy.

H3c: The relationship between perceived behavioural control and consumer boycott intentions is moderated by ethnocultural empathy.

2.1.4 Interplay between Ethnocultural Empathy, eWOM Trust, and Consumer Boycott Intentions

Nikmat (2015) investigates the factors that influence actual purchasing behaviour, the intention to purchase domestic goods, and ethnocentrism in the context of the "Buy Malaysian Goods" campaign that the Malaysian government is running. In order to increase the demand for locally produced goods, the campaign intends to encourage customers to feel a sense of patriotism and ethnocentrism. The research, which was based on primary data collected in a cross-sectional design, examined households in four different areas of Malaysia. Using a structural equation model (SEM), the research identified several important factors that influence actual purchase behaviour, such as collectivism, cultural openness, and patriotism; attitude, control belief, collectivism, and conservatism as factors influencing domestic product purchase intentions; and cultural openness, control belief, foreign travel, and patriotism as factors contributing to ethnocentrism. The findings show a high level of ethnocentrism and patriotism among Malaysian consumers, and the ramifications of these results are discussed in relation to the Malaysian National Agenda.

Among Chinese tourists who use WeChat, Chu (2019) investigates the influence of two personality qualities: a feeling of belonging and a drive for self-enhancement. These attributes have been shown to have an effect on consumer engagement and the intention to participate in eWOM. From the perspective of social identity theory and the literature on consumer engagement, this research is the first research to be conducted in this

particular scenario. According to the results, the urge for self-improvement has a favourable effect on involvement with WeChat. Furthermore, a partial positive correlation exists between eWOM intention and consumer engagement, particularly influenced by dedication to WeChat. It has been determined that dedication acts as a mediator between the urge for self-enhancement and the eWOM intention. It is surprising to find that a sense of belonging does not have a substantial influence on customer engagement. This finding reflects the changing cultural values that are prevalent in current Chinese culture. Furthermore, the research provides theoretical insights as well as practical implications for understanding and leveraging the dynamics of eWOM on social media platforms like WeChat.

Lin (2017) examines how social distance, review valence, and reviewer ethnicity affect customers' perceptions of reviewers' credibility, their attitudes towards businesses, and their intention to make a purchase in the setting of electronic word-of-mouth marketing (eWOM). Using a design that is a combination of 2 (review valence) x 3(reviewer ethnicity), the research is conducted with 398 participants being assigned to various circumstances. Mock-product review websites are established with the intention of manipulating reviewer ethnicity and review valence. The findings indicate that a wide range of variables, such as social distance, reviewer ethnicity, and review valence, significantly affect how reliable reviewers are thought to be. On the other hand, the attitude towards the brand and the intention to buy are directly influenced exclusively by the review's valence. IFurthermore, how reviewer ethnicity and review valence interact defines how trustworthy reviewers are seen to be, as well as how they feel about the business and whether or not they plan to make a purchase. Applying social distance theory to cross-cultural perceptions of trust in eWOM, this research is the first of its type and has implications for a range of digital communication and marketing scenarios.

The research conducted by Levy (2021) investigates the characteristics that influence minority consumers' participation with eWOM on social media, especially in interactions with those who belong to the majority culture. Specifically, it sheds insight on the impact that intercultural factors including acculturation, social contact, language proficiency, and

cultural distance have in determining the attitudes and intentions of minority consumers with regard to eWOM. This research reviews theoretical frameworks including the TPB and social exchange theory in order to shed light on the intricacy of minority consumer involvement with eWOM. A conceptual model and empirical data from a research on the Israeli-Arab minority are presented in the research. The research places an emphasis on the relevance of these aspects for marketers who are targeting ethnic minorities and looking for good and positive eWOM. It discusses the difficulties and advantages that are involved with cross-ethnic communications on social media and provides examples of marketing initiatives that have been successful when directed at ethnic minorities as well as those that have been unsuccessful. The research, in overall, offers a complete review of the matter, which makes it an invaluable resource for academicians and practitioners interested in ethnic minority marketing and consumer engagement on social media.

A discussion on the function that emotion plays in the behaviour of eWOM in the hospitality industry is presented by Liu (2021). In their investigation into the impact of consumption emotion on consumers' electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) behavior and emotion-specific media preferences (social networking sites [SNSs] versus review sites), the author incorporates the online disinhibition effect and the social sharing of emotion theory.According to the research findings, emotional intensity emerges as the primary determinant of consumers' intention to provide electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) across both forms of media. Emotional valence, however, shows effects on eWOM-giving that are particular to mediums. Customers' eWOM is influenced by a "positivity bias," however this prejudice is limited to social networking sites (SNSs). Through the lenses of emotion and media differences, the research not only advances theoretical knowledge of consumers' eWOM behaviour, but it also pushes the boundaries of valence-centred assertions in the eWOM research field. The findings have important ramifications for both practitioners specialising in eWOM media provision and those employed in the hospitality sector.

Research has shown that ethnocultural empathy may have a substantial impact on the eWOM trust that consumers have and their intention to boycott products. Chu (2019)

discovered that the need for self-enhancement has a positive impact on the level of engagement that consumers have with eWOM, and that this engagement may be mediated by dedication. In addition, Lin (2017) revealed that the reviewer ethnicity and the social distance between them might have an effect on the perceived trustworthiness of the reviewer, which in turn influences the attitude towards the brand and the intention to purchase. Levy (2021) emphasised that acculturation and language proficiency are two examples of intercultural factors that have a significant impact in the engagement of ethnic minority consumers with eWOM. Last but not least, Liu (2021) emphasised that emotion plays a significant influence in eWOM activity. These research together demonstrate that ethnocultural empathy may shape eWOM trust and consumer boycott intentions through its effect on consumer engagement, perceived trustworthiness, and emotional reactions.

There has been a number of researches that have investigated the factors that influence consumer boycott intentions in Malaysia, especially in relation to the conflict between Israel and Palestine. In order to change consumer behaviour in Malaysia in light of the Israel-Palestine conflict, a complex and multifaceted topic must first be understood. This topic involves the interaction of ethnocultural empathy, eWOM trust, attitude, subjective norms, perceived behavioural control, and consumer boycott intentions. Hamzah (2019) found that attitudes towards boycotting, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control regarding the boycott all had a significant impact on the desire to participate in a boycott. According to Abdul-Talib (2016), self-enhancement, perceived egregious conduct, and the image of the country are major predictors of the willingness to boycott American-based businesses. The research by Halimi (2017) underlined the importance that empathy plays in motivating residents of third-country countries to boycott Israeli goods. Specifically, Halimi (2017) focused on the citizens of Palestine and Lebanon throughout the research. In addition, Nikmat (2015) highlighted the influence of collectivism, cultural openness, and patriotism as factors that impact actual purchasing behaviour, the intention to purchase domestic products, and ethnocentrism among consumers in Malaysia. Tabassi (2012) discovered that ethnocentrism, religion, and antagonism had a detrimental influence on the purchasing intentions of consumers,

especially with regard to European items. The findings of these research together indicate that consumer behaviour in Malaysia, in response to the Israel/Palestine conflict, is influenced by several elements such as individual, societal, and cultural characteristics. In the context of the Israel-Palestine conflict in Malaysia, collectively, these research show that a variety of factors, such as attitude, perceived behavioural control, eWOM trust, ethnocultural empathy, and subjective norms, interact to influence the intentions of consumers to boycott.

It is crucial to take into account a number of aspects while evaluating the Israel-Palestine conflict in Malaysia in order to comprehend how eWOM trust affects consumer boycott intentions. Research indicates that ethnocultural empathy—the capacity to comprehend and perceive things from the viewpoints of others—has a noteworthy influence on those who intend to boycott a certain good or service. An additional noteworthy discovery is that the intention to engage in a boycott is strongly impacted by animosity. Moreover, researchers have examined the impact of consumer boycotts driven by religious motivations on brand perception, customer loyalty, and product evaluation. In their research, Abosag and Farah (2014) provided evidence that boycotts have a substantial detrimental effect on brand image and customer loyalty. Moreover, Zasuwa (2022) examined the impact of trust and mistrust on the relationship between corporate social irresponsibility and the intention to boycott a specific company. The results of this research by Zasuwa (2022) suggest that when consumers perceive a business's behaviour as irresponsible, their tendency to boycott that business is fully influenced by their mistrust in the business. The relationship between perceived business irresponsibility and consumer boycott behaviour is mediated by this mistrust (Zasuwa, 2022).

Research indicates that the propensity to boycott Israel-related alternative items is significantly influenced by subjective norms (Abdul-Talib & Adnan, 2017). This was determined by examining the desire to boycott surrogate products associated with Israel. The aim of the research is to comprehend the elements that impact Malaysian customers' decision to boycott goods and services from companies thought to be endorsing or sponsoring Israel (Hamzah & Mustafa, 2019). Furthermore, a research has been carried

out to examine consumer boycott intelligence concerning companies associated with Israel in Malaysia. The impact of modern bad political relations on ethnic dining choices has also been investigated, and the results have shown that political animosity affects customers' intention to boycott a certain brand (Kim & Li, 2020).

The complex interaction of social and cultural elements can have a substantial impact on consumer boycott intentions. Consumer boycott intentions in the context of the Israel/Palestine conflict in Malaysia are likely to be influenced by characteristics such as ethnocultural empathy, eWOM trust, attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control.

Table 2.4: Summary of literature review of the interplay between ethnocultural empathy, eWOM trust, and consumer boycott intentions

Citation	Insights gained	Relation to this research
Chu (2019)	Need for self-enhancement positively impacts consumer engagement with eWOM, mediated by dedication.	Demonstrates the positive impact of self-enhancement on consumer engagement in eWOM,
Lin (2017)	Reviewer ethnicity and social distance affect perceived trustworthiness, influencing brand attitude and purchase intention.	Highlights the influence of reviewer characteristics on trust and purchase intentions.
Levy (2021)	Acculturation and language proficiency significantly impact ethnic minority consumer engagement with eWOM.	Emphasises the role of intercultural factors in consumer engagement with eWOM.
Liu (2021)	Emotions significantly influence eWOM activity.	influence eWOM activity. Underscores the importance of emotions in eWOM.

Nikmat (2015)	Collectivism, cultural openness, and patriotism influence purchasing behaviour and ethnocentrism in Malaysian consumers.	Explores cultural factors impacting consumer behaviour.
Abosag & Farah (2014)	Boycotts have a detrimental effect on brand image and customer loyalty.	Demonstrates the negative impact of boycotts on brand perception and loyalty,
Zasuwa (2022)	Mistrust mediates the relationship between perceived business irresponsibility and consumer boycott behaviour.	Shows the role of mistrust in influencing consumer boycott decisions
Abdul-Talib & Adnan (2017)	Subjective norms significantly influence the propensity to boycott Israel-related alternative items.	Highlights the impact of social norms on boycott decisions
Hamzah & Mustafa (2019)	Research aims to understand factors influencing Malaysian consumers' decision to boycott goods related to Israel.	Focuses on understanding consumer behaviour in relation to the Israel-Palestine conflict
Kim & Li (2020)	Political animosity affects customers' intention to boycott a brand.	Demonstrates the influence of political factors on consumer behaviour

2.1.5 Research Gap

The existing research on the correlation between attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control with consumer boycott intentions lacks information on the moderation effect of ethnocultural empathy and eWOM trust. There is a lack of literature that has integrated ethnocultural empathy, eWOM trust, attitude, subjective norms,

perceived behavioural control, and consumer boycott intentions. Research has utilised the TPB paradigm to examine customer responses regarding cultural empathy and electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) as conducted by Zhao et al. (2020) who revealed that attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control significantly influenced customers' intentions to participate in electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) activities, which in turn affected their intentions to make purchases. Another research found that the TPB accurately predicted consumers' intentions to participate in boycott activities. Attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control were all found to have a significant influence on these intentions (Wei et al., 2022). Additional research is required to integrate ethnocultural empathy and eWOM trust into the TPB framework to understand and predict how attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control can influence consumer boycott intentions.

2.2 Conceptual Framework

Figure 2.1: Conceptual Framework of the Research
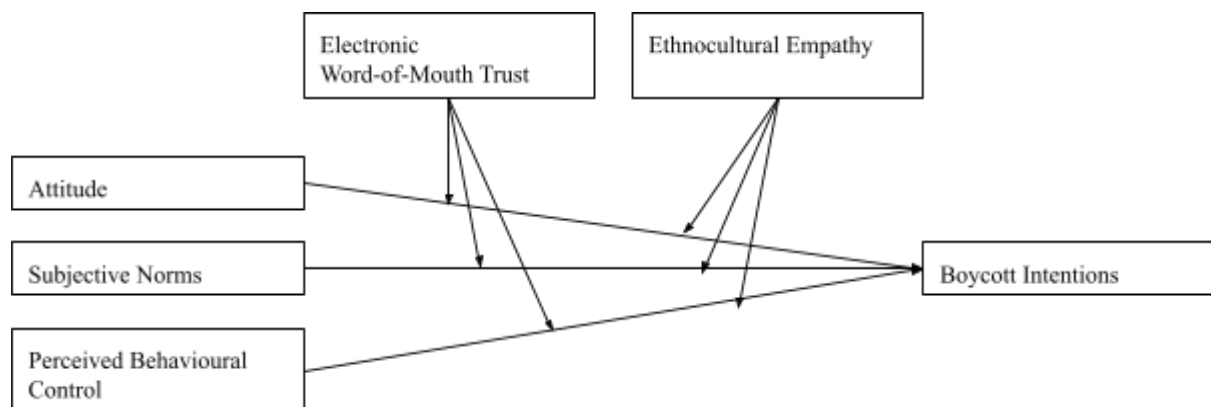
The research aims to investigate whether eWOM trust and ethnocultural empathy moderates the correlation between attitude, subjective norms and perceived behavioural

control in relation to boycott intention. The research also aims to examine the potential correlation between attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control with boycott intentions.

2.3 Hypotheses

A research hypothesis is a concise and verifiable statement or prediction regarding the anticipated outcome of a scientific research project, which is grounded in a specific characteristic of the population being studied, such as disparities between groups on a given measurement or connections between variables (Lavrakas, 2008).

The hypothesis will be developed and explored in the next subsection, drawing on the literature review in the preceding part. This research hypothesised that

H1a: There is a strong correlation between consumer boycott intentions and attitude.

H1b: There is a strong correlation between customer boycott intentions and subjective norms.

H1c: There is a strong correlation between customer boycott intentions and perceived behavioural control.

H2a: The correlation between attitude and consumer boycott intentions is moderated by eWOM trust.

H2b: The correlation between subjective norms and consumer boycott intentions is moderated by eWOM trust.

H2c: The correlation between perceived behavioural control and consumer boycott intentions is moderated by eWOM trust.

H3a: The correlation between attitude and consumer boycott intentions is moderated by ethnocultural empathy.

H3b: The correlation between subjective norms and consumer boycott intentions is moderated by ethnocultural empathy.

H3c: The correlation between perceived behavioural control and consumer boycott intentions is moderated by ethnocultural empathy.

2.4 Summary

In the beginning of this chapter, relevant and related journal articles were reviewed in an effort to get an understanding of how research that is comparable to this one has been produced in the past. In addition, the findings of prior research have been discovered, and the insights obtained from those earlier research have been included into this literature review. Following an examination of the existing body of literature, the research gap was recognized, and the conceptual framework was developed with the TPB serving as the basis for the framework. The conceptual framework served as the basis for the formation of hypotheses, which were then used to initiate the research design.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHOD

3.0 Introduction

This chapter concentrates on the research design and the methods used for collecting data. Furthermore, the sample design, research instruments, and measurements of constructs will be analysed. This chapter will delve into the research methodologies employed for data analysis.

3.1 Research Design

Based on Saunders' (2007) research onion, in order to examine the correlation between ethnocultural empathy, eWOM trust, attitude, subjective norms, perceived behavioural control, and consumer boycott intentions in the specific setting of Malaysia, this research should take on the positivism philosophy, deductive approach, survey strategy, mono method choice, and cross sectional time horizon. The research will predominantly take on

a quantitative approach via a structured questionnaire. The research will employ a cross-sectional design to gather information from a diverse group of Malaysian customers.

Figure 3.1: Sanders' et al. (2017) research onion
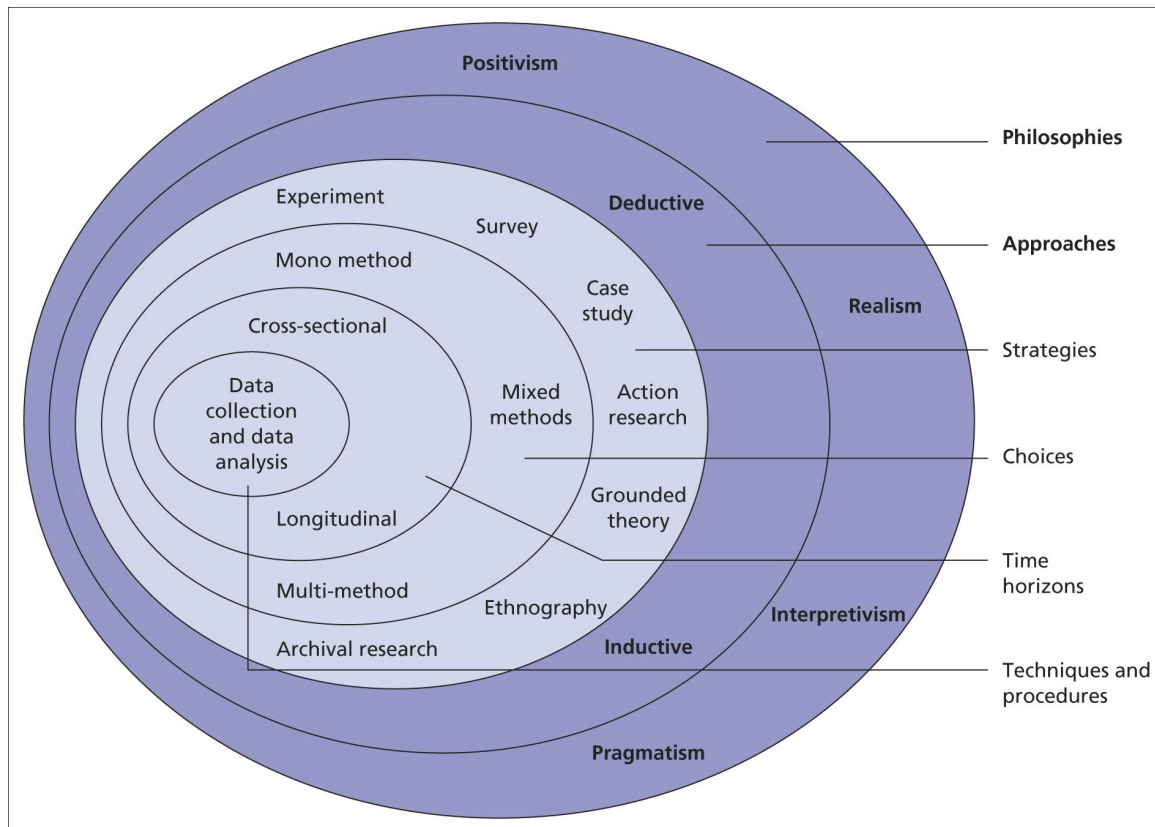
Note. From Saunders, M., Lewis, P. & Thornhill, A. (2007). *Research Methods for Business Students* (4th ed). Harlow: Financial Times Prentice Hall.

This research is an appropriate example of descriptive research on the subject since it attempts to explain and comprehend how eWOM trust and ethnocultural empathy influence the correlation between attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control with consumer boycott intentions. For the purpose of examining the attitudes and behaviours of customers with relation to a certain matter, descriptive research makes it possible to collect data through the use of questionnaires. In addition, descriptive research is often employed to thoroughly examine a phenomenon, aligning with the overall

research objective. Descriptive research is a suitable research design choice for this research because it provides a thorough understanding of how ethnocultural empathy and eWOM trust moderate the correlation between attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control with consumers' intentions to boycott.

3.2 Method of Data Collection

3.2.1 Primary Data

A survey questionnaire will be used in the research to gather data from a big number of participants. An online administration of the questionnaire will be a component of the data collecting strategy. This will be accomplished through the utilisation of a platform that permits straightforward data collection and analysis. The completed questionnaire will be collected using Google Forms.

3.2.2 Secondary Data (no secondary data were used)

To aid in the development of the conceptual framework for this research as well as the theory that guides it, the literature review from earlier studies was examined and taken into consideration. The vast majority of the data and research papers were gathered from several online journal databases, including Google Scholar, the UTAR Online Library, and others.

Research institutes and other organisations that conduct studies or handle data pertaining to this research gap are additional sources of secondary data. It is significant to remember that these sources are also used to obtain secondary data. One major benefit of secondary data is its ability to offer analysis utilising historical and relative data, which may not be possible to obtain using the acquisition of the primary data. Secondary data might potentially be more affordable than the primary data. It is crucial to gauge the quality of the secondary data and determine their relevance which will assure the research's findings reliability and accuracy.

3.3 Sampling Design

In the research design, the practicality of the survey needs to be taken into consideration because it is subject to time and cost constraints. Due to the fact that the population was composed of several demographic categories, it is not possible to conduct surveys on the entire population. In addition, the survey is dependent on the individuals who voluntarily participate in the research which is being conducted within the population itself. Purposive sampling will be used for this research due to time restrictions, even if it is probable that the results cannot be generalised to the population of interest. On the other hand, if the sample size is sufficiently big, the findings can be used to accurately represent the population (Sekaran & Bougie, 2019). To further address the research topics, data collection will only occur once during a predetermined period of time (Sekaran & Bougie, 2019). In order to meet the deadline for submitting this research project, the questionnaires were distributed and collected in relation to this research within 2 weeks, or by the end of February 2024 at the latest.

3.3.1 Sampling Target and Location

People living in Malaysia who are between the ages of 18 and 85. Due to the fact that the sampling is based on purposive sampling, there is a preference ratio on ethnicity; however, there is no ratio for any preferences for respondents based on gender, age, education level, or income level of the sample. The presence of the preference ratio will impact the representativeness of the sample as proven by Gilovich et al. (2006) who emphasised the need to collect data on characteristics such as ethnicity to understand the demographic composition of the sample and ensure that the survey results are reflective of the target audience and this highlights the relevance of ethnicity as a key socio-demographic factor that should be considered in survey sampling to capture the diversity of the population being studied.

According to Statista (2023), the Bumiputera population in Malaysia accounted for 71%, the Chinese population accounted for 22.6%, and the Indian population accounted for 6.6%. Hence, the preference ratio for ethnicity in this research is as follows: The majority of the participants, accounting for 70%, are Malay, followed by 23% who are Chinese, and 7% who are Indian.

3.3.2 Sampling Technique

In general, sampling techniques can be classified into two types: those that involve probability and those that do not involve probability, or in other words, non-probability sampling. Researchers are able to draw a statistical inference through the use of a method of random selection known as probability sampling. Whereas the method of non-random selection researchers to collect data based on convenience or other specified criteria is known as a non-probability sampling (McCombes, 2019).

The research employed purposive sampling, a sort of non-probability sampling. This approach entails the deliberate selection of persons who possess specific qualities, information, or experiences. In situations when there is a clear understanding of the particular features that are being researched and where it is necessary to pick a sample that accurately represents those traits, this method is frequently applied (Williams, 2024). However, there is a chance that this approach may yield a non-representative sample of the entire population. Because the selection of the sample is dependent on the subjective judgement of the researcher, the results are vulnerable to a significant risk of bias, particularly when it comes to observer bias (Elfil & Negida, 2017). After evaluating the questionnaires collected, the researcher will reject any questionnaires that are incomplete or missing data, as they do not provide the desired information for the research.

3.3.3 Sampling Element

Consumers that are between the ages of 18 to 85 years old and have basic knowledge on ethnocultural empathy, eWOM trust, attitude towards boycott, subjective norms on boycott, perceived behavioural control on boycott, and boycott intentions.

3.3.4 Sampling Size

It is anticipated that this research will have a sample size of approximately 300 or more participants. MacCallum et al. (1999) suggest that for research involving three to six independent variables, an ideal minimum sample size of 250 respondents is recommended.

Roscoe (1975) established criteria for behavioural research, stating that a sample size more than 30 and less than 500 is considered sufficient. On the other hand, a sample size

that is greater than 500 may result in a Type II error (Mumtaz et al., 2020). Furthermore, according to Mumtaz et al. (2020), multivariate statistical analysis approaches are best suited for use with a sample that contains between 160 and 300 valid observations.

3.4 Research Instrument

Taking into account the conceptual and measurement aspects from the TPB framework, the survey questionnaire was developed. The descriptive statistics, such as frequencies, will be utilised in the statistical analyses in order to provide a concise summary of the data that was gathered. In order to test the hypotheses derived from the literature review, inferential statistical methods such as correlation analysis and multiple regression analysis will be employed. By using the SPSS software, the data that was gathered would be analysed for the research.

3.4.1 Questionnaire

According to Taherdoost (2022) and Farnsworth (2021), the process of constructing a questionnaire is a logical and planned procedure that requires taking into consideration a variety of question types and circumstances that are associated with the questionnaire. Hence, it is crucial for the researcher to meticulously evaluate the phrasing of the questions and the format of the questionnaire to make sure that respondents submit relevant and meaningful responses. When doing research, it is essential to make use of measurement methods that are both trustworthy and valid, and the design of the questionnaire is an essential component in accomplishing this goal. Having questionnaires that are poorly prepared can result in the failure of research.

In this research, the distributed questionnaire was developed in English, which is widely acknowledged as a language of significance in Malaysia. The questions were created using prior research to ensure that they were reliable and valid. In addition, they were provided in a direct manner, with no intricate questions being included. In order to offer respondents direction, unambiguous instructions were presented at the beginning of each segment of the questionnaire.

3.4.2 Pre-testing and Pilot Testing

The pretesting phase holds significant importance within the research process. This facilitates the researcher in assessing the appropriateness of the questions. Furthermore, the process of pretesting serves to validate the respondents' comprehensive understanding of the survey questions. It entails conducting a test on a smaller scale in order to discover any potential flaws with the questionnaire. These flaws may include ambiguous questions, issues with the measurements, or problems with language. Before implementing the questionnaire on a larger scale for data gathering, the researcher can use the pre-testing phase to identify and address any deficiencies in it. The pre-testing for this research was carried out with two academic experts and three potential survey participants, and feedback from them were taken into consideration. There were no alterations made to the survey which would proceed to be used for the pilot test. The pre-testing was done via two UTAR lecturers that were proficient in questionnaire making and three potential participants, namely a final year university student, a first year university student, and a current working adult. Feedback from the academic experts included revising the PDPA and introduction section of the questionnaire to be more clear to the audience. There weren't any comments from the potential survey participants regarding the questionnaire. All five pre-testers took around ten to fifteen minutes to complete the questionnaire.

Pilot testing was conducted with thirty respondents, and the cronbach-alpha test for all variables was found to be more than 0.70 as indicated in table 3.1. This shows that there was no need to eliminate or add any items in an effort to improve the reliability or internal consistency of the scale (Taber, 2017).

Franzen (2011) asserted that a test of reliability is performed to determine the consistency and reliability of research procedures across time. In other words, the same conclusion is produced regardless of the number of tests that are conducted, provided that the research is conceived and performed in the appropriate manner. The Cronbach's Alpha value was employed as a reliability measure in this research to evaluate the degree of consistency among the research variables. According to Sekaran and Bougie (2019), a Cronbach's Alpha value below 0.6 is regarded as poor, values between 0.6 and 0.7 are considered acceptable, and values of 0.8 or more are considered good.

Table 3.1: Reliability Test for Each Variables (Pilot Testing, n=30)

Variables	Constructs	Number of items	Cronbach's Alpha
Dependent variable:	Boycott Intentions	5	0.832
Independent variable:	Ethnocultural Empathy	32	0.909
	eWOM Trust	4	0.741
	Attitude	4	0.753
	Subjective Norms	4	0.741
	Perceived Behavioral Control	4	0.741

Source: Developed for this research.

For the pilot testing, 30 questionnaires were collected as a sample to examine the Cronbach's Alpha values for boycott intentions, ethnocultural empathy, eWOM trust, attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control are as follows: 0.832, 0.909, 0.741, 0.753, 0.741, and 0.741, respectively. From Cronbach's Alpha value, it can be shown that eWOM trust, attitude, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control

have acceptable reliability. Boycott intentions and ethnocultural empathy have good reliability.

3.5 Measurement of Constructs

3.5.1 Operational Definition

Ethnocultural empathy: Ethnocultural empathy is the ability to understand and share the feelings and experiences of others who come from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds than one's own (Wang et al., 2003). It is measured by asking questions about how an individual behaves toward members of different ethnic groups, whether or not they are able to perceive the feelings of those members, whether or not they show respect for the customs and languages of those members, and whether or not they protect those members from performing certain discriminatory actions.

Electronic word of mouth (eWOM) trust: eWOM trust refers to the online user evaluation being done when conducting business, transferring knowledge in the sharing economy, and building strategic partnerships (Xie & Liu, 2022). Questions are asked about the degree of faith an individual would place on the evaluation of a prominent opinion leader and social media and this is how it is measured.

Attitude: An "attitude" refers to the consumer's favourable or unfavourable emotions towards a specific brand, product, or service (Ajzen, 1988). By inquiring about the consumer's perspectives, convictions, and sentiments regarding the act of boycotting, it is feasible to assess it.

Subjective norms: Subjective norms are when consumers become aware of social pressure or influence that an individual feels, which drives them to engage in a specific action (Ajzen, 1988). Subjective norms pertain to the impact of societal pressure on an individual. To assess it, questions are posed on the individual's attitudes towards societal expectations and their level of deference for others' viewpoints.

Perceived Behavioral Control: The concept of perceived behavioural control describes a person's conviction that they can control their actions in a particular circumstance (Ajzen, 1988). To assess it, questions are posed on the confidence of that individual in their ability to execute the behaviour, as well as the level of ease with which they can perform that behaviour.

Within the discipline of social science, there exists a theoretical framework known as the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB). Its objective is to clarify and predict human behaviour, specifically about actions aimed at achieving a specified goal.

3.5.2 Original Questions

The items under EFE, EPTACD, and EA will be used to measure the independent variable of ethnocultural empathy (EE).

Empathic feeling and expression (EFE)		Adopted from
EFE1	I feel disturbed when other people experience misfortunes due to their racial or ethnic backgrounds.	Özdikmenli-Demir & Demir, 2014
EFE2	When I know my friends are treated unfairly because of their racial or ethnic backgrounds, I speak up for them.	
EFE3	When other people struggle with racial or ethnic oppression, I share their frustration.	

EFE4	I share the anger of those who face injustice because of their racial and ethnic backgrounds.	
EFE5	I feel supportive of people of other racial and ethnic groups, if I think they are being taken advantage of.	
EFE6	When I see people who come from a different racial or ethnic background succeed in the public arena, I share their pride.	
EFE7	I express my concern about discrimination to people from other racial or ethnic groups	
EFE8	I am touched by movies or books about discrimination issues faced by racial or ethnic groups other than my own.	
EFE9	When I interact with people from other racial or ethnic backgrounds, I show my appreciation of their cultural norms.	
EFE10	I care if people make racist statements against other racial or ethnic groups.	
EFE11	I am likely to participate in events that promote equal rights for people of all racial and ethnic backgrounds.	

Empathic perspective taking and acceptance of cultural differences (EPTACD)		Adopted from
EPT1	It is easy for me to put myself in the shoes of someone who is racially and/or ethnically different from me.	Özdikmenli-Demir & Demir, 2014
EPT2	I feel comfortable when I am around a significant number of people who are racially/ethnically different than me.	
EPT3	I understand why people want to keep their indigenous racial or ethnic cultural traditions instead of trying to fit into the mainstream.	

EPT4	I am not annoyed when people do not speak standard English.	
EPT5	I am not annoyed when people do not speak standard Bahasa Melayu.	
EPT6	I am not irritated when people of different racial or ethnic backgrounds speak their language around me.	
EPT7	I know a lot of information about important social and political events of racial and ethnic groups other than my own.	
EPT8	I am patient when communicating with people from other racial or ethnic backgrounds regardless of how well they speak English.	
EPT9	I am patient when communicating with people from other racial or ethnic backgrounds regardless of how well they speak Bahasa Melayu.	
EPT1 0	I understand why people of different racial or ethnic backgrounds enjoy wearing traditional clothing.	
EPT1 1	It is easy for me to relate to stories in which people talk about racial or ethnic discrimination they experience in their day to day lives.	
EPT1 2	I seek opportunities to speak with individuals of other racial or ethnic backgrounds about their experiences.	
EPT1 3	It is easy for me to understand what it would feel like to be a person of another racial or ethnic background other than my own.	

Empathic Awareness (EA)		Adopted from
EA1	I am aware of institutional barriers (e.g., restricted opportunities for job promotion) that discriminate against racial or ethnic groups other than my own	Özdikmenli-Demir & Demir, 2014

EA2	I am aware of how society differentially treats racial or ethnic groups other than my own.	
EA3	I can see how other racial or ethnic groups are systematically oppressed in our society.	
EA4	I know what it feels like to be the only person of a certain race or ethnicity in a group of people.	
EA5	I can relate to the frustration that some people feel about having fewer opportunities due to their racial or ethnic backgrounds.	
EA6	I recognize that the media often portrays people based on racial or ethnic stereotypes.	
EA7	I share the anger of people who are victims of hate crimes (e.g., intentional violence because of race or ethnicity).	
EA8	When I hear people make racist jokes, I tell them I am offended even though they are not referring to my racial or ethnic group	

Electronic Word of Mouth Trust (EWOMT)		
EWOMT1	I think the key opinion leaders on websites and social media are trustworthy.	Lee & Hong, 2019
EWOMT2	I think the reviews posted by the key opinion leaders on websites and social media are accurate	
EWOMT3	Before making a purchase, I am willing to depend on the key opinion leaders on websites and social media.	
EWOMT4	Overall, I trust the key opinion leaders on websites and social media.	

Attitude towards boycotts (ATT)		Adopted from
ATT1	Boycotting Israel-related products is beneficial	Kim et al., (2022)

ATT2	Boycotting Israel-related products is good	
ATT3	Boycotting Israel-related products is favorable	
ATT4	I support to boycott Israel-related products	

Subjective norms on boycotts (SUB)		Adopted from
SN1	People close to me think I should boycott Israel-related products	Kim et al., (2022)
SN2	People who are important to me would not approve of purchase of Israel-related products	
SN3	People close to me think I should not buy Israel-related products	
SN4	People close to me will look down on me if I buy Israel-related products	

Perceived behavioral control of boycotts (PBC)		
PBC1	Whether to boycott is entirely within my control	Kim et al., (2022)
PBC2	I think there are enough alternatives to replace Israel-related products	
PBC3	I think there is no problem in replacing Israel-related products with other things	
PBC4	I have the recourse and the knowledge to buy alternative products	

Boycott Intentions (BOY)		
BI1	I would feel guilty if I bought a Israel-related product	Rose et al., 2019
BI2	I would never buy a Israel-related food product	

BI3	Whenever possible, I avoid buying Israel-related products	
BI4	I do not like the idea of owning Israel-related products	
BI5	If two products were equal in quality, but one was Israel-related and one was not, I would pay more for the product that is not Israel-related.	

3.5.3 Scale of Measurement

3.5.3.1 Nominal Scale

The questionnaire and research project employ nominal scale items such as gender, ethnicity, education level, occupation, and location.

3.5.3.2 Ordinal Scale

The questionnaire examines the personal income level and household income level through the use of ordinal scale items.

3.5.3.3 Interval Scale

The variables included in this questionnaire include ethnocultural empathy, eWOM trust, attitudes towards boycotts, subjective norms regarding boycotts, perceived behavioural control regarding boycotts, and boycott intentions. These items are measured on an interval scale. The variables that have been presented are being calculated using Likert

scales consisting of 5 points, ranging from one to five. The scales encompass a spectrum between strongly disagreeing to strongly agreeing. Afterwards, the score is computed using spreadsheet software and then employed for data analysis in SPSS.

3.6 Data Analysis Techniques

3.6.1 Data Analysis

Data analysis is essential for researchers to achieve their research objectives, irrespective of whether the research is of quantitative design or qualitative design. It helps researchers by decreasing and organising the amount of the acquired data. To analyse the data obtained from the respondents, IBM SPSS Statistics Software was utilised for this research.

3.6.2 Descriptive Analysis

Researchers are able to summarise the data and identify the likelihood of a trend with the use of descriptive analysis, which involves the computation of means, modes, and median. Identifying the data was accomplished through the utilisation of methods such as mean, median, mode, percentage, and frequency. Descriptive analysis establishes the research structure in the initial stage of the data analysis process by conducting frequency analysis tests to acquire an understanding of the variables. Hence, it is essential to

methodologically capture all of the descriptive data because it helps contribute to the establishment of reliable research practices and minimises the likelihood of publishing any false findings (Huebner, Vach, &le Cessie, 2016).

A full comprehension of the research participants was obtained by doing a descriptive analysis on the demographic data of the respondents in this research. The demographic data includes gender, age, ethnicity, occupation, monthly personal income level, monthly household income level, education level, and location.

3.6.3 Inferential Analysis

Two different kinds of inferential statistics are known as parametric and non-parametric analysis. The examination of the data that does not contain the normal distribution is referred to as the non-parametric analysis. Parametric analysis, which is the other type of inferential statistics, is commonly used to analyse data that can be measured at an interval scale and follows a normal distribution. This type of analysis involves estimating sample statistics, testing statistical hypotheses, and conducting significance tests. The most important reason for the wide range of applications of inferential analysis is that it allows for the generalisation of findings from a small sample to the overall research population. There are two methods of analysis that fall under the category of inferential analysis which are the estimation method and the point estimate method. Utilising the parameter value is what is meant by estimation, whereas utilising a sample of observations is what is meant by point estimate. Within the scope of this research, the point estimate method was utilised.

3.6.3.1 Pearson Correlation Coefficient

The Pearson Correlation Coefficient is the most direct approach to evaluate the correlation between variables. The coefficient is used to assess how closely two variables move together in a linear relationship, providing valuable insights into the correlation between them. The Pearson Correlation is commonly used when discussing the linear correlation between two variables and quantifying the extent of correlation between them.

There will be a calculation of the means for each construct before running the Pearson correlation test in SPSS and interpreting the findings. The means will be computed by summing all the scores within a variable and then dividing by the number of items within that variable. The resulting means are also rounded to the nearest zero decimal point.

3.6.3.2 Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

Alexopoulos (2010) discovered that multiple linear regression is a statistical method employed to evaluate the correlation between variables that exhibit significant links, as well as to estimate variables by taking into account their relationship. In this research, multiple regression analysis was utilised to generate a thorough prediction that determines the impact of independent factors on the dependent variable. A statistical technique known as multiple regression analysis makes use of independent variables to investigate the result or conclusion of the dependent variable. This can help the researcher evaluate the linear relationship that exists between the independent variables—perceived behavioural control, subjective norms, and conceptual knowledge of attitude—and the dependent variable—boycott intentions. Additionally, the researcher can examine the moderating effects of ethnocultural empathy and eWOM trust on the linear relationship between boycott intentions, attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control.

Firstly, just the independent variables—attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control—and the dependent variable—boycott intentions—will be used in a

multiple linear regression analysis as the variables of interest in the model. Interpretation will be carried out for the model summary, ANOVA, and coefficient.

The moderation effect of ethnocultural empathy and eWOM trust on the linear relationship between attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control with the boycott intentions will be assessed in the second phase using further multiple linear regression analysis. In order to accomplish this, interaction terms will be generated in SPSS by multiplying the mean of eWOM trust and ethnocultural empathy respectively with the mean of each independent variable and these interaction terms shall be the variables of interest in this model. Interpretation will be carried out for the model summary, ANOVA and coefficient. In order to evaluate how well the moderating variables moderate the effect of independent variables on the dependent variable, the analysis will next concentrate on looking at the coefficients for the interaction terms.

3.7 Summary

The methodology of the research, the method for collecting data, and the sample strategy were all discussed in this chapter. After that, a comprehensive discussion is held on the production of the research instrument as well as the pre-testing and pilot testing of the questionnaire, all of which are required to be carried out before the distribution of the survey questionnaire. Next, discussion on how to measure the variables and how the analysis will be done to the data collected.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH RESULTS

4.0 Introduction

An overview of the research questionnaire's results, completed by 300 participants, is provided in this chapter. This chapter's first half is devoted to a descriptive analysis of the respondents' submitted demographic data. The findings of the reliability tests and the inferential analysis carried out using the IBM SPSS Statistics Subscription Software (SPSS 27.0) are shown in the second half, which is split into two parts.

4.1 Descriptive Analysis

Respondents' demographic information overview is as shown as the table 4.1 below. Following the analysis and presentation of the information that was received from 300 respondents, the following sections contain tables and the results of the interpretation that was performed by the SPSS Statistics program.

Table 4.1: Frequency of the Demographic Profiles of Respondents

Demographic Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Female	150	50.00%
	Male	150	50.00%
Total		300	100.00%
Age	18-25 years old	90	30.00%
	26-35 years old	80	26.67%
	36-45 years old	60	20.00%
	46-55 years old	40	13.33%
	Above 56 years old	30	10.00%
Total		300	100.00%
Ethnicity	Malay	210	70.00%
	Chinese	70	23.33%
	Indian	20	6.67%
Total		300	100.00%
Education Level	High school	50	16.67%
	Diploma	50	16.67%
	Bachelor's Degree	50	16.67%
	Master's Degree	50	16.67%
	Doctoral Degree	51	17.00%
	N/A	49	16.33%
Total		300	100.00%
Personal Income Level)Monthly)	Less than RM2,000	52	17.33%
	RM2,000-RM3,999	52	17.33%
	RM4,000-RM5,999	48	16.00%
	RM6,000-RM7,999	46	15.33%
	RM8,000-RM9,999	52	17.33%
	RM10,000 and above	50	16.67%
Total		300	100.00%
Household Income Level (Monthly)	Less than RM4,000	50	16.67%
	RM5,000-RM5,999	50	16.67%
	RM6,000-RM7,999	50	16.67%
	RM8,000-RM9,999	47	15.67%
	RM10,000-RM11,999	53	17.67%
	RM12,000-RM13,999	48	16.00%
	RM14,000 and above	2	0.67%

Total		300	100.00%
Occupation	Student	50	16.67%
	Employed	50	16.67%
	Self-employed	50	16.67%
	Unemployed	51	17.00%
	Retired	49	16.33%
	N/A	50	16.67%
Total		300	100.00%
Location	Johor	30	10.00%
	Kedah	20	6.67%
	Kelantan	10	3.33%
	Melaka	10	3.33%
	Negeri Sembilan	10	3.33%
	Pahang	10	3.33%
	Perak	20	6.67%
	Pulau Pinang	21	7.00%
	Sabah	28	9.33%
	Sarawak	31	10.33%
	Selangor	70	23.33%
	Terengganu	9	3.00%
	Kuala Lumpur	21	7.00%
	Putrajaya	10	3.33%
Total		300	100.00%

Source: Developed for this research.

4.1.1 Gender

According to the obtained data, 50 percent of the respondents are male, and an equal 50 percent are female. The fact that both males and females are willing to take part in the survey is demonstrated by this outcome.

4.1.2 Age

Based on the data, 30 percent of respondents are within the age range of 18 to 25 years old. There are 26.7 percent of respondents who fall into the age range of 26 to 35 years old. 20 percent of the respondents are individuals aged 36 to 45 years old. Respondents who are between the ages of 46 and 55 make up 13.3 percent of the respondents, while those who are above the age of 56 make up ten percent of the respondents.

4.1.3 Ethnicity

Malay people make up 70 percent of the respondents, while Chinese people make up 23.3 percent and Indians make up six point seven percent. According to the data on the population of Malaysia for the year 2023 categorised by ethnicity on Statista (2023), this is a good sample to depict the population of Malaysia.

4.1.4 Education Level

High school diplomas, bachelor's degrees, master's degrees, and master's degrees are the levels of education held by 16.7 percent of the respondents, respectively. Other than that, 16.3 percent of the respondents are unwilling to divulge their level of education, whereas 17 percent of the respondents hold a doctoral degree.

4.1.5 Personal Income Level (Monthly)

Respondents with a personal income below RM2,000, between RM2,000 and RM3,999, and between RM8,000 and RM8,999 constitute 17.3 percent of the total respondents. A personal income of between RM4,000 and RM5,999 ranges for 16 percent of the respondents. Among the respondents, 15.3 percent have an income that falls between RM6,000 and RM7,999, while 17.3 percent have an income that falls between RM8,000 and RM9,999.

4.1.6 Household Income Level (Monthly)

In terms of household income, 16.7 percent of the respondents have incomes that fall within the range of less than RM4,000, between RM5,000 and RM5,999, and between RM6,000 and RM7.099. The households of 15.7 percent of the respondents have an monthly income that falls between RM8,000 and RM9,999, and the households of 17.7 percent of the respondents have an monthly income that falls between RM10,000 and RM11,999. 16 percent of the respondents' households have a monthly income ranging from RM12,000 to RM13,999, while households belonging to zero point seven percent of the respondents have a monthly income that is RM14,000 or higher.

4.1.7 Occupation

There are now 16.7 percent of respondents that are either students, employed, self-employed, or unwilling to divulge their employment status. There are 17 percent of respondents who are unemployed, and 16.3 percent of respondents who are retired.

4.1.8 Location

The Terengganu region is home to three percent. The states of Kelantan, Melaka, Negeri Sembilan, Pahang, and Putrajaya are home to three point three percent of the total respondents respectively. The states of Kedah and Perak are home to six point seven percent of the respondents. Kuala Lumpur and Pulau Pinang are home to seven percent of the respondents, respectively. Sabah is home to nine point three percent of the respondents. There are ten percent in Johor. 10.3 percent of the respondents are located in Sarawak. There are 23.3 percent of respondents that call Selangor their home.

4.1.9 Summary of Demographic Frequency

Each gender accounts for 50 percent of the total respondents, as indicated by the data that was gathered.

30 percent of the respondents are between the ages of 18 and 25 years old, twenty-six and thirty-seven years old, thirty-five to forty-five years old, forty-five to fifty-five years old, and fifty-six years old or older.

Malay people make up 70 percent of the sample for this research, followed by Chinese people (23.3% of the sample) and Indians (6.7 percent).

The samples' education level include 17 percent are doctoral degree holders, 16.3 percent not willing to divulge or not applicable, and 16.7 percent of the samples are high school certificate holders, diploma certificate holders, bachelor's degree holders, and master's degree holders respectively.

In the sample, 17.3 percent of respondents have a monthly personal income that falls within the range of RM2,000 to RM3,999, RM8,000 to RM9,999, and RM2,000 to RM3,999. In the following order, 16.7 percent of respondents make RM10,000 or more, 16 percent earn between RM4,000 and RM5,999, and 15.3 percent earn between RM6,000 and RM7,999.

17.7 percent of the respondents reported that their households had a monthly income ranging from RM10,000 to RM11,999. After that, 16.7 percent of the homes of the respondents have income levels that are less than RM4,000, between RM5,000 and RM5,999, and between RM6,000 and RM7,999, and 16 percent of the households of the respondents have income levels that are between RM12,000 and RM13,999. 15.7 percent of the respondents' households have a monthly income between RM8,000 and RM9,999, while the households of 0.7 percent of the respondents have a monthly income that is RM14,000 or more.

Regarding the occupations of the samples, 27 percent are jobless, 16.3 percent are retired, and 16.7 percent are either students, employed, self-employed, not willing to tell, or not applicable.

Approximately 23.3 percent of the samples were collected from the state of Selangor. After that, 10.3 percent lives in Sarawak, 10 percent lives in Johor, 9.3 percent lives in Sabah, 7 percent lives in Pulau Pinang and Kuala Lumpur, 6.7 percent lives in Kedah and Perak, and 3.3 percent lives in Kelantan, Melaka, Negeri Sembilan, Pahang, and Putrajaya. The Terengganu region is home to 3 percent of the samples.

4.2 Reliability Test

Table 4.2: Reliability Test for Each Variables (Actual Research, N=300)

Variables	Constructs	Number of items	Cronbach's Alpha
Dependent variable:	Boycott Intentions	5	0.831
Independent variable:	Ethnocultural Empathy	32	0.910
	eWOM Trust	4	0.741
	Attitude	4	0.702
	Subjective Norms	4	0.740
	Perceived Behavioral Control	4	0.740

Source: Developed for this research.

The Cronbach's Alpha values for boycott intentions, ethnocultural empathy, eWOM trust, attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control in the actual research are as follows: 0.831, 0.910, 0.741, 0.702, 0.740, and 0.740, respectively. From Cronbach's Alpha for eWOM trust, attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control have acceptable reliability. Boycott intentions and ethnocultural empathy has good reliability. This result is consistent with the Cronbach's Alpha obtained from the pilot test.

4.3 Inferential Analysis

4.3.1 Pearson Correlation Analysis

The direction, strength, and statistical significance of a linear correlation between two variables can all be analysed using correlation. One can examine the correlations between the variables in the research by referring to the correlation table. The degree of a linear link between two continuous variables is determined by the Pearson correlation coefficient. A perfect positive correlation is shown by a coefficient of +1; a complete negative correlation is indicated by a value of -1.

Table 4.3: Correlations between attitude, subjective norms, perceived behavioural control and boycott intentions

Correlation					
		Attitude	Subjective Norm	Perceived Behavioural Control	Boycott Intentions
Attitude	Pearson Correlation		.905**	.451**	.534**
Subjective Norms	Pearson Correlation	.905**		.526**	.587**
Perceived Behavioural Control	Pearson Correlation	.451**	.526**		.879**
Boycott Intentions	Pearson Correlation	.534**	.587**	.879**	

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

Source: Developed for this research.

Table 4.4 illustrates the correlations of attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control, which are the independent variables, with boycott intentions, which is the dependent variable. The following is the explanation of the correlations that were found between the variables in this research:

There is a highly significant and positive correlation (r = 0.905, p < 0.001) between the mean attitude and the mean subjective norms. The correlation indicates that as attitude increases, there is a tendency for subjective norms to also increase.

There is a significant and positive correlation (r = 0.451, p < 0.001) between attitude and the mean perceived behavioural control. This correlation indicates that as attitude increases, there is a tendency for perceived behavioural control to also increase.

There is a moderate and positive correlation (r = 0.526, p < 0.001) between the mean subjective norms and the mean perceived behavioural control. The correlation indicates that as perceived behavioural controls rise, there is a tendency for subjective norms to also increase.

As perceived behavioural control grows, there is a corresponding tendency for boycott intentions to increase as well. The presence of a highly significant and positive relationship between the mean perceived behavioural control and the mean boycott intentions is evident (r = 0.879, p < 0.001).

There is a moderately positive relationship between the mean subjective norms and the mean boycott intentions, with a correlation coefficient of 0.587 (p < 0.001). This correlation indicates that as subjective norms increase, there is a corresponding propensity for boycott intentions to also increase.

A moderate and significant correlation (r = 0.534, p < 0.001) exists between the mean attitude and the mean boycott intentions. This correlation implies that if attitude increases, there is a corresponding tendency for boycott intentions to also increase.

According to the findings of correlation as a whole, attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control being the independent variables have a positive correlation with the boycott intentions being the dependent variable.

4.3.2 Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

Under this part, the researcher will be using acronyms of the below to simplify the writing process:

ATT = attitude

SN = Subjective Norms

PBC = Perceived Behavioural Control

BI = Boycott Intentions

EE = Ethnocultural Empathy

EWOMT = Electronic Word of Mouth Trust

Table 4.4: Multiple Regression on Independent Variables and Dependent Variable (Model Summary)

Model Summary		
Model	R	R Square
1	.893[a]	.797

a. Predictors: (Constant), AvgPBC, AvgATT, AvgSN

Table 4.5 presents the summary of the multiple regression model that examines the relationship between independent variables being the attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control, and a dependent variable being boycott intentions.

The table shows that the correlation coefficient (R) in the multiple regression model is 0.893. This value shows a highly positive relationship between ATT, SN and PBC, being the independent variables, and BI, being the dependent variable. The R-square value, also

known as the coefficient of determination, is 0.797. This value indicates that the independent variables can explain 79.7% of the variability in BI.

Table 4.5: Multiple Regression on Independent Variables and Dependent Variable (ANOVA)

ANOVA[a]				
Model		df	F	Sig.
1	Regression	3	387.660	<.001[b]

    a.   Dependent Variable: BI

    b.   Predictors: (Constant), PBC, ATT, SN

According to table 4.6, there are three degrees of freedom (*df)*, which refers to ATT, SN and PBC. The regression model is found to be well fitted to the data with significance level less than 0.001 as shown by the F-ratio = 387.660. This implies that the independent variables have a significance on the dependent variable.

Table 4.6: Multiple Regression on Independent Variables and Dependent Variable (Coefficient)

Coefficients[a]				
Model		Unstandardised B	Standardised Coefficients Beta	Sig.
1	(Constant)	-.195		.127
	ATT	.125	.127	.040
	SN	.057	.055	.398
	PBC	.820	.793	<.001

    a.   Dependent Variable: BI

Table 4.7 displays the unstandardized coefficients (B), standardised coefficients (betas), as well as significance values (p-value) for each independent variable. There exists a significantly positive relationship between ATT, SN, and PBC being the independent variables with BI being the dependent variable. To be more specific, the BI will have an

increase of 0.125, 0.057, and 0.820 units, respectively, for every one-unit increase in ATT, SN and PBC.

Based on the data shown in the table, the ATT and PBC are the independent variables that have a notable impact in predicting BI. The p-values for ATT and PBC are 0.040 and <0.001 respectively, both of which are below the significance threshold of 0.05. This is why they are considered more statistically significant. SN is less significant in predicting BI due to its p-value being 0.398 which is higher than the significance level of 0.05.

Formula for the equation of multiple linear regression of this model:

$Y = a + ß1X1 + ß2X2 + ß3X3 + ß4X4$

Where

Y= Predicted linear relationship of BI (Dependent variable)

a= Constant Value

ß= Un-standardized Coefficients

X= Dimensions contribute to boycott intention (Independent variables)

$BI = -0.195 + 0.125 (ATT)* + 0.057 (SN) + 0.820 (PBC)*$

When BI increases by one unit, it will result in an increase of 0.125 (ATT), 0.057 (SN), and 0.820 (PCB), according to the findings revealed by this research.

As can be seen in the table, the PBC is the factor that has the greatest impact on the variation of BI. This is due to the fact that its beta value (under the standardised coefficient) is the highest: 0.793. This indicates that PBC is the most significant and made the most distinctive contribution to the explanation of the variation in BI. Next is ATT, which has a beta value of 0.127, and then comes SN, which has the lowest beta value of 0.055.

Moderating effects:

To analyse the data for the moderating effects, interaction terms have been made by multiplying the means of the moderating variables with the means of each of the independent variables on SPSS. After doing so, the multiple regression analysis was run and the tables are as interpreted as below.

a. eWOM Trust (EWOMT)

Table 4.7: Multiple Regression on Moderating Variable (eWOM Trust) and Dependent Variable (Coefficient)

Coefficients[a]				
Model		Unstandardised B	Standardised Coefficients Beta	Sig.
1	(Constant)	-.422		.001
	EWOM x TATT	-.093	-.633	.202
	EWOMT x SN	.026	.170	.734
	EWOMT x PBC	.119	.673	.002

a. Dependent Variable: BI

A negative interaction impact between EWOMT and ATT on BI is suggested by the negative coefficient (-0.093), which indicates that this effect is negative. Given that the p-value is 0.202, it may be concluded that the moderating effect does not meet the criteria for statistical significance at significance level of 0.05. There is insufficient evidence to suggest that the moderating effect is zero in this case.

A positive interaction impact between EWOMT and SN on BI is suggested by the positive coefficient (0.026), which indicates that this effect is favourable. On the other hand, the p-value (0.734) reveals that the moderating impact does not meet the criteria for meaningful statistical significance at significance level of 0.05. There is insufficient evidence to suggest that the moderating effect is zero in this case.

There is a positive and statistically significant interaction impact between EWOMT and PBC on BI, as indicated by the positive coefficient (0.119), which indicates that this

effect is positive, and the p-value of 0.002 which met the criteria for statistically significance at significance level of 0.05. The fact that this is the case suggests that the moderating impact is not equal to zero, and that the positive relationship is supported by statistical evidence.

BI = -0.422 - 0.093 (EWOMT x ATT) + 0.026 (EWOMT x SN) + 0.119 (EWOMT x PCB)*

A decrease of 0.093 (EWOMT x ATT), an increase of 0.026 (EWOMT x SN), and a increase of 0.119 (EWOMT x PCB) are to be expected as a consequence of an increase of one unit in boycott intentions, according to the findings.

The table demonstrates that the moderating effect of EWOMT on PBC is the factor that contributes the most to the variation of BI. This is due to the fact that its beta value (under standardised coefficient) is the greatest, coming in at 0.673 to be exact. In light of this, it may be concluded that EWOMT on PBC is the most significant and original addition to the explanation of the variation in boycott intentions. Following that is EWOMT on SN, which possesses a beta coefficient of 0.270, and EWOMT on ATT, which exhibits the most negative beta coefficient of -0.633.

In a nutshell, the moderation effects support the hypothesis that the moderation of eWOM trust on perceived behavioural control has a large and favourable impact on the boycott intentions. It should be noted, however, that the moderating effects with regard to attitude and subjective norms do not exhibit statistical significance.

b. Ethnocultural empathy (EE)

Table 4.8: Multiple Regression on Moderating Variable (Ethnocultural Empathy) and Dependent Variable (Coefficient)

Coefficients[a]			
Model	Unstandardised B	Standardised Coefficients Beta	Sig.

1	(Constant)	-.934		<.001
	EE x ATT	.072	.370	.345
	EE x SN	.022	.110	.806
	EE x PBC	.146	.738	.013

a. Dependent Variable: BI

There is a positive moderating effect between EE and ATT on BI, as indicated by the positive coefficient (0.072), which suggests that this effect is favourable. However, the moderating impact does not achieve statistical significance, as evidenced by the p-value (0.345) at the significance value of 0.05. Taking this into consideration, there is insufficient data to conclude that the moderating effect is zero.

A positive moderating effect of EE and SN on BI is suggested by the positive coefficient (0.022), which indicates that this effect is favourable. However, the moderating impact does not achieve statistical significance, as evidenced by the p-value (0.806) at the significance value of 0.05. It can be deduced from this that there is insufficient data to conclude that the moderating effect is zero.

There is a positive and statistically significant moderation effect between EE and PBC on BI, as indicated by the positive coefficient (0.146), which indicates that this coefficient is positive, and the p-value is 0.013 which met the criteria for statistical significance at significance level of 0.05 The conclusion that can be drawn from this is that the moderation effect is not equal to zero, and that the positive link is supported by statistical evidence.

BI = -0.934 + 0.072 (EET x ATT) + 0.022 (EE x SN) + 0.146 (EE x PCB)*

According to the findings, an increase of one unit in the intention to boycott will result in an increase of 0.072 (EE x ATT), 0.022 (EE x SN), and 0.146 (EE x PCB).

The table demonstrates that the EE on PBC is the factor that contributes the most to the variation of BI. This is due to the fact that its beta value (under standardised coefficient) is the greatest, coming in at 0.738. Consequently, this indicates that EE on PBC is the

most significant and made the most distinctive contribution to the explanation of the variation in boycott intentions. Following that is EE on ATT, which possesses a beta coefficient of 0.370, and subsequently EE on SN, which exhibits the lowest overall beta coefficient of 0.110.

To summarise, the moderation effects indicate that the moderation of ethnocultural empathy on perceived behavioural control has a considerable beneficial effect on boycott intentions. This is the conclusion that can be drawn from the findings. It should be noted, however, that the moderating effects with regard to attitude and subjective norms do not exhibit statistical significance.

4.4 Hypothesis Result Summary

Table 4.9: The Summary from Hypothesis Testing

Variables	Hypothesis Constructed	Result
Attitude	H1a: There is a relationship between customer boycott intentions and perceived behavioural control.	Supported
Subjective Norms	H1b: There is a relationship between customer boycott intentions and subjective norms.	Not supported
Perceived Behavioral Control	H1c: There is a relationship between customer boycott intentions and perceived behavioural control.	Supported
Electronic Word-of-Mouth Trust	H2a: The relationship between attitude and consumer boycott intentions is moderated by eWOM trust.	Not supported
	H2b: The relationship between subjective norms and consumer boycott intentions is moderated by eWOM trust.	Not supported
	H2c: The relationship between perceived behavioural control and consumer boycott intentions is moderated by eWOM trust.	Supported

Ethnocultural Empathy	H3a: The relationship between attitude and consumer boycott intentions is moderated by ethnocultural empathy.	Not supported
	H3b: The relationship between subjective norms and consumer boycott intentions is moderated by ethnocultural empathy.	Not supported
	H3c: The relationship between perceived behavioural control and consumer boycott intentions is moderated by ethnocultural empathy.	Supported

The magnitude and direction of the correlations between the research variables are evaluated using correlation analysis. As was to be predicted, the three independent variables—ATT, SN, and PBC—have a positive relationship with the dependent variable, which is boycott intentions. Based on the data, it appears that consumers' attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control they have over their own conduct all play a role in determining whether or not they intend to boycott a product that is associated with Israel. Taking everything into consideration, the correlation analysis not only offers significant insights into the links between the variables, but it also emphasises the significance of taking into account a variety of aspects when analysing the intentions of customers to boycott things.

