

FROM CONVENTIONAL TO SUSTAINABLE MOBILITY: EXAMINING BYD ELECTRIC VEHICLE PURCHASE INTENTION AMONG INTERNAL COMBUSTION ENGINE VEHICLE OWNERS IN SURABAYA

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ABSTRACT

The global transition from conventional mobility to sustainable mobility is driving the accelerated adoption of electric vehicles (EVs), particularly in emerging markets. This study aims to analyze the factors influencing the purchase intention of BYD electric vehicles among the internal combustion engine (ICE) vehicle owners in Surabaya. The ICE vehicle owners are seen as a potential segment in the transition to sustainable mobility. This study examines the influence of environmental concern, brand credibility, perceived benefits, and competitive advantage on purchase intention. Environmental concern reflects an individual's level of concern for environmental issues, while brand credibility is positioned as an intangible strategic asset that builds consumer trust. Perceived benefit describes consumers' perceptions of the functional, economic, and environmental benefits of electric vehicles, while competitive advantage represents the perception of BYD's strategic superiority over conventional vehicles. Data will be collected through a structured questionnaire distributed to internal combustion engine vehicle owners in Surabaya. Data analysis was conducted using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to simultaneously examine the relationships between variables. The results of this study are expected to contribute to the development of strategic management and sustainable marketing literature, particularly in understanding the determinants of consumer transition to electric vehicles. Practically, the findings of this study can serve as a basis for electric vehicle manufacturers in formulating effective sustainable positioning strategies in the Indonesian urban market.

Keywords: Environmental Concern, Brand Credibility, Perceived Benefit, Competitive Advantage, Purchase Intention

1. Introduction

The trend of electric vehicles (EVs) in Indonesia has experienced rapid acceleration in recent years, driven by government incentives, increasing environmental awareness, and the entry of global players. EV adoption rose significantly from around 2–3% in 2023 to over 12% by the end of 2025, with some months exceeding 15% of total vehicle sales, indicating a shift from niche to mainstream adoption (AutoJago, 2025; SindoNews, 2026). This growth is also supported by more affordable EV options and strong policy backing, which have contributed to overall automotive sales growth in Indonesia (Reuters, 2025). Additionally, Indonesia's ambition to become a global EV hub is reinforced by investments in battery ecosystems and production capacity, highlighting long-term industry potential (Reuters, 2025).

One of the most aggressive players in this transformation is BYD, which is striving to become the number one EV brand in Indonesia. BYD has rapidly gained dominance, capturing more than 50% of the EV market and selling over 47,000 units in 2025 alone (AutoJago, 2025; SWA, 2025). Its strategy focuses on offering a complete product portfolio across multiple segments, from affordable city cars to premium MPVs, allowing it to target diverse consumer groups (Oto.com, 2026). Furthermore, BYD is investing heavily in Indonesia through a planned \$1 billion manufacturing plant, demonstrating long-term commitment and cost competitiveness (Reuters, 2025). This combination of pricing strategy, product variety, and local investment strengthens its positioning as a market leader.

From a consumer behavior perspective, environmental concern plays a critical role in shaping EV adoption. Increasing awareness of pollution and sustainability motivates consumers to consider EVs as a cleaner alternative, aligning with Indonesia's push toward reducing emissions. As environmental concern grows, consumers are more likely to evaluate EVs positively, especially when they perceive them as contributing to environmental protection (Wang et al., 2023; Joshi & Rahman, 2022). This psychological factor is particularly important in transitioning internal combustion engine (ICE) users toward EV adoption. Brand credibility is another key factor influencing EV purchase decisions. In a relatively new market like EVs, consumers face uncertainty regarding performance, durability, and after-sales service. Brands like BYD address this by emphasizing technological reliability, innovation, and consistent performance, which enhances trust and reduces perceived risk (Dwivedi et al., 2022; Baek et al., 2022). High brand credibility strengthens competitive positioning and encourages consumers to shift from traditional vehicles to EVs.

Perceived benefit further reinforces purchase intention by highlighting tangible advantages such as lower operating costs, fuel savings, and environmental benefits. As EV technology improves and becomes more accessible, consumers increasingly recognize these benefits, which enhances perceived value and satisfaction (Li et al., 2024; Wang et al., 2023). In Indonesia, affordability and practicality are especially critical, making perceived economic and functional benefits key drivers of adoption. Ultimately, the EV market in Indonesia is highly driven by competitive advantage, where companies compete on innovation, pricing, infrastructure, and brand positioning. Firms that successfully differentiate themselves through superior value propositions are more likely to influence purchase intention. Competitive advantage directly impacts consumer choice, as buyers tend to select products that offer better overall value compared to alternatives (Chen & Chang, 2022). Therefore, the interplay between environmental concern, brand credibility, perceived benefit, and competitive advantage becomes essential in shaping purchase intention among prospective EV buyers.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Environmental Concern to Competitive Advantage and Purchase Intention

Environmental concern refers to the extent to which individuals are aware of environmental issues and are willing to engage in behaviors that help mitigate environmental degradation (Joshi & Rahman, 2022). It reflects a sense of responsibility toward sustainability and influences pro-environmental attitudes in consumption decisions (Sun et al., 2022). Recent studies show that environmental concern shapes consumers' evaluations of eco-friendly products, including electric vehicles, by increasing perceived environmental benefits and moral obligation (Wang et al., 2023). It also enhances firms' competitive advantage by encouraging green innovation, improving corporate image, and strengthening consumer trust in sustainable

brands (Chen & Chang, 2022). Furthermore, environmental concern positively affects purchase intention either directly or through mediating variables such as perceived value, environmental knowledge, and green trust (Li et al., 2024).

H1: Environmental Concern has significant effect on Competitive Advantage

H2: Environmental Concern has significant effect on Purchase Intention

2.2 Brand Credibility to Competitive Advantage and Purchase Intention

Brand credibility refers to the extent to which consumers perceive a brand as trustworthy and capable of delivering its promised value (Erdem & Swait, 2021). It reflects reliability, expertise, and consistency, which reduce perceived risk and uncertainty in consumer decision-making (Dwivedi et al., 2022). Strong brand credibility enhances competitive advantage by differentiating firms from competitors, strengthening brand equity, and fostering long-term customer relationships (Baek et al., 2022). It also plays a critical role in shaping consumer perceptions of product quality and value, especially in emerging markets such as electric vehicles (Nguyen et al., 2023). Furthermore, brand credibility positively influences purchase intention, as consumers are more likely to choose brands they trust, either directly or through mediating factors such as perceived quality and brand loyalty (Sharma et al., 2024).

H3: Brand Credibility has significant effect on Competitive Advantage

H4: Brand Credibility has significant effect on Purchase Intention

2.3 Perceived Benefit to Purchase Intention

Perceived benefit refers to the extent to which consumers believe that a product or service provides functional, emotional, or environmental value that satisfies their needs (Kim et al., 2022). It represents the overall evaluation of advantages gained from using a product, including cost savings, performance, and sustