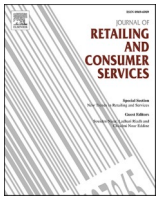
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Relationships among consumer innovativeness, learning, and global product purchases: Store manager perspectives in retailing

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ABSTRACT

Our study aims to provide a new perspective on the relationship between consumer innovativeness (i.e., social, functional, cognitive, and hedonic) and global purchases by considering consumers' global product learning and store managers' interactions with consumers. Using structural equation modeling on data from 500 Japanese consumers, our findings reveal that global product learning fully mediates the impact of diverse aspects of consumer innovativeness (excluding the non-significant functional sub-dimension) on consumers' global product purchase behavior. Additionally, we highlight the critical role of store managers in influencing consumer behavior toward global products by demonstrating that store managers' interactions with consumers strengthen the effect of consumers' global product learning on their purchase behavior. Our results offer significant insights into the dynamics of consumer innovativeness and the impact of store managers on global product purchases, thereby filling a gap in the retailing and marketing literature.

1. Introduction

Globalization has inevitably led to the emergence of global products worldwide (Fazli-Salehi et al., 2021; Rodrigo et al., 2023). The international trade value of exported goods surged to approximately USD 24.9 trillion in 2022, a significant increase from approximately USD 6.45 trillion in 2000 (Statista, 2023a). For example, Kaldi (Camel Coffee Group, 2022a; Kaldi Coffee Farm, 2022) is a renowned Japanese retailer recognized for its extensive range of coffee products sourced from various regions. Kaldi differentiates itself by setting up stands outside its stores where customers are offered complimentary coffee samples, allowing them to experience diverse flavors. Additionally, Kaldi emphasizes in-store interactions between employees and customers, providing professional descriptions of their latest products (Camel Coffee Group, 2022b). This unique sales strategy distinguishes Kaldi from its competitors in the coffee market and has contributed to the opening of numerous stores, growing from a single retail store in 1986 to 487 stores by 2022 (Camel Coffee Group, 2022c). This case underscores the growing demand among consumers for new global products and highlights the significance of the learning process associated with these products as a key step in the purchasing journey.

The consumption of global products represents a rapid shift away from local consumption practices (Kim et al., 2022; Micevski et al., 2019; Steenkamp and De Jong, 2010). Global products, often associated with innovative and progressive items in contrast to local alternatives, tend to attract consumers seeking innovativeness and stimulation. The influence of innovativeness on trial behavior is particularly pronounced for newer products. Similarly, early researchers underscored the positive impact of individual innovativeness on attitudes toward global products, given their novel characteristics (Park et al., 2007). In recent years, scholars have investigated the effect of individual innovativeness on shaping new consumption experiences across various domains, including digital devices and app usage (Cudjoe et al., 2024; Hong et al., 2017), facial recognition payment systems (Hwang et al., 2024), and 3D printed fashion products (Lyu et al., 2023). Despite the growing body of research on innovativeness in consumer behavior—which recognizes its significant role in the new product or service adoption—few studies have explored consumers' purchase behavior regarding global products as new consumption experiences that require learning processes.

We identify gaps in the literature on consumer innovativeness, specifically by focusing on consumers' purchasing behavior for global products. First, previous studies have predominantly examined how consumer innovativeness positively influences the adoption of newly introduced products within specific industries (Al-Jundi et al., 2019;

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Chao et al., 2013), technology-driven products (Hong et al., 2017; Lyu et al., 2023), and digital services in the hospitality sector (Hwang et al., 2020, 2024; Sarmah et al., 2017). However, there is limited exploration of how consumer innovativeness affects the acceptance of global products as new consumption experiences exist. While the association of global products with novelty and uniqueness is well-established—owing to their origins in diverse countries—a notable scarcity of research investigating the direct impact of consumer innovativeness on the willingness to accept these global products exists.

Second, as emphasized by Steenkamp and De Jong (2010), consumers who prefer global products may be viewed as innovative individuals, as global products represent fundamentally new phenomena undergoing rapid change. However, consumers often perceive risks and show reluctance to buy products from other countries owing to product uncertainty (Wang et al., 2018). This underscores the importance of comprehending the learning process involved in enhancing information and expertise about global products. Such understanding is crucial for reducing the perceived risks associated with engaging in new consumption experiences through learning (Al-Jundi et al., 2019), information searching (Li et al., 2021), and education (Peng and Li, 2021; Steils, 2021). However, existing research does not sufficiently consider the role of the consumer learning process in elucidating the relationship between consumer innovativeness and their purchase behavior regarding global products.

Third, new and advanced technologies—such as social networks (Al-Jundi et al., 2019), online sales channels (Kim et al., 2022), artificial intelligence (AI)-powered chatbots (Jan et al., 2023), and ChatGPT (Kim et al., 2023) —have rapidly changed how consumers communicate, while personal interactions with store personnel serve to persuade and captivate them (Ma and Kim, 2022; Nakamori et al., 2024). Japan, the focus of our research, is a country where physical stores remain a preference over e-commerce for purchasing food and daily essentials among consumers. Approximately 60% of Japanese consumers prefer shopping in brick-and-mortar stores, valuing the opportunity to physically perceive and test products before making a purchase (Statista, 2023b). In 2023, the online share of Japan's retail sector was approximately 13.7% of total sales (ECDB, 2023), which further supports the predominant reliance on offline channels. These statistics highlight the critical role of both tangible and intangible information in Japanese consumers' purchase decisions, emphasizing the role of personalized interpersonal interactions as supportive communication tools.

From this standpoint, store managers can act as key figures in delivering professional and in-depth information to consumers, especially regarding relatively unfamiliar global products. Alm and Hultman (2023) suggest that store managers not only influence consumers' purchase behavior but also play a vital role in sustainable communication within physical retail spaces. However, existing literature on offline retail settings explores the impact of frontline employees on consumer satisfaction (Lucia-Palacios et al., 2020), reciprocal behavior intention (Errajaa et al., 2022), word of mouth (WOM), (Ma and Kim, 2022), store image (Nakamori et al., 2024), and sales performance (Zheng et al., 2023). Moreover, limited studies investigating store managers have offered insights into their skills or qualities in crafting sales strategies for employees (Luu, 2020), boosting employees' service performance and consumer loyalty (Jung et al., 2021), or leveraging their leadership to increase salespeople's self-efficacy (Vieira et al., 2018). Consequently, a gap in managerial guidelines exists on how close communication with store managers during the shopping process influences consumers' purchase behavior.

Against this backdrop, our study aims to provide a new perspective on the relationship between consumer innovativeness (i.e., social, hedonic, functional, and cognitive) and global purchases by incorporating consumers' global product learning and store managers' interactions. Our research underscores the mediating role of consumer global product learning in the impact of consumer innovativeness on global product purchase behavior, except for the functional sub-dimension, which is not statistically significant. Furthermore, it confirms the role of store managers' interactions with consumers in enhancing the effect of consumer global product learning on global product purchase behavior.

Specifically, this research contributes to the literature in two key ways. First, to address the first and second limitations identified in previous studies, we explore the mechanism underlying the relationship between consumer innovativeness and global product purchase behavior, with global product learning serving as a mediator. Based on Rogers' (2003) diffusion of innovation theory, we provide initial insights into how different facets of consumer innovativeness shape the learning process for global products and subsequent purchases in shopping malls.

Second, to address the third limitation of prior research, we examine the moderating effect of store managers' interactions with consumers as a valuable source of information. These interactions offer additional insights into global products (which may be perceived as uncertain from both informational and experiential perspectives)and provide consumers with memorable communication experiences, ultimately magnifying the influence of learning about global products on their purchasing decisions. Unlike prior literature, which has mostly explored the role of frontline employees in enriching the consumers' shopping experiences (Amenuvor et al., 2022; Lucia-Palacios et al., 2020), this study is the first to investigate how interactions between store managers and consumers moderate the effect of consumers' global product learning on their global product purchases.

2. Theoretical background and hypotheses

2.1. Consumer innovativeness in global product purchase behavior

In our increasingly globalized marketplace, consumers are presented with opportunities to engage with numerous global products. With the growing prevalence of global products in the retail sector, maximizing their value has become essential for the sustainable growth of retail firms and the internationalization of global brands. Previous international marketing studies have focused extensively on sociocultural perspectives to understand consumers' attitudes or behaviors toward global products and brands, including boycott campaigns (Kim et al., 2022), consumer affinity (Fazli-Salehi et al., 2021), country of origin (Rodrigo et al., 2023), and cultural identity (Hong et al., 2023; Micevski et al., 2019). However, we assert that, surprisingly, despite companies recognizing the importance of addressing consumer factors from a personal standpoint for the successful diffusion of new products (Al-Jundi et al., 2019) and services (Sapic et al., 2019) or technologies (Hwang et al., 2024; Lyu et al., 2023), the impact of consumer innovativeness has not been adequately investigated concerning global products.

Consumer innovativeness is intricately tied to the consumption and experience of newness (Steenkamp and De Jong, 2010), and predicts consumers' perceptions, attitudes, and behavioral intentions toward specific innovations (Zhang et al., 2024). Given that highly innovative consumers are particularly open to fresh trends and changes and possess a strong desire for novelty (Rašković et al., 2016), retailers can leverage consumer innovativeness to effectively introduce new global products to the broader market. Consequently, given the significance of global products as a competitive advantage for differentiating retail stores (Ma and Kim, 2022), this study underscores the existing gap in the literature concerning the managerial implications of whether and how consumer innovativeness influences consumers' global product purchase behavior.

Following this line of reasoning, Table 1 outlines key empirical studies on the relationship between consumer innovativeness and new consumption experiences, including the adoption of innovation. While the sub-dimensions of consumer innovativeness and the research context are diverse, these studies have consistently shown that consumer innovativeness is a pivotal antecedent in increasing positive attitudes and behaviors toward novel products or services in particular industries,

Table 1
Empirical study on the relationships between consumer innovativeness and new consumption experiences.

Study	Study context	Theoretical perspective	Aspects of consumer innovativeness	Explanatory mechanism		Outcome variable	Key findings related to our study
				Mediator(s)	Moderator(s)		
Im et al. (2003)	Survey of 296 households in the US in the context of new products in the electronics category	N/A	Innate consumer innovativeness	N/T	Personal characteristics (i.e., age, education level, income, length of residence)	New product adoption behavior	• Innate consumer innovativeness directly increases new product adoption. • Personal characteristics do not have a significant moderating effect.
Jin and Suh (2005)	Survey of 168 South Korean female customers in the context of a private label brand	Theory of reasoned action	Consumer innovativeness	Purchase behavior attitude	N/T	Purchase behavior purchase intention	• While purchase behavior attitude partially mediates the impact of consumer innovativeness on purchase behavior purchase intention in the food category, it fully mediates the same path in the home appliance category.
Im et al. (2007)	Survey of 147 American customers in the context of new product (service) adoption	N/A	Innate consumer innovativeness	Vicarious innovativeness (i.e., modeling, exposure to ads, and engagement in WOM)		New product (service) adoption behavior	• Innate consumer innovativeness does not directly influence adoption behavior but indirectly affects new service adoption behavior through engagement in WOM and modeling.
Park et al. (2007)	Survey of 222 South Korean female students in the context of foreign fashion products	N/A	Fashion innovativeness	N/T	Internet innovativeness	Attitude (toward purchasing a foreign fashion product)	• Internet innovativeness strengthens the positive impact of fashion innovativeness on favorable attitudes.
Cowart et al. (2008)	Survey of 741 American students in multiple industries[a]	Approach/avoidance theory	Consumer innovativeness	Perceived self-congruence; Perceived risk; Satisfaction	N/T	Behavioral intention (new products)	• Consumer innovativeness increases behavioral intention through self-congruence and satisfaction but decreases behavioral intention through perceived risk.
Steenkamp and De Jong (2010)	Survey of 243 American customers in multiple industries[b]	Consumer culture theory	Consumer innovativeness	N/T	N/T	Attitudes toward global products	• Consumer innovativeness directly increases attitudes toward global products.
Hong et al. (2017)	Survey of 276 Taiwanese customers in the context of the smartwatch industry	Multiple theories applied[c]	Consumer innovativeness	Hedonic value; Utilitarian value	N/A	Continuance intention to use a smartwatch	• Consumer innovativeness increases the continuance intention to use a smartwatch through hedonic and utilitarian value.
Sarmah et al. (2017)	Survey of 152 consumers in the tourism sector	Service dominant logic	Consumer innovativeness	Degree of creation	N/T	Adoption intention (for using new services)	• Consumer innovativeness increases adoption intention for using new services via the degree of creation.
Konuk (2018)	Survey of 274 Turkish female customers in the organic food industry	N/A	Consumer innovativeness	N/T	N/T	Purchase intention: willingness to pay	• Consumer innovativeness increases purchase intention and willingness to pay.
Al-Jundi et al. (2019)	Survey of 438 university students in the United Arab Emirates regarding new products	N/A	Consumer innovativeness	Perceived value; Learning process	N/T	New product purchase intention	• Consumer innovativeness increases new product purchase intention through the learning process and perceived value.
Sapic et al. (2019)	Survey of 535 Croatia and Serbian customers in the fast food industry	Theory of reasoned action; Theory of planned behavior	Personal innovativeness	Product evaluation; Behavioral intention	N/T	Willingness to use new fast food services	• Personal innovativeness positively affects foreign restaurant evaluations and intentions but negatively impacts domestic restaurant

(*continued on next page*)

Table 1 (*continued*)

Study	Study context	Theoretical perspective	Aspects of consumer innovativeness	Explanatory mechanism		Outcome variable	Key findings related to our study
				Mediator(s)	Moderator(s)		
							evaluations and intentions.
Hwang et al. (2020)	Survey of 427 South Korean customers in the context of a robotic restaurant	N/A	Motivated consumer innovativeness (i.e., social hedonic, cognitive, and social)	Overall image of a robotic restaurant	Product knowledge	WOM intention	• Consumer innovativeness (except for the social sub-dimension) increases WOM intention through the overall image of a robotic restaurant. • Product knowledge strengthens the relationship between overall image and WOM intention.
Lee (2023)	Survey of 159 South Korean and 266 Chinese Gen Z consumers in the context of a FinTech adoption	N/A	Social innovativeness; Hedonic innovativeness	Technostress (i.e., uncertainty, invasion, and complexity)	N/T	FinTech usage intention o	• Social innovativeness decreases the three dimensions of technostress and increases FinTech usage intention for all samples. • The impact of hedonic innovativeness on usage intention is insignificant for all samples, but it has different effects on the three dimensions of technostress for each individual sample.
Lyu et al. (2023)	Survey of 326 customers in the context of 3D printed fashion products	Unified theory of acceptance and use of technology	Personal innovativeness	Technology innovativeness; Perceived Security risk; Performance expectancy; Attitude	3D printed fashion innovativeness	Intention to purchase	• Personal and technology innovativeness have a positive indirect effect on purchase intention through performance expectations and attitudes toward 3D-printed fashion products. • The innovativeness of 3D-printed fashion products strengthens the indirect effect of personal innovativeness on perceived security risk.
Hwang et al. (2024)	Survey of 345 South Korean customers and 338 US customers in the restaurant industry	Extended theory of planned behavior	Motivated consumer innovativeness (i.e., function, hedonic, cognitive, and social)	Attitude	Cultural differences (between South Korea and the US)	Usage intention of a facial recognition payment system	• The effects of the sub-dimensions of consumer innovativeness on the attitude that increases behavioral intention vary between the two countries. • Cultural differences moderate the impact of functional, hedonic, and social motivations on attitude.
Our study	Survey of 500 Japanese consumers regarding global products in the category of FMCGs	Diffusion of innovation theory; Learning theory; Social exchange theory	Hedonic innovativeness; Functional innovativeness; Cognitive innovativeness; Social innovativeness	(Consumers') global product learning	Store managers' interaction with consumers	Global product purchase behavior	• Consumers' global product learning fully mediates the impact of diverse aspects of consumer innovativeness (excluding the non-significant functional sub-dimension) on their global product purchase behavior. • Store managers' interactions with consumers strengthen the effect of consumers' global product learning on their global product purchase behavior.

Note: N/T = not tested; N/A = not applicable.
FMCGs = fast-moving consumer goods.
[a] Home entertainment equipment, music, and handheld devices.
[b] The products include the product domain lifestyle, entertainment, home furnishings, food, clothing, and brands.

[c] Diffusion of innovation theory, technology acceptance model, expectation confirmation theory, and flow theory.

including new products (Al-Jundi et al., 2019; Im et al., 2003; Lyu et al., 2023), premium organic food (Konuk, 2018), private label brands (Jin and Suh, 2005), smart devices (Hong et al., 2017; Sarmah et al., 2017), and automation-based services (Hwang et al., 2020, 2024).

Additionally, the studies listed in Table 1 have expanded the connection between consumer innovativeness and adoption behavior by conceptualizing various explanatory mechanisms as mediating and moderating factors. Specifically, the mediating variables encompass perceived overall image (Hwang et al., 2020), perceived self-congruence, perceived risk, satisfaction (Cowart et al., 2008), vicarious innovativeness (Im et al., 2007), technostress (Lee, 2023), perceived behavioral control, subjective norms, and attitude, (Hwang et al., 2024). As for the moderators, we examined domain-specific innovativeness (Lyu et al., 2023; Park et al., 2007), personal characteristics (Im et al., 2003; Im et al., 2007), and product knowledge (Hwang et al., 2020).

Although several studies offer theoretical insights into the various aspects of consumer innovativeness and its positive effects on consumers' new consumption experiences by adopting innovative things, research on whether and how consumer innovativeness impacts global product purchases remains lacking. Specifically, previous studies exploring the positive relationship between consumer innovativeness and global product adoption are outdated and primarily focus on categories such as laptop computers (Kim et al., 2011), fashion goods (Park et al., 2007), and various consumer products including lifestyle, home furnishings, entertainment, foods, clothing, and brands (Steenkamp and De Jong, 2010). Given the current market dominance of global products, it is evident that relevant and current research is now sparse.

Additionally, because consumers habitually and repeatedly purchase fast-moving consumer goods (FMCGs), leading to the establishment of fixed purchasing patterns and preferences, the process of acquiring information about globalized FMCGs (e.g., learning about the story behind a given product) becomes particularly crucial in capturing consumer attention, especially when compared to other global product categories. However, the role of the learning experience in the relationship between consumer innovativeness and purchase decisions of global products remains poorly understood. A notable exception is the work of Al-Jundi et al. (2019), which explores the significant and positive mediating role of the learning process between consumer innovativeness and the intention to purchase new products. However, Al-Jundi et al. (2019) primarily focus on the supply side of new products rather than on global products within the FMCG sector, which is the primary focus of our research.

2.2. Theory and conceptual framework

Drawing on the theory of innovation diffusion, we examine the boundary condition effect of store managers' interactions with consumers on the link between consumer innovativeness and global product purchase behavior (i.e., our baseline relationship) while investigating the consumer learning process. The theory of innovation diffusion offers insights into the complete process of innovation diffusion, from its inception to shaping user attitudes and ultimately impacting the choice to accept or decline a product or service (Lyu et al., 2023; Rogers, 2003; Zhang et al., 2024). Innovation diffusion follows a structured sequence, with innovations communicated through specific channels among members of a social system. Applied across diverse domains such as tourism and hospitality (Couture et al., 2015; Hwang et al., 2024), fashion (Lyu et al., 2023; Park et al., 2007), and retailing (Truong, 2013), this theory elucidates how individual innovativeness influences the acceptance or rejection of new ideas, concepts, and objects.

To explore the role of communication channels in bolstering consumers' adoption of global products, this study highlights the significance of interpersonal channels in the context of physical retail stores. As described by Rogers (2003), information on innovation diffusion follows two main paths of communication: external influences (e.g., TV, radio, magazines, newspapers, internet) and interpersonal networks (e.g., opinion leaders, family, peers, staff). Within this framework, we propose considering store managers as pivotal referents within interpersonal networks given their specialized expertise in stores, merchandise, employees, and customer management. Additionally, by applying the zone of intervention in learning theory, proficient individuals in specific fields can assist others in overcoming challenges in acquiring information (Al-Jundi et al., 2019; Peng and Li, 2021; Steils, 2021). Specifically, the blend of the diffusion of innovation and learning theories suggests that when customers face difficulties obtaining information about global products, individuals with prior knowledge of the products (such as store managers) can enhance the effectiveness of innovation learning behaviors.

Fig. 1 summarizes our arguments regarding global product purchases, indicating that: (1) consumers' global product learning can mediate the relationship between consumer innovativeness and purchase behavior, and (2) the impact of global product learning on purchase behavior can be influenced by interpersonal interactions between store managers and consumers. Building on Vandecasteele and Geuens (2010), who emphasize that existing measures of consumer innovativeness overlook the motivational sources for innovation adoption, we view consumer innovativeness as a multidimensional concept that includes hedonic, functional, social, and cognitive motives. Drawing on the diffusion of innovation theory, we propose the conceptualization of global product learning (i.e., the process of acquiring information about global products through communication channels; Al-Jundi et al., 2019) as a mediating variable to elucidate the direct relationship between various facets of consumer innovativeness and the purchase behavior of global products (H1 and H2).

Additionally, while existing research emphasizes the significant role of store managers in fostering in-store communication (Alm and Hultman, 2023; Arnold et al., 2019), their potential impact as interpersonal communication channels of consumer learning and purchasing experiences remains unexplored. Hence, we innovatively examine the role of interactions between store managers and consumers (i.e., consumers' social reactions involve sharing opinions and information about global products with store managers; Happ et al., 2021) as a moderating variable that enhances the impact of global product learning on purchase behavior (H3).

2.3. Hypotheses development

2.3.1. The direct effect of consumer innovativeness on global product purchases

Based on the fundamental structure of consumer innovativeness influencing the adoption of innovations (Al-Jundi et al., 2019; Lyu et al., 2023; Steenkamp and De Jong, 2010), we explore the critical role of diverse aspects of consumer innovativeness in global product purchases in the context of new consumption experiences. To better understand consumers' reasons for adopting innovative products or services, Vandecasteele and Geuens (2010) incorporate four motives (hedonic, functional, cognitive, and social) into the concept of consumer innovativeness, termed motivated consumer innovativeness. Hedonic innovativeness is driven by affective stimulation (e.g., excitement, pleasure). Functional innovativeness is propelled by utilitarian qualities (e.g., efficiency, convenience). Cognitive innovativeness is sparked by the desire for mental stimulation (e.g., exploration, and knowledge). Finally, social innovativeness is driven by the proactive desire for social distinction (e.g., status and sense of belonging) (Hwang et al., 2020, 2024; Vandecasteele and Geuens, 2010).

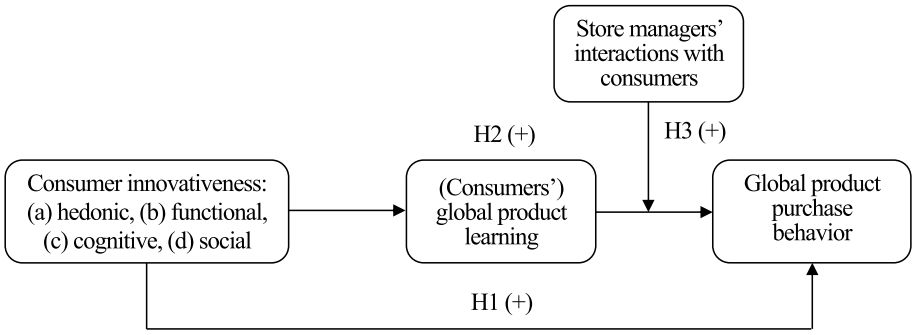


Fig. 1. Conceptual framework.
Note: H1, H2, and H3 indicate the direct, indirect, and moderating effects, respectively.

Following Vandecasteele and Geuens (2010), we examine four dimensions of consumer innovativeness when adopting global products. We posit that consumer innovativeness, across these four dimensions, directly increases consumers' global product purchase behavior. The rationale for this argument is as follows: As shown in Table 1, individual innovativeness directly strengthens attitudes toward purchasing global products (Park et al., 2007; Steenkamp and De Jong, 2010). Similarly, consumers with high domain-specific and general innovativeness tend to consider various places (i.e., retailers) for purchasing highly globalized products compared to less innovative consumers (Kim et al., 2011). Recent studies further support this by demonstrating that numerous aspects of consumer innovativeness positively and significantly influence consumers' adoption of innovative products and services, including attitudes (Hwang et al., 2024) and behavioral intentions (Lee, 2023).

These findings support the diffusion of innovation theory, which posits that highly innovative individuals are typically the earliest adopters of new consumption experiences, including those involving innovation. Therefore, we view purchasing and consuming global products as new consumption experiences in a competitive international marketplace. Therefore, we investigate the direct and positive effect of consumer innovativeness on the purchase behavior of global products. Consequently, we propose.

H1. Consumer innovativeness with (a) hedonic, (b) functional, (c) cognitive, and (d) social characteristics directly increases global product purchase behavior.

2.3.2. *Mediating effect of global product learning*

We extend H1 by considering the mediating effect of consumers' global product learning. According to the diffusion of innovation theory, innovators' learning behavior is a central characteristic of consumer innovativeness (Lyu et al., 2023; Rogers, 2003; Zhang et al., 2024). As innovators represent the first adoption group in society, it is crucial for them to proactively learn about new things before adopting innovations to reduce risks and uncertainty. Trialability, which refers to the ability to try innovative products before adoption, is a key factor influencing actual adoption behavior (Rogers, 2003). Thus, innovators prefer acquiring knowledge about innovations through various communication channels—such as Internet search engines and social networks (Al-Jundi et al., 2019), online sales channels (Kim et al., 2022), influencers within platforms (Akhtar et al., 2024), AI-powered chatbots (Jan et al., 2023), and ChatGPT (Kim et al., 2023)—before deciding to adopt a product or service. Applying these insights, we hypothesize that the process of learning about global products is crucial for innovative consumers when deciding to adopt these products as it diminishes the uncertainty associated with new goods as new consumption experiences.

We offer a further rationale to support the mediating role of the learning process regarding global products: First, the learning process is known as vicarious innovativeness, which involves acquiring information about innovations (Al-Jundi et al., 2019; Im et al., 2007) through active engagement in external communications and information-gathering activities about new products (Hirschman, 1980). According to Hirschman (1980), innovative consumers participate in vicarious innovativeness by integrating new information into their memories and using it to inform their decision-making. Similarly, Im et al. (2007) emphasize the indirect effect of the social learning process by elucidating the intervening role of vicarious innovativeness (i.e., engaging in impersonal and personal communication for learning) in the link between innate consumer innovativeness and the adoption of new products.

Second, drawing on the diffusion of innovation theory, the learning process is essential for individuals to acknowledge the existence of innovation. This learning process mediates consumers' intentions to purchase new products (Al-Jundi et al., 2019; Chao et al., 2013). As highlighted by Steenkamp and De Jong (2010), global products can be regarded as innovations owing to their rapid change and attributes such as novelty and uniqueness, which appeal to consumer innovativeness. However, global products often feature descriptions in foreign languages and are distributed by companies that may lack consumer awareness or familiarity, making it difficult for consumers to obtain relevant information. Similarly, Li et al. (2021) note that consumers frequently have limited knowledge about new products (i.e., organic food) because these products are recently introduced to the market, leading to insufficient reference information.

Consequently, innovative consumers actively seek information about the benefits and features of these products, shaping their attitudes and making purchasing decisions based on the acquired knowledge. Given these observations, it is anticipated that consumers must allocate sufficient time to comprehend and learn about global products before making purchase decisions (Al-Jundi et al., 2019; Peng and Li, 2021; Steils, 2021). However, to the best of our knowledge, the mediating effect of global product learning in the relationship between consumer innovativeness and global product purchase behavior has not been explored. Therefore, we propose.

H2. Consumer innovativeness with (a) hedonic, (b) functional, (c) cognitive, and (d) social characteristics indirectly increases global product purchase behavior through global product learning.

2.3.3. *Moderating effect of store managers' interaction with consumers*

Our study is novel because it highlights the vital role of store managers' interactive communication with consumers in predicting their global product purchases. Existing studies on the theory of innovation diffusion (Al-Jundi et al., 2019; Rogers, 2003; Zhang et al., 2024) consistently demonstrate that the process of innovation diffusion employs the active transmission of information through various communication channels to potential adopters. Adopters typically gain knowledge about a product via media-focused external influences and interpersonal channels.

Considering the distinct Japanese philosophy of hospitality, this

study emphasizes the impact of interpersonal channels, particularly the interactions between store managers and consumers. According to Nakamori et al. (2024), the Japanese concept of *Omotenashi*— the responsibility of the host to offer altruistic service to guests—represents a fundamental business practice. When applied in a retail setting, authentic service from sellers who prioritize consumer satisfaction over profit positively impacts buyers' perceptions of both the seller and the overall store image. Additionally, considering that Japanese consumers prefer offline retail stores for purchasing FMCGs over online options (Statista, 2023b), face-to-face interactions between sellers and buyers may be particularly crucial in fulfilling consumers' expectations and needs in Japan than in other countries. Hence, we perceive store managers as hosts with the primary responsibility for both successful store management and consumer relations. In Japan, store managers invest time and effort into understanding consumer preferences and delivering personalized, face-to-face services. Consequently, they play a crucial role in meeting consumers' informational needs, particularly for new consumption experiences.

We assert that personal interactions between store managers and consumers can positively moderate the impact of consumers' global product learning on their purchase behavior for the following reasons: First, interpersonal sources involving face-to-face interactions between individuals can reduce users' reluctance to adopt innovations by effectively addressing sociopsychological barriers (Rogers, 2003). According to social exchange theory (Park and Kim, 2023), altruism-centered research (Nakamori et al., 2024), and consumers' social experiences (Happ et al., 2021), interactions between store personnel and consumers can be understood through the norm of reciprocity. Under this principle, store managers can provide necessary information about global products to aid consumer learning and decision-making. Consequently, consumers tend to purchase global products if they perceive the information provided by store managers as beneficial. Therefore, direct interactions with bank staff knowledgeable about banking matters have proven to be a vital source of information for enhancing consumers' service adoption (Tran and Corner, 2016).

Second, close interactions with store managers can significantly support consumer learning about global products. According to learning theory, individuals struggling to acquire new information can benefit from the assistance, interaction, or education of those who are knowledgeable in the field (Al-Jundi et al., 2019; Park and Kim, 2023; Peng and Li, 2021; Steils, 2021). Given the key role of store managers in developing strategies for store assortments—including balancing local and global products (Jung et al., 2021)—consumers can enhance their knowledge of unfamiliar products through these interactions. Similarly, Hwang et al. (2020) found that the positive impact of the image of new automation-based services on WOM intention was amplified when individuals possessed high product knowledge. Applying this to our study, we anticipate that store managers' interactions with consumers will strengthen the influence of global product learning on consumer consumption behavior, as these interactions enhance consumers' understanding of and positive feelings toward global products. Consequently, we propose.

H3. Store managers' interactions with consumers strengthen the link between global product learning and purchase behavior.

3. Method

3.1. Sampling and data collection

The research context is the purchase behavior of Japanese consumers regarding global products in terms of FMCGs. To better understand trends in consumer behavior, we targeted products (e.g., food, pharmaceuticals, cosmetics, cigarettes, alcohol, and beverages) that are frequently bought and used at relatively lower prices because they are widely integrated into daily life in Japan and are thus essential for consumers. We distributed a questionnaire survey to 500 Japanese consumers utilizing a quota sampling method based on age and gender to identify and analyze particular segments within a larger population. We conducted this survey through an online market research corporation (Rakuten Insights) until 500 samples were collected; hence, information about the response rate was not applicable, and there were no missing data for our analysis. Table 2 contains a concise summary and distribution of the sample: Among the 500 respondents, 250 were women. The mean age and annual income were 40.9 years and approximately 3.84 million yen. Finally, regarding education level, over half of the respondents indicated that they had attended college/university, including students.

3.2. Measurement assessment

Table 3 outlines the measurement scale items for each construct using a 5-point scale (5 = *strongly agree*, 1 = *strongly disagree*). First, based on Vandecasteele and Geuens (2010) who explored the reasons underlying consumer innovativeness, we measured four sub-dimensions of consumer innovativeness: hedonic (5 items), functional (4 items), cognitive (5 items), and social (5 items). Second, adapting Al-Jundi et al.'s (2019) examination of the individual learning process in new product adoption, we measured consumers' global product learning using five items. Third, applying the findings of Happ et al. (2021) and emphasizing social experiences in the retail store context, we measured store managers' interactions with consumers using five items. Last, building on Kim et al. (2022) and testing consumers' consumption behaviors, we measured global product purchase behavior by asking respondents to answer three questions based on their actual purchase behavior toward global products in the past six months.

3.3. Common method bias

To check for common method bias (Lindell and Whitney, 2001), we conducted a marker variable test. Based on our results using a theoretically non-correlated scale item (i.e., "Once I've started using a certain product, I'm not likely to switch to another one") as a covariate ($|r|$ = 0.016–0.032), we found no significant differences between the adjusted and observed correlations ($\Delta|r|$ = 0.000–0.001), indicating that common method bias was not a major problem.

4. Analysis and results

This study examines the direct, indirect, and moderating effects of our proposed model, as shown in Fig. 1. Employing the methodological procedures suggested by prior studies (Byrne, 2010; Hwang et al., 2020; Ma and Kim, 2022), we utilized structural equation modeling (SEM)

Table 2
Sample distribution and profile.

Variables	Frequency	%	Variables	Frequency	%
Gender			*Age*		
Men	250	50	Mean value (SD)[b]	40.9 (16.7)	N/A
Women	250	50	Under 20	82	16.4
Education level			20–29	82	16.4
High school or below	156	31.2	30–39	84	16.8
College/university	326	65.2	40–49	84	16.8
Graduate school or above	18	3.6	50–59	84	16.8
Annual income[a]			Above 60	84	16.8
Mean value (SD)	3.84 (5.37)	N/A			

Note: N/A: not applicable; SD = standard deviation.
[a] In millions of Japanese yen.
[b] Actual age.

Table 3
Constructs and measurement assessment (n = 500).

Construct and scale item	Estimate[a]	AVE	CR
Consumer innovativeness			
a) Hedonic *(Cronbach's α = 0.93)*		0.74	0.92
Using new products gives me a sense of personal enjoyment.	0.81		
It gives me a good feeling to acquire new products.	0.89		
New products make my life exciting and stimulating.	0.87		
Acquiring new products makes me happier.	0.89		
The discovery of new products makes me feel playful and cheerful.	0.85		
b) Functional *(Cronbach's α = 0.88)*		0.65	0.87
If a new time-saving product is launched, I will buy it right away.	0.79		
If new products give me more comfort than my current product, I will not hesitate to buy them.	0.85		
If a new product is more functional, then I usually buy it.	0.81		
If a new product makes my daily work easier, then this new product is a "must" for me.	0.76		
c) Cognitive *(Cronbach's α = 0.90)*		0.64	0.90
I mostly buy new products that satisfy my analytical mind.	0.78		
I like new products that are intellectually challenging and buy them instantly.	0.86		
I often buy new products that make me think logically.	0.83		
I often buy new products that challenge the strengths and weaknesses of my intellectual skills.	0.74		
I am an intellectual thinker who buys new products because they help my brain for daily work.	0.80		
d) Social *(Cronbach's α = 0.93)*		0.74	0.93
I love to use new products that impress others.	0.85		
I like to own new products that distinguish me from others who do not own such products.	0.89		
I prefer to try new products with which I can present myself to my friends and neighbors.	0.91		
I like to outdo others, and I prefer to do this by buying new products that my friends do not have.	0.86		
I deliberately buy new products that are visible to others and which command respect from others.	0.78		
Global product learning *(Cronbach's α = 0.89)*		0.62	0.89
I frequently learn beneficial information about global products from various sources (e.g., the Internet or social networks)	0.68		
If I hear about a global product, I would like to know the details about it.	0.74		
I enjoy searching for information about global products.	0.81		
I am more curious about information on global products than my peers.	0.83		
I spend more time learning global products compared to my peers.	0.86		
Store managers' interactions with consumers *(Cronbach's α = 0.94)*		0.74	0.93
I give my opinion to the store manager about global products.	0.84		
I receive advice from the store manager about global products.	0.84		
I ask the store manager for his/her opinions about global products.	0.89		
I share my opinions about global products with the store manager.	0.87		
I interact with the store manager about global products.	0.87		
Global product purchase behavior *(Cronbach's α = 0.93)*		0.81	0.92
Based on actual purchase behavior during the past six months:			
The frequency of buying global products has increased.	0.90		
The number of global products I bought has increased	0.92		
The amount of money I spent on global products has increased.	0.88		

Notes.
AVE = average variance extracted; CR = composite reliability.
[a] Standardized factor loading.

with AMOS 28, following a two-step approach comprising measurement and structural models. We evaluated the sensitivity to a normal distribution and sample size. Our findings indicate that skewness values ranging from −0.47 to 0.70 and kurtosis values ranging from −0.13 to −0.91 fell below the thresholds of ±2 and ± 7, respectively (Niemand and Mai, 2018). Furthermore, considering the widely accepted guidelines of 10–20 cases per indicator variable (Mitchell, 1993) and the rule of thumb suggesting a sample size exceeding 200 (Iacobucci, 2010), our sample size of 500 appears adequate. Based on the data presented in Table 4, our sample exhibits a relatively low level of consumer innovativeness, with mean values for each dimension falling below 3: hedonic (mean = 2.89, SD = 0.97), functional (mean = 2.75, SD = 0.90), cognitive (mean = 2.71, SD = 0.84), and social (mean = 2.29, SD = 0.93).

4.1. Construct validity

To evaluate the validity of the constructs (Fornell and Larcker, 1981), we test the measurement model using confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). Our results reveal a satisfactory fit to our data (χ^2 (90) = 991.94, $p < 0.001$, CMIN/DF = 2.27, NFI = 0.93, CFI = 0.96, IFI = 0.96, RMSEA = 0.05) and concrete evidence for the construct validity of our data (Table 3). Regarding convergent validity, the AVE values ranged from 0.62 to 0.81, while the CR values ranged from 0.89 to 0.93, which were above the threshold of the AVE (0.50) and CR (0.60) values. We checked the discriminant validity by comparing the AVE values for each pair of constructs with shared variance (r^2). No shared variances (ranging from 0.04 to 0.54) were greater than the AVE values (Table 4).

4.2. Structural model for hypotheses testing

We employed a structural model to test the hypotheses, suggesting a satisfactory fit to the data (χ^2 (74) = 732.97, $p < 0.001$, CMIN/DF = 2.41, NFI = 0.94, CFI = 0.96, IFI = 0.96, RMSEA = 0.05). Table 5 shows the results of testing the direct and indirect effects. Specifically, contrary to our hypothesis, we found non-significant direct impacts of consumer innovativeness on global product purchase behavior: hedonic (H1a: β = 0.00, SE = 0.05, *t*-value = 0.035, $p = 0.972$), functional (H1b: β = −0.09, SE = 0.06, *t*-value = −1.395, $p = 0.163$), cognitive (H1c: β = 0.09, SE = 0.08, *t*-value = 1.274, $p = 0.203$) and social (H1d: β = 0.05, SE = 0.05, *t*-value = 1.006, $p = 0.314$). Hence, we rejected H1. Additionally, the outcome of indirect effects, based on a bootstrapping method with a dataset of 1000 (Byrne, 2010), showed that hedonic (H2a: β = 0.12, SE

Table 4
Descriptive matrix and correlation matrix (n = 500).

Variables	X1	X2	X3	X4	X5	X6	X7
X1. Hedonic innovativeness	*0.86*						
X2. Functional innovativeness	0.66*	*0.81*					
X3. Cognitive innovativeness	0.71*	0.71*	*0.80*				
X4. Social innovativeness	0.61*	0.60*	0.59*	*0.86*			
X5. Global product learning	0.48*	0.39*	0.42*	0.48*	*0.79*		
X6. Store managers' interactions with consumers	0.21*	0.22*	0.30*	0.32*	0.50*	*0.86*	
X7. Global product purchase behavior	0.38*	0.32*	0.37*	0.43*	0.74*	0.52*	*0.90*
Mean	2.89	2.75	2.71	2.29	2.64	2.41	2.34
SD	0.97	0.90	0.84	0.93	0.83	0.92	0.95

Note: The italicized figures in the diagonal row are the square roots of the AVE values; SD = standard deviation; *$p < 0.05$.

Table 5
Results of testing the direct and indirect effects (n = 500).

Hypothesized relationships	Estimates[a]	SE	*p*-value	*t*-value	Results
Direct effects					
H1a. Hedonic innovativeness → Global product purchase behavior	0.00	0.05	0.972	0.035	Rejected
H1b. Functional innovativeness → Global product purchase behavior	−0.09	0.06	0.163	−1.395	Rejected
H1c. Cognitive innovativeness → Global product purchase behavior	0.09	0.08	0.203	1.274	Rejected
H1d. Social innovativeness → Global product purchase behavior	0.05	0.05	0.314	1.006	Rejected
Hedonic innovativeness → Global product learning	0.15*	0.05	0.042	2.029	–
Functional innovativeness → Global product learning	−0.06	0.06	0.469	−0.724	–
Cognitive innovativeness→ Global product learning	0.21*	0.08	0.017	2.380	–
Social innovativeness → Global product learning	0.31***	0.05	<0.001	4.867	–
Global product learning → Global product purchase behavior	0.79***	0.08	<0.001	13.645	–
Indirect effects (i.e., testing the mediating role of global product learning)					
H2a. Hedonic innovativeness → Global product purchase behavior	0.12*	0.06	0.035	–	Accepted
H2b. Functional innovativeness → Global product purchase behavior	−0.05	0.07	0.635	–	Rejected
H2c. Cognitive innovativeness → Global product purchase behavior	0.17*	0.08	0.033	–	Accepted
H2d. Social innovativeness → Global product purchase behavior	0.24**	0.05	0.002	–	Accepted

SE = standard error.
*$p < 0.05$; **$p < 0.01$; ***$p < 0.001$.
[a] Standardized coefficient.

Table 6
Results of testing the moderating effects of store managers' interactions with consumers (n = 500).