From the results obtained from multiple regression analysis using the model summary, table of ANOVA, and table of coefficients, the researcher arrived at the following findings and conclusions regarding the multiple regression model:

The table summarising the model indicates that the model of multiple regression has a correlation coefficient (R) of 0.893. This suggests a highly positive relationship between ATT, SN, and PBC with the BI. The variation in boycott intentions can be explained by the independent variables up to 79.7%, according to the coefficient of determination, often known as the R-square, which is 0.797.

According to the analysis of variance (ANOVA) table, the regression model is found to be statistically significant (F = 387.660, p <.05). This implies that the independent variables have a substantial influence on the dependent variable. Taking all of these findings into consideration, it appears that ATT, SN, and PBC are significant predictors of BI, and that

it can be concluded that the multiple regression model is highly suitable for the given data. In contrast, it is of the utmost importance to keep in mind that these findings are derived from this particular sample and factors that were utilised for the purpose of this research, and it is possible that these findings cannot be applied to other specific populations or contexts.

The coefficient table clearly demonstrates that people's intentions to engage in boycotting activities are significantly positively impacted by two independent variables: attitude and perceived behaviour control. More precisely, the act of boycotting leads to an incremental rise of 0.125 and 0.820 units, correspondingly, for each additional unit of attitude and perceived behaviour control. It is possible to evaluate the correlative significance of the predictors included in the model by using the standardised coefficients. Because they are less than the significance level of 0.05, the p-values for ATT and PBC, which are 0.040 and less than 0.001, respectively, are both statistically significant. Therefore, ATT and PBC are important predictors of BI. SN is less significant in predicting BI due to its p-value being 0.398 which is higher than the significance level of 0.05.

In terms of the multiple regression model for the moderation effect, the purpose of this research is to examine the moderating effect of eWOM trust and ethnocultural empathy on the relationship between attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control on boycott intentions. In the case of eWOM trust, the moderating effect between eWOM trust and perceived behavioural control is statistically significant. Similarly, in the case of ethnocultural empathy and perceived behavioural control, the moderating influence is also statistically significant on the intentions to boycott a product or service.

It can be summarised by saying that there is a positive association between the three independent variables (ATT, SN, and PBC) and the dependent variable of boycott intentions. The association between perceived behavioural control and boycott intentions is strongly moderated by eWOM trust and ethnocultural empathy, whereas the relationship between attitude and subjective norm and boycott intentions is not significantly influenced by both of these moderating variables.

4.5 Summary

In this chapter, SPSS was employed to analyse the data collected from the respondents who completed the questionnaires. The objective was to first determine the demographic frequency which will allow the researcher to acquire the demographic statistical result. A multiple regression analysis was conducted to examine the correlation between the independent variables (ATT, SN, PBC) and the dependent variable (BI). In addition, the analysis has also examined the influence of the moderating variables (EWOMT, EE) on the correlation between the independent variables and the dependent variables. In Chapter 5, the major findings presented in this chapter will be elaborated upon, alongside suggestions for future research directions.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

5.0 Introduction

This chapter offers a comprehensive analysis and discussion of the significant discoveries, building on the data presented in Chapter 4. This chapter provides recommendations for future research, as well as a research overview, the theoretical and practical implications of the research, the limitations and consequences of the research, and the constraints and implications of the research.

5.1 Discussion on Major Findings

The findings of this research demonstrate that attitudes and perceived behavioural control significantly influence the dependent variable, boycott intentions. However, subjective norms are not found to be statistically significant in influencing boycott intentions. There

are comparisons made between the findings of this research and those of other studies that have produced comparable findings.

5.1.1 Relationship between Attitude, Subjective Norms, and Perceived Behavioural Control with Boycott Intentions

The initial findings of this research centre around the factors that impact consumers' intention to boycott things associated with Israel. These findings are derived from a correlation analysis and a multiple regression model. According to Hamzah (2019), who discovered that attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioural control had a major influence on boycott intentions. This indicates that the findings of this research can be used to a variety of consumer goods businesses that are associated with Israel, as the findings can be interpreted and applied to a variety of various industry fields. Research by Delistavrou (2021) has shown that buyers' tendency to boycott unethical products is greatly impacted by subjective norms, and this is also supported by Song (2010) where consumers' decision to engage in a boycott against unethical products is mostly shaped by subjective norms. Subjective norms can impede actual purchase behaviour by raising the chances of boycotting a product or service (Sukirman et al., 2019). The conclusions of these researches are inconsistent with the findings of this research, which indicate that subjective norms have no substantial impact on boycott intentions.

Contrary to the prevailing view, this research's findings indicate that subjective norms have no substantial impact on boycott intentions, which suggests a departure from the commonly held belief that social influences significantly shape consumers' decisions to boycott products associated with specific entities. Hamzah (2019) emphasised the significant influence of attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioural control on boycott intentions, highlighting the importance of individual attitudes and perceived control alongside subjective norms in driving consumer behaviour. On the other hand, Delistavrou (2021), Song (2010), and Sukirman et al. (2019) underscored the pivotal role

of subjective norms in influencing consumers' propensity to engage in boycotts. Their research findings suggest that subjective norms can act as barriers to actual purchase behaviour, thereby increasing the likelihood of consumers boycotting products or services. This contrast reveals a divergence in perspectives on the impact of subjective norms on boycott intentions. While this research's findings challenge the notion of subjective norms as a significant driver of boycott intentions, the researches by Delistavrou, Song, and Sukirman et al. emphasise the influential role of social norms in shaping consumer behaviour. This discrepancy underscores the complexity of consumer decision-making processes and the need for further research to reconcile conflicting viewpoints on the factors influencing boycott intentions.

5.1.2 Moderating Relationship of Ethnocultural Empathy on the Relationship between Attitude, Subjective Norms, and Perceived Behavioural Control with Boycott Intentions

Additionally, Halimi (2019) investigated the impact of empathy on the decision of third-country nationals (TCNs) to boycott Israeli products in the context of the antagonism between Arabs and Muslims and Israelis. It has been discovered that the decision to boycott items which originate from a country that is engaged in unfriendly actions is influenced by ethnocultural empathy, particularly with regard to the residents of the countries that have been insulted (Halimi, 2019). Specifically, this is further narrowed down by the findings of this research, which discovered that ethnocultural empathy is a major moderator between the relationship between perceived behavioural control and intentions to boycott. On the other hand, the findings of this research indicate that ethnocultural empathy does not play a substantial role as a moderator in the relationship between attitude and subjective norms and intentions to boycott.

While ethnocultural empathy may not directly moderate the relationship between attitude and subjective norms and intentions to boycott, individuals with high levels of ethnocultural empathy may still indirectly influence these factors. Research by Halimi (2019) highlights that empathy plays a crucial role in shaping individuals' decisions to boycott products from politically contentious regions. Ethnocultural empathy, although not a direct moderator, can impact the social context surrounding boycott decisions. Researches like the one conducted by Halimi (2019) emphasise that empathy, including moral emotions, can influence participation in boycotts regarding products sourced from politically contentious regions beyond individual attitudes and subjective norms. While the research indicates that ethnocultural empathy does not substantially moderate the relationship between attitude and subjective norms and intentions to boycott, it is crucial to acknowledge the complexity of empathy. Research by Halimi (2019) and other scholars suggests that different dimensions of empathy, such as cognitive empathy or emotional empathy, could interact with attitudes and subjective norms in nuanced ways, potentially affecting intentions to boycott in more subtle manners (Hino, 2023).

5.1.3 Moderating Relationship of eWOM Trust on the Relationship between Attitude, Subjective Norms, and Perceived Behavioural Control with Boycott Intentions

In addition, Zainal (2017) discovered that consumers' attitudes partially mediate the relationship between eWOM trust and consumer intentions. This relationship was found to be strongly influenced by consumer behaviours. The research findings, however, indicate that eWOM trust is a significant moderator between the relationship between perceived behavioural control and boycott intentions. This observation is in contrast to the findings of the previous study. On the other hand, eWOM trust does not play a significant role as a moderator in the link between attitude and subjective norms and boycott intentions.

In contrast to Zainal's (2017) findings on the mediating role of consumer attitudes between eWOM trust and consumer intentions, a contrasting argument can be made based on recent research. The current research suggests that consumer behaviours play a more significant role in influencing the connection between eWOM trust and consumer intentions, overshadowing the mediating effect of attitudes (Jungbulut & Johnen, 2021). Furthermore, the research reveals that eWOM trust acts as a significant moderator between perceived behavioural control and boycott intentions. This contrasts with Zainal's findings, emphasising the crucial influence of trust in eWOM sources on the link between perceived control and intentions to boycott (Ismagilova et al., 2020). On the other hand, the research does not support a significant role for eWOM trust as a moderator in the relationship between attitude, subjective norms, and boycott intentions. Unlike Zainal's study, the current research suggests that while trust in eWOM sources is essential in certain aspects of consumer decision-making, it may not play a significant moderating role in shaping the influence of attitudes and subjective norms on boycott intentions (Zasuwa, 2022).

5.1.4 Summary of Major Findings

Prior research that was discussed earlier demonstrates that attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control all play a significant part in determining whether or not customers intend to boycott a product or service . In addition to this, the research investigates the relationship between attitudes, subjective norms, perceived behavioural control with consumer boycott intentions and found out that this relationship is also influenced by ethnocultural empathy and eWOM trust Therefore, when analysing the consumers intentions to boycott, it is essential to take into account a significant number of different aspects.

The purpose of this research was to investigate the moderation effect of ethnocultural empathy and eWOM trust on the relationship between attitude, subjective norms, and

perceived behavioural control with boycott intentions. Boycott intentions were found to have substantial positive relationships with attitudes and perceived behavioural control, according to the findings of this research. Particularly noteworthy is the fact that the moderation effects between eWOM trust and perceived behavioural control, as well as ethnocultural empathy and perceived behavioural control, had significant positive influence on the boycott intentions.

5.2 Implications of the Research

5.2.1 Theoretical Implications

The findings of the research add significantly to the understanding of consumer behaviour and decision-making. This suggests that the research findings have significant theoretical implications. In addition to being influenced by attitudes and perceived behavioural control, the findings of this research imply that boycott intention is also being moderated by ethnocultural empathy and eWOM trust on perceived behavioural control (Liang & Liao, 2024). This is the conclusion that can be drawn from the implications of the data. In light of this, it is imperative that businesses take into consideration the aforementioned considerations when formulating marketing strategies and carrying out advertising campaigns for products associated with Israel. Attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control have been shown to be related to appropriate sets of salient behavioural and normative factors, indicating their influence on consumer boycott intelligence towards Israel-related companies in Malaysia (Hamzah & Mustafa, 2018).

Additionally, the findings of this research suggest that the TPB is a solid framework for understanding consumer intentions involving recognizing that attitudes, subjective norms,

and perceived behavioural control collectively determine intention. This framework can be utilised in a variety of contexts, including purchasing and boycotting, and it can be used to ascertain the variables that may impact customers' perspectives on whether they will participate in a boycott or not (Liang & Liao, 2024; Ismagilova et al., 2019). The research on hibah giving intent in Malaysia highlights the significance of attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control as determinants of individuals' intentions, underscoring the importance of these factors in shaping behaviors related to giving in the Malaysian context (Nadzirah Said et al., 2020).

Furthermore, the outcomes of this research have both theoretical and practical consequences for businesses who are interested in promoting their products to consumers. Businesses must possess an understanding of the factors that influence consumers' intents to boycott a product or service in order to develop more efficient marketing tactics tailored to their target audience's needs and preferences (Liang & Liao, 2024; Ismagilova et al., 2019). For example, businesses may opt to highlight the social repercussions of their products to attract consumers that possess a strong sense of ethnocultural empathy for different cultures and ethnicities. Alternatively, they may choose to highlight the reviews of key opinion leaders in order to appeal to the trust that consumers have in electronic word of mouth (eWOM trust). The study on public attitudes toward collective action in the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict sheds light on the psychological processes that predict support for different forms of collective action among Arab and Jewish Israelis, emphasising the role of ingroup identification and justice in shaping behaviours in protracted conflict settings (Selvanathan, 2019).