Hypothesized relationships	Estimates[a]		χ^2 difference[b]	*p*-value	Results
	High group	Low group			
H3. Global product learning → Global product purchase behavior	0.89***	0.63***	df (1) = 6.03*	0.014	Accepted
Hedonic innovativeness → Global product purchase behavior	0.07	0.11	df (1) = 0.04	0.841	–
Functional innovativeness → Global product purchase behavior	−0.10	−0.10	df (1) = 0.00	1.000	–
Cognitive innovativeness→ Global product purchase behavior	−0.09	0.14	df (1) = 2.16	0.142	–
Social innovativeness → Global product purchase behavior	0.08	−0.01	df (1) = 0.52	0.471	–
Hedonic innovativeness → Global product learning	0.01	0.31**	df (1) = 3.10	0.078	–
Functional innovativeness → Global product learning	0.14	−0.11	df (1) = 2.14	0.144	–
Cognitive innovativeness→ Global product learning	0.25	0.10	df (1) = 0.40	0.527	–
Social innovativeness → Global product learning	0.20*	0.26**	df (1) = 1.25	0.264	–

Note.
[a] Standardized coefficient.
[b] Values over 3.84 are significant at the 5% level ($\triangle\chi^2$ (1) = 3.84, $p < 0.05$); *$p < 0.05$; **$p < 0.01$; ***$p < 0.001$.

= 0.06, $p = 0.035$), cognitive (H2c: β = 0.17, SE = 0.08, $p = 0.033$), and social (H2d: β = 0.24, SE = 0.05, $p = 0.002$) innovativeness increased global product purchase behavior via enhanced global product learning. However, we failed to find a significant effect of functional innovativeness (H2b: β = −0.05, SE = 0.07, $p = 0.635$) due to a non-significant effect of functional innovativeness on global product learning (β = −0.06, SE = 0.06, *t*-value = −0.724, $p = 0.469$). Thus, we accepted H2a, H2c, and H2d, whereas we rejected H2b. Building on the findings in H1, we highlight the critical role of global product learning, which fully mediates the relationship linking global product purchase behavior to hedonic, cognitive, and social innovativeness.

Additionally, to test H3, we employed multigroup analysis (Byrne, 2010; Ma and Kim, 2022). As indicated in Table 6, the chi-square (χ^2) difference test—based on a high group (n = 278) versus a low group (n = 222) regarding the mean value of store managers' interactions with consumers (mean = 2.41)—indicated that the positive linkage between global product learning and global product purchase behavior became stronger for the high group of store managers' interactions with consumers (β = 0.89, $p < 0.001$) than for the low group (β = 0.63, $p < 0.001$) at a 5% significance level ($\triangle\chi^2$ (1) = 6.03, $p = 0.014$). This finding is consistent with our prediction; hence, H3 is supported.

4.3. Ad hoc analysis

By controlling for potential heterogeneity among the respondents (see Table 2), we confirmed whether our sample was representative for obtaining non-biased and more generalizable results by examining gender (male = 1, female = 0), age (actual number), income (the logarithm of actual income), university education (university degree = 1, other = 0), and postgraduate education (graduate school degree = 1, other = 0). While age had a direct and significant influence on global product purchase behavior (β = −0.07, SE = 0.00, *t*-value = −2.04, $p = 0.041$), other control variables did not significantly affect purchase behavior; these included gender (β = 0.00, SE = 0.06, *t*-value = 0.093, $p = 0.926$), income (β = 0.07, SE = 0.03, *t*-value = 1.931, $p = 0.053$), university education (β = −0.05, SE = 0.06, *t*-value = −1.654, $p = 0.098$), and postgraduate education (β = −0.03, SE = 0.151, *t*-value = −0.938, $p = 0.348$). More importantly, despite the significance of age, our results were not contingent upon the inclusion or exclusion of the control variables, implying that potential heterogeneity among the respondents (mentioned in Section 3.1) is not a major concern.

Furthermore, we checked whether store managers' interactions with consumers had additional moderating effects. As described in Table 6, we found no significant effects in any possible direct path between consumer innovativeness and global product learning ($p > 0.05$) or between consumer innovativeness and global product purchase behavior ($p > 0.05$). Finally, to evaluate the moderated mediation effect of store managers' interactions with consumers on the significant moderating effect of H2a, H2b, and H2d, we employed PROCESS macro (Model 14) using percentile bootstrapping with a dataset of 5000 samples and a 95% confidence interval (CI) (Hayes, 2018). Our findings demonstrated that store managers' interactions with consumers strengthened the indirect effects of hedonic (b = 0.03, SE = 0.01, 95% CI = [0.002, 0.051]), cognitive (b = 0.03, SE = 0.01, 95% CI = [0.002, 0.057]), and social (b = 0.03, SE = 0.01, 95% CI = [0.001, 0.055]) innovativeness on global product purchase behavior via global product learning.

5. Discussion and implications

5.1. Theoretical implications

This study expands the knowledge of global product purchases in two ways. First, this study adds to the existing literature by examining the critical function of the consumer learning process in global product purchases. Applying insights from previous research that focused on consumer learning (Al-Jundi et al., 2019) and education by companies (Steils, 2021), our findings indicate that consumers' global product learning fully mediates the impact of diverse aspects of consumer innovativeness (except for the functional sub-dimension, which is not significant) on consumers' global product purchase behavior.

Our study differs from the work of Al-Jundi et al. (2019), who investigate the mediating role of consumer learning in linking a unidimensional construct of consumer innovativeness with purchase intention toward new products, testing how consumer learning mediates the effects of the four sub-dimensions of consumer innovativeness on actual purchase behavior in the context of global products as new consumption experiences.

The indirect effect of the functional aspect of consumer innovativeness on global product purchases was insignificant. The rationale behind this unanticipated outcome is as follows. Considering Japan's characteristics, the FMCG sector represents one of the largest segments of the Japanese consumer market, with national brands of domestic companies dominating this sector (Statista, 2024). Furthermore, given that Japanese consumers prefer familiar brands that offer good quality at reasonable prices (Statista, 2024), this suggests that national brands may already fulfill a functional value through local products in FMCG consumption. This implies that for Japanese consumers, consumer innovativeness driven by functional motives might not necessarily activate consumers' desire to learn more about, and ultimately buy global products.

Additionally, the direct impact of all four sub-dimensions of consumer innovativeness (hedonic, functional, cognitive, and social) on the purchase behavior of global products was insignificant. In this regard, several prior studies with similar results offer a theoretical rationale for this non-significant effect. For example, while Wang et al. (2018) suggest that consumers generally perceive risks in new consumption experiences such as buying global products, Jin and Suh (2005) found that the direct influence of consumer innovativeness on purchase intention for new brands may not be significant, depending on the product category. Overall, considering the newness and unfamiliarity associated with global products, our findings support the idea that the learning process (i.e., acquiring information and understanding global products) is a prerequisite for consumer innovativeness, which leads to the purchase of global products.

Second, this study offers valuable insights by clarifying the pivotal function of store managers' interactions with consumers in the context of new consumption experiences, namely global product purchases. Despite the significant presence of store managers as key personnel who can provide ample and useful merchandising information to consumers in offline retail settings, prior research has underlined the effectiveness of frontline employees' social interactions with consumers (Errajaa et al., 2022; Lucia-Palacios et al., 2020; Nakamori et al., 2024). Conversely, we highlight that store managers' interactions with consumers amplify the impact of consumers' global product learning on their global product purchase behavior.