In conclusion, this research makes a significant contribution to the understanding of the factors that influence the intention of consumers and offers vital insights for those who employ marketing strategies. The findings of this research illustrate the significance of taking into account a wide range of different factors when analysing the behaviour and intentions of consumers. Furthermore, it is necessary for businesses to devise marketing plans that take into account the aforementioned factors.

5.2.2 Managerial Implications

When it comes to businesses who are attempting to understand and influence the behaviour of customers, the managerial implications of these findings are considerable. According to the findings, attitudes and perceived behavioural control are significant factors that impact consumers' intentions to boycott a product or service (Hamzah & Mustafa, 2019; Farah & Newman, 2010). Furthermore, the findings indicate that ethnocultural empathy and eWOM trust mediation are responsible for moderating the relationship between perceived behavioural control and boycott intentions. Consequently, when developing their marketing strategy and determining who they want to target, businesses want to take into consideration the aforementioned variables (Farah & Newman, 2010). Attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control significantly impact Malaysian boycott intentions in the Israel/Palestine conflict context (Hamzah & Mustafa, 2019). Ethnocultural empathy and eWOM trust can influence or moderate the relationship between perceived behavioural control and Malaysian boycott intentions in the context of the Israel/Palestine conflict (Abdul-Talib & Adnan, 2017; Ismagilova et al., 2019).

To deter consumers from boycotting their product, businesses should focus on crafting a message that targets consumers' perceived behavioural control (Farah & Newman, 2010). This can be accomplished by leveraging the trust that consumers have in eWOM and the ethnocultural empathy that they have regarding the intention of the product to be boycotted. Companies associated with Israel or perceived to support Israel have faced consumer backlash and boycotts, leading to decreased sales and financial performance ("Crucial math: Key economic implications of the Gaza conflict", 2024). Brands like McDonald's and Starbucks have experienced challenges in the Middle East region due to consumer sentiment against their perceived stance on the conflict, resulting in job cuts, closures, and reduced demand for their products ("Israel's war on Gaza: Are boycotts hurting US brands?", 2024).

The researcher advises businesses to examine a variety of factors when designing their messaging and targeting their customers in light of these findings, which highlight how important it is to understand the numerous elements that drive consumer behaviour and intentions (Farah & Newman, 2010). According to an article by Purushotman (2023), the war in Gaza could potentially lead to supply chain disruptions, impacting consumer prices in Malaysia due to higher transport costs and potential disruptions in supply chains. This could result in increased costs for consumers in the long run, affecting purchasing behaviour and market dynamics (Purushotman, 2023).

The conflict has not only affected consumer behaviour but also investor confidence, leading to reduced investments in the Israeli tech sector and impacting high-tech unicorns ("Crucial math: Key economic implications of the Gaza conflict", 2024). The economic repercussions of the conflict extend beyond consumer markets to investments and key industries, highlighting the broader economic implications of the conflict on global businesses and markets ("Crucial math: Key economic implications of the Gaza conflict", 2024).

5.2 Limitations of the Study

The time constraints imposed on the completion of this research project posed a significant challenge, limiting the depth of data collection and literature review. While the research focused on quantitative research, dedicating additional time and resources to gather more comprehensive data and literature support would enhance the robustness of the findings. As a result of the restricted amount of time that was provided, the researcher was unable to include a greater number of respondents in the research. This limitation also reduced the amount of time that was available to identify the issues that were being researched and to monitor changes that occurred over a considerable amount of time. The

restricted time frame hindered the inclusion of a larger number of respondents and the ability to monitor changes over an extended period effectively. In particular, the researcher had a tough time locating literature evaluations on ethnocultural empathy, eWOM trust, attitude, subjective norms, perceived behavioural control, and boycott intentions, particularly those written by Malaysian academics. In spite of the fact that the majority of the historical literature that is being examined is regarded to be recent, there are not many recent evaluations that have been conducted on the correlation between ethnocultural empathy, eWOM trust, and boycott intention utilising TPB framework, particularly in the context of the conflict between Israel and Palestine. Because of this, the researcher's literature review is based on supporting literature from an earlier research. As a result of the limited amount of previous research that has been conducted on the topic, the researcher was required to develop a new typology. Recognising this as a variable in this context might be interpreted as a chance to pinpoint the knowledge gap and bring attention to the need for an additional area of research.

There is a possibility that responses bias and sample bias will be introduced into this research due to the use of self-reported measures and purposive sampling. Despite the fact that the sample is selected in accordance with the ethnicity statistics presented by Statisca (2023), the researcher's judgement may be influenced by factors such as age, occupation, location, level of education, and income level. The population of respondents might scarcely be described, and respondents could be biassed in their responses to the questionnaire. These are just two of the drawbacks that are associated with online surveys and purposive sampling procedures. On the other hand, taking into consideration the limited amount of time that is available and the number of responses that are required to be established as a sample for this research, this is the method and platform that might be considered the most appropriate for this research.

Due to the fact that the questionnaires used to gather data by the researchers were taken from other researchers that were connected to this research objective, the next constraint is that the questionnaires may not be responsive, and the results may not be accurate. Additionally, there is a possibility that some of the respondents may have the perception

that the information may violate their privacy. This may have an impact on the outcome of the survey because they may choose not to engage in the survey openly. As a result of their packed schedules, the majority of the respondents only spend a short amount of time filling out the questionnaires. Given the nature of this problem, the researchers are constrained in their ability to acquire information that is more trustworthy in relation to the research.

5.3 Recommendations for Future Research

To address the limitations posed by the current time constraints in this research project, hindering the investigation of a research problem and tracking changes over time, future researchers may consider adopting a longitudinal research design. Using a longitudinal design allows for the research to be able to track change patterns over time. This allows for a more accurate and comprehensive result that is reflective of the actual boycott intentions in Malaysia. Additionally, this type of research will be more valuable to offer to the businesses. The Malaysian Cohort Study Experience highlighted the benefits of a longitudinal study in tracking changes over time and providing more accurate results (Noraidatulakma Abdullah et al., 2021)

Furthermore, enhancing the practicality of research findings can be achieved by diversifying and expanding the sample size to improve external validity. It is possible to strengthen the external validity of the research by using samples that are larger and more diverse. This will also ensure that the findings may be applicable to a variety of people and contexts. Research on attrition in longitudinal studies emphasises the significance of diversifying and expanding sample sizes to improve external validity and applicability to various contexts (You et al., 2022). Future researchers can enhance the practicality of research findings by using various recruitment methods to reach a more diverse pool of

participants such as using different platforms, advertising in various departments, and collecting data at different times and days ("How can you balance the need for a large sample size with diversity in Higher Education research?", n.d.; Noraidatulakma Abdullah et al., 2021). Other than that, establishing clear inclusion and exclusion criteria to introduce a probability-based sampling method, enhancing credibility and external validation of the research ("What you need to know about convenience sampling", 2023). Instead of relying exclusively on self-reports from the respondents who participated in the research, future researchers can implement objective measurements that are quantifiable, such as sales numbers or online engagement rates, in order to reduce the amount of response biases that would otherwise be present. Additionally, future researchers have the opportunity to investigate additional moderators, such as cultural background or patterns of usage of social media, which can provide a more thorough knowledge of consumer behaviours in connection to boycotts (Tariki & Shukor, 2019). Providing marketers and policymakers with relevant information can be accomplished by analysing the ways in which various cultural values influence the intention to boycott or the ways in which interactions on social media shape eWOM trust. The variances in consumer attributes, such as personality traits, can also be analysed by future researchers in order to identify whether or not particular psychological dispositions can be connected to increased susceptibility to boycotting.

In addition to that, it is possible that future research would take into consideration the possibility of translating the questionnaire into a variety of languages. The languages spoken in Malaysia consist of the official language, Bahasa Melayu, as well as Mandarin Chinese, which is considered one of the most significant languages in the country. Considering the diverse cultural and linguistic makeup of the nation, it is crucial to construct the questionnaire in many language versions. By recreating the questionnaire, the likelihood of a higher participation rate can be enhanced. This is because when the questionnaire is provided in the respondent's mother tongue, they are more inclined to complete the questionnaire.

5.4 Summary

5.4.1 Conclusion

The findings and analysis of the research highlight an important conclusion: attitudes and perceived behavioural control significantly influence customers' intentions to boycott products associated with Israel. The model can explain almost 80% of the variation in boycott intentions, according to the model summary table that showed that the coefficient of determination is 0.797, which means the independent variables can explain 79.7% of the variability in boycott intentions. Furthermore, the results of the multiple regression model demonstrated that consumer intentions to boycott are highly influenced by the independent variables of attitude and perceived behavioural control. Within the context of the relationship between perceived behavioural control and boycott intentions, the research also discovered that ethnocultural empathy and eWOM trust have a significant moderating influence.

By examining the ways in which attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control influence boycott intentions, along with the moderating effect of eWOM trust and ethnocultural empathy, these findings add to the expanding number of literature body on consumer behaviour and the process of decision-making and thus, this have theoretical significance for academics. The findings also offer insights for businesses aiming to market their goods effectively to customers. They can achieve this by crafting customised marketing plans tailored to the essential needs and preferences of their consumers. It is important to modify these strategies in order to cater to the specific demands and tastes of the target audience.

Overall, this research project has successfully achieved its objective of exploring and investigating multiple factors that impact individuals' intentions to boycott in relation to

the Israel-Palestine issue. However, in addition to the characteristics that are covered in this research, there are still a great deal of other factors that influence behaviour. Some of these aspects include ethnocultural empathy, trust in eWOM, attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control. As a result, additional research might be conducted on the other aspects in order to investigate the connection between other factors and boycott intentions in light of the conflict between Israel and Palestine.

In light of the conflict between Israel and Palestine, the perceived behavioural control on boycott is the most powerful element that determines boycott intentions, The perceived behavioural control, considered an independent variable in this research, has the most significant influence on the intention to engage in a boycott. The second aspect that has a significant impact is the attitude towards boycotts. There is little doubt that adding attitude as an independent variable to this research will raise the intention to boycott. Lastly, there are the subjective norms that are associated with boycotts. Taking into consideration the conflict between Israel and Palestine, it has the least amount of impact on the boycott intention.

Businesses associated with Israel and Palestine, along with marketers of Israel-related products, can enhance their marketing strategies and minimise the risk of boycotts by gaining a comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing boycott intention. The results of this research can serve as a comprehensive framework for businesses and organisations involved with Israel and Palestine, enabling them to prevent consumer boycotts.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A TABLE 4.3

Correlations

		AvgATT	AvgSN	AvgPBC	AvgBI
AvgATT	Pearson Correlation	1	.905**	.451**	.534**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		<.001	<.001	<.001
	Sum of Squares and Cross-products	206.917	178.850	89.150	109.167
	Covariance	.692	.598	.298	.365
	N	300	300	300	300
AvgSN	Pearson Correlation	.905**	1	.526**	.587**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001		<.001	<.001
	Sum of Squares and Cross-products	178.850	188.730	99.270	114.500
	Covariance	.598	.631	.332	.383
	N	300	300	300	300
AvgPBC	Pearson Correlation	.451**	.526**	1	.879**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	<.001		<.001
	Sum of Squares and Cross-products	89.150	99.270	188.730	171.500
	Covariance	.298	.332	.631	.574
	N	300	300	300	300
AvgBI	Pearson Correlation	.534**	.587**	.879**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	<.001	<.001	
	Sum of Squares and Cross-products	109.167	114.500	171.500	201.667
	Covariance	.365	.383	.574	.674
	N	300	300	300	300

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

APPENDIX B TABLE 4.4

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.893[a]	.797	.795	.372	.797	387.660	3	296	<.001

a. Predictors: (Constant), AvgPBC, AvgATT, AvgSN

APPENDIX C TABLE 4.5

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	160.752	3	53.584	387.660	<.001[b]
	Residual	40.914	296	.138		
	Total	201.667	299			

a. Dependent Variable: AvgBI

b. Predictors: (Constant), AvgPBC, AvgATT, AvgSN

APPENDIX D TABLE 4.6

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	(Constant)	-.195	.127		-1.531	.127	-.445	.055
	AvgATT	.125	.061	.127	2.060	.040	.006	.245
	AvgSN	.057	.067	.055	.847	.398	-.075	.188
	AvgPBC	.820	.032	.793	25.697	<.001	.757	.882

a. Dependent Variable: AvgBI

APPENDIX E TABLE 4.7

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	(Constant)	1.328	.525		2.527	.012	.294	2.362
	AvgATT	.569	.284	.576	2.004	.046	.010	1.128
	AvgSN	.047	.300	.045	.156	.876	-.543	.636
	AvgPBC	.233	.165	.225	1.408	.160	-.093	.559
	AvgEWOMT	-.422	.131	-.410	-3.221	.001	-.680	-.164
	EWOMTATT	-.093	.073	-.633	-1.280	.202	-.236	.050
	EWOMTSN	.026	.076	.170	.341	.734	-.123	.174
	EWOMTPBC	.119	.038	.673	3.132	.002	.044	.193

a. Dependent Variable: AvgBI

APPENDIX F TABLE 4.8

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	(Constant)	2.612	.582		4.485	<.001	1.466	3.758
	AvgATT	-.098	.242	-.099	-.405	.686	-.574	.378
	AvgSN	-.004	.281	-.004	-.016	.987	-.558	.549
	AvgPBC	.376	.185	.363	2.026	.044	.011	.741
	AvgEE	-.934	.192	-.778	-4.868	<.001	-1.312	-.556
	EEATT	.072	.076	.370	.946	.345	-.078	.222
	EESN	.022	.088	.110	.246	.806	-.151	.194
	EEPBC	.146	.058	.738	2.512	.013	.032	.260

a. Dependent Variable: AvgBI

APPENDIX G CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK
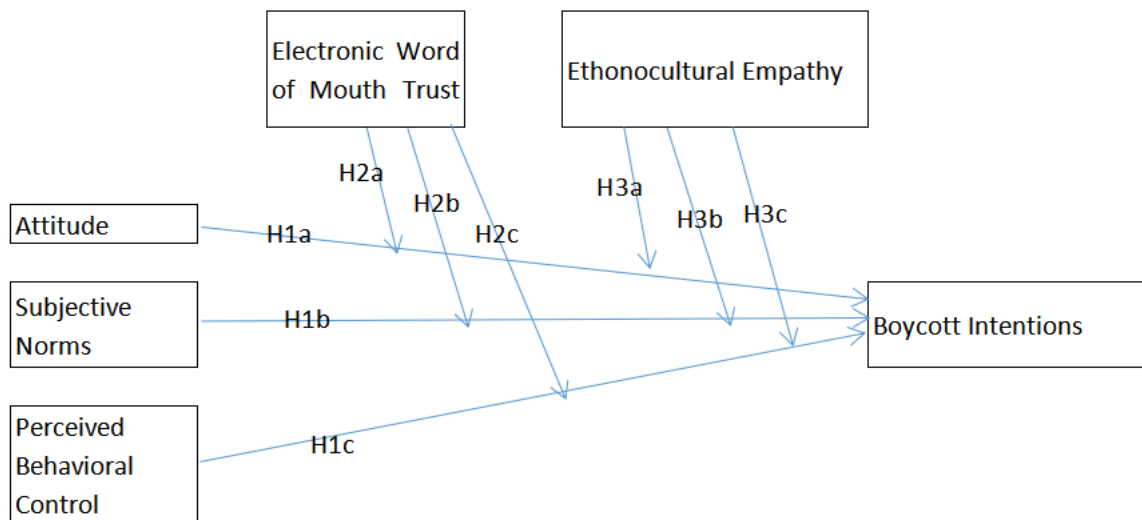
APPENDIX H QUESTIONNAIRE

Boycott Intention Survey

Dear Respondent,

I am Soong Ru Yee, currently pursuing my Masters in Business Administration at Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR) Sg. Long campus.

This study is in fulfillment for my postgraduate research project in UTAR. The purpose of this study is to understand how ethnocultural empathy and electronic word of mouth trust shapes consumer boycott intentions.

Please complete all the questions. The estimated time needed to complete this questionnaire is around 10 minutes. All of your responses will be confidential and will only be used for academic purposes.

If you have any inquiries, please do not hesitate to contact me at soongruyee@1utar.my.

Your participation is greatly appreciated!

Thank you.

Switch account

* Indicates required question

Email *

Your email

Please note that by providing your personal data to UTAR, you had consented and *
agreed for your personal data to be used for academic purpose, your responses
will be kept PRIVATE and CONFIDENTIAL.

○ I hereby understands, consent and agree to notice above.

○ I disagree, my personal data will not be processed.

`SECTION A : DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Please select the answer that is most applicable to you.

Gender *

○ Female

○ Male

○ Prefer not to say

Age *

○ 18 - 25 years old

○ 26 - 35 years old

○ 36 - 45 years old

○ 46 - 55 years old

○ Above 56 years old

Ethnicity *

○ Malay

○ Chinese

○ Indian

○ Other:

Education level *

○ High school

○ Diploma

○ Bachelor's degree

○ Master's degree

○ Doctoral degree

○ Other: _____

Personal income level (monthly) *

○ Less than RM2,000

○ RM2,000 - RM3,999

○ RM4,000 - RM5,999

○ RM6,000 - RM7,999

○ RM8,000 - RM9,999

○ RM10,000 and above

Household income level (monthly) *

○ Less than RM4,000

○ RM5,000 - RM5,999

○ RM6,000 - RM7,999

○ RM8,000 - RM9,999

○ RM10,000 - RM11,999

○ RM12,000 - RM13,999

○ RM14,000 and above

Occupation *

○ Student

○ Employed

○ Self-employed

○ Unemployed

○ Retired

○ Other:

Location

○ Johor

○ Kedah

○ Kelantan

○ Melaka

○ Negeri Sembilan

○ Pahang

○ Perak

○ Pulau Pinang

○ Sabah

○ Sarawak

○ Selangor

○ Terengganu

○ Kuala Lumpur

○ Labuan

○ Putrajaya

SECTION B

Please select appropriate responses that best describe your response to the prompt.

Please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement on the following statements from 1 (Strongly disagree) to 5 (Strongly agree) with regards to the prompt. Kindly select the answer according to your preference.

Ethnocultural Empathy
This section consist of three (3) parts:
Part 1: Empathic feeling and expression
Part 2: Empathic perspective taking and acceptance of cultural differences
Part 3: Empathic Awareness

Empathic feeling and expression *

	Strongly Disagree (1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	Strongly Agree (5)
I feel disturbed when other people experience misfortunes due to their racial or ethnic backgrounds.	○	○	○	○	○
When I know my friends are treated unfairly because of their racial or ethnic backgrounds, I speak up for them.	○	○	○	○	○

When other people struggle with racial or ethnic oppression, I share their frustration.	○	○	○	○	○
I share the anger of those who face injustice because of their racial and ethnic backgrounds.	○	○	○	○	○
I feel supportive of people of other racial and ethnic groups, if I think they are being taken advantage of.	○	○	○	○	○
When I see people who come from a different racial or ethnic background succeed in the public arena, I share their pride.	○	○	○	○	○
I express my concern about discrimination to people from other racial or ethnic groups	○	○	○	○	○

I am touched by movies or books about discrimination issues faced by racial or ethnic groups other than my own.	○	○	○	○	○
When I interact with people from other racial or ethnic backgrounds, I show my appreciation of their cultural norms.	○	○	○	○	○
I care if people make racist statements against other racial or ethnic groups.	○	○	○	○	○
I am likely to participate in events that promote equal rights for people of all racial and ethnic backgrounds.	○	○	○	○	○

Empathic perspective taking and acceptance of cultural differences *

	Strongly Disagree (1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	Strongly Agree (5)
It is easy for me to put myself in the shoes of someone who is racially and/or ethnically different from me.	○	○	○	○	○
I feel comfortable when I am around a significant number of people who are racially/ethnically different than me.	○	○	○	○	○
I understand why people want to keep their indigenous racial or ethnic cultural traditions instead of trying to fit into the mainstream.	○	○	○	○	○
I am not annoyed when people do not speak standard English.	○	○	○	○	○
I am not annoyed when people do not speak standard Bahasa Melayu.	○	○	○	○	○

I am not irritated when people of different racial or ethnic backgrounds speak their language around me.	○	○	○	○	○
I know a lot of information about important social and political events of racial and ethnic groups other than my own.	○	○	○	○	○
I am patient when communicating with people from other racial or ethnic backgrounds regardless of how well they speak English.	○	○	○	○	○
I am patient when communicating with people from other racial or ethnic backgrounds regardless of how well they speak Bahasa Melayu.	○	○	○	○	○
I understand why people of different racial or ethnic backgrounds enjoy wearing traditional clothing.	○	○	○	○	○

It is easy for me to relate to stories in which people talk about racial or ethnic discrimination they experience in their day to day lives.	○	○	○	○	○
I seek opportunities to speak with individuals of other racial or ethnic backgrounds about their experiences.	○	○	○	○	○
It is easy for me to understand what it would feel like to be a person of another racial or ethnic background other than my own.	○	○	○	○	○

Empathic Awareness *

	Strongly Disagree (1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	Strongly Agree (5)
I am aware of institutional barriers (e.g., restricted opportunities for job promotion) that discriminate against racial or ethnic groups other than my own	○	○	○	○	○
I am aware of how society differentially treats racial or ethnic groups other than my own.	○	○	○	○	○
I can see how other racial or ethnic groups are systematically oppressed in our society.	○	○	○	○	○
I know what it feels like to be the only person of a certain race or ethnicity in a group of people.	○	○	○	○	○

I can relate to the frustration that some people feel about having fewer opportunities due to their racial or ethnic backgrounds.	○	○	○	○	○
I recognize that the media often portrays people based on racial or ethnic stereotypes.	○	○	○	○	○
I share the anger of people who are victims of hate crimes (e.g., intentional violence because of race or ethnicity).	○	○	○	○	○
When I hear people make racist jokes, I tell them I am offended even though they are not referring to my racial or ethnic group	○	○	○	○	○

Electronic Word of Mouth (eWOM) Trust *

	Strongly Disagree (1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	Strongly Agree (5)
I think the key opinion leaders on websites and social media are trustworthy.	○	○	○	○	○
I think the reviews posted by the key opinion leaders on websites and social media are accurate	○	○	○	○	○
Before making a purchase, I am willing to depend on the key opinion leaders on websites and social media.	○	○	○	○	○
Overall, I trust the key opinion leaders on websites and social media.	○	○	○	○	○

Boycott Intentions

This section consist of four (4) parts:
Part 1: Attitude towards boycotts
Part 2: Subjective norms on boycotts
Part 3: Perceived behavioural control of boycotts
Part 4: Boycott Intentions

Attitude towards boycotts *

	Strongly Disagree (1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	Strongly Agree (5)
Boycotting Israel-related products is beneficial	O	O	O	O	O
Boycotting Israel-related products is good	O	O	O	O	O
Boycotting Israel-related products is favorable	O	O	O	O	O
I support to boycott Israel-related products	O	O	O	O	O

Subjective norms on boycotts *

	Strongly Disagree (1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	Strongly Agree (5)
People close to me think I should boycott Israel-related products	O	O	O	O	O
People who are important to me would not approve of purchase of Israel-related products	O	O	O	O	O
People close to me think I should not buy Israel-related products	O	O	O	O	O
People close to me will look down on me if I buy Israel-related products	O	O	O	O	O

Perceived behavioural control of boycotts *

	Strongly Disagree (1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	Strongly Agree (5)
Whether to boycott is entirely within my control	○	○	○	○	○
I think there are enough alternatives to replace Israel-related products	○	○	○	○	○
I think there is no problem in replacing Israel-related products with other things	○	○	○	○	○
I have the recourse and the knowledge to buy alternative products	○	○	○	○	○

Boycott Intentions *

	Strongly Disagree (1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	Strongly Agree (5)
I would feel guilty if I bought a Israel-related product	○	○	○	○	○
I would never buy a Israel-related food product	○	○	○	○	○
Whenever possible, I avoid buying Israel-related products	○	○	○	○	○
I do not like the idea of owning Israel-related products	○	○	○	○	○
If two products were equal in quality, but one was Israel-related and one was not, I would pay more for the product that is not Israel-related.	○	○	○	○	○