Our approach to emphasizing personal interactions between store managers and consumers is novel and important because early studies focused on aspects of retail store management and organizational leadership, such as managers' skills in driving sales performance (Jung et al., 2021; Luu, 2020) and store managers' leadership in salespeople's self-efficacy (Vieira et al., 2018). Building on theories of innovation diffusion, social exchange, and learning, and considering the contextual importance of offline sales channels in Japan, this study underscores the significance of personal interactions between store managers and consumers. Such interactions not only enhance consumer learning by providing systematic and detailed information about global products but also foster positive and sustainable relationships with target consumers.

5.2. Managerial implications

We provide two practical insights for retailers regarding the diffusion of global products in Japan. First, we recommend that retailers recognize the significance of the social, cognitive, and hedonic aspects of consumer innovativeness in shaping consumers' desire to learn about global products, which ultimately influences global product purchases in the FMCG sector. Specifically, to captivate consumers' hedonic innovativeness when using global products, retailers should design playful, interactive experiences that make the consumption of these products enjoyable. For example, retailers can set up spaces for pre-experiencing global products, such as tasting booths for food items or virtual makeup stations for cosmetics. In these retail settings, consumers can explore various unfamiliar global products within FMCG categories while receiving personalized, interactive support from sales personnel. Such engagement is considered a part of experiential consumption, thereby stimulating hedonic motivation.

Second, to pique consumers' cognitive motivation, it is crucial to spark their intellectual curiosity and perceptual interest in products. From a marketing perspective, retailers can achieve this by leveraging opinion leaders, such as early adopters who try products in advance to aid innovation diffusion. Specifically, by collaborating with social influencers, retailers can provide informative content that highlights the distinctive features and usage tutorials of global products. Disseminating influencer-created content across various social channels and offline sales stores can foster consumers' desire to learn more about global products and cultivate positive attitudes toward them.

Third, to drive consumers' social innovativeness, retailers can focus on packaging differentiation strategies. Social innovativeness—stemming from the desire to distinguish one's product choices from others—highlights the importance of visual exclusivity. Given that consumers generally associate global brands with superior quality, modernity, and aspirational value compared to local brands (Davvetas and Diamantopoulos, 2018), conveying novelty and exclusivity through product packaging accurately aligns with consumer expectations for global products. This stimulatessocial innovation in addition to enhancing a product's intrinsic attributes. Overall, these adaptable managerial strategies can help mitigate the uncertainty associated with adopting global products and offer consumers valuable opportunities to learn about these products with heightened innovativeness.

Second, according to H3, personalized communication between store managers and consumers can significantly enhance the impact of consumer learning on global product purchase behavior. We recommend that store managers take proactive steps to gain specialized knowledge

about imported product categories among various products in their stores. Additionally, they should actively work to reduce consumers' psychological distance from new global products by regularly organizing promotional events that facilitate direct communication with consumers. By building trustful relationships, store managers can effectively help lower the various barriers consumers encounter when purchasing global products.

5.3. Limitations and future research

Our research has several limitations that warrant further investigation. First, the product categories listed in the questionnaire included global products that Japanese consumers were already familiar with. Given that newness is a key attribute of innovation (Truong, 2013), it is imperative to select product categories that consumers perceive as sufficiently novel, particularly for global products to be considered innovative. Moreover, even for new products imported from foreign countries, the impact of individual innovativeness on the learning processes and purchase behavior for global products is expected to vary depending on the product category. For instance, in the FMCG sector, where products are purchased frequently and in high volumes, the prevalence of global products may decrease. Methodologically, participants were asked to recall their experiences of purchasing global FMCGs within the past six months to participate in the survey. This approach implies that the range of FMCG subcategories and brands they recalled could have been quite broad and beyond the researchers' control.

Consequently, generalizing our findings across all contexts of global product purchases may be challenging. To further investigate these mechanisms in various contexts, experimental research should consider specifying the scope of global product categories or brands based on clearly defined criteria. Additionally, given the findings of H3, it is crucial to conduct subsequent research exploring how consumer innovativeness affects the adoption of global products, particularly in product categories where interactions with store managers significantly influence consumer learning and purchase decisions (e.g., products that are slightly more expensive, have many alternatives in the market, or require specialized knowledge).

Second, to better comprehend how consumer innovativeness predicts the adoption of global products, it is essential to recognize that the distinct consumption characteristics of consumers in each country may be associated with specific motives shaping consumer innovativeness. We found that functional reasons for consumer innovativeness, particularly learning about and purchasing global products, were ineffective for Japanese consumers who prioritized quality, price, and familiarity.

Similarly, consumer values influenced by cultural factors not only shape attitudes toward global and local products (Steenkamp and De Jong, 2010) but also lead to varying stereotypes of global and local brands (Davvetas and Halkias, 2019). This highlights the importance of integrating sociocultural perspectives into international branding strategies, especially in markets where globalization and localization coexist (Davvetas and Halkias, 2019). Such an approach suggests that consumers' perceptions of the values or signals associated with global brands may vary across different countries. Given the anticipated increase in the presence of global products in international retail markets, it is crucial to expand our research by exploring the combined effects of consumer innovativeness and sociocultural cues. Cross-cultural comparisons will be instrumental in understanding how various aspects of innovativeness directly and interactively influence consumer behavior toward global products.

Third, improving and ensuring the accuracy and procedures of sampling techniques and data collection are challenging. While quota sampling for demographic variables such as gender and age is widely accepted, stratified sampling for gender must consider the age-related male-to-female ratio, which depends on the upper age limit set for valid consumer responses. For instance, in Japan, which is a super-aging society, females outnumber males in the total population. However, among potential respondents under 79, the male-to-female ratio is higher. Thus, with aging populations in many countries, future research should refine the sampling techniques and criteria for gender and age to achieve generalizable and unbiased results.

Finally, this study employs the consumer innovativeness scale, originally designed for technically and socially innovative products (Vandecasteele and Geuens, 2010), in the FMCG sector. However, the scale measures consumer openness to technological and substantial innovative products but may not be fully appropriate for FMCG products with a lower level of innovation owing to differences in consumer interaction and perception. Additionally, the social innovativeness component intended to measure the impact of socially relevant innovations may not accurately align with the private consumption nature of FMCG products. Accordingly, future studies could focus on creating or adapting a consumer innovativeness scale specifically for the FMCG sector, considering the unique characteristics of FMCG products such as their rapid turnover, lower technological novelty, and private consumption. This could enhance the understanding of consumer behavior and innovation adoption across different product categories.

CRediT authorship contribution statement

Woo Bin Kim: Writing – review & editing, Writing – original draft, Visualization, Validation, Supervision, Software, Resources, Project administration, Methodology, Investigation, Conceptualization. **Changju Kim:** Writing – review & editing, Writing – original draft, Visualization, Validation, Supervision, Software, Resources, Project administration, Methodology, Investigation, Formal analysis, Data curation, Conceptualization. **Karin Kurata:** Writing – review & editing, Writing – original draft, Visualization, Validation, Methodology, Investigation, Formal analysis, Data curation, Conceptualization.

Declaration of competing interest

The authors have no conflicts of interest to declare that are relevant to the content of this article.

Data availability

Data will be made available on request.

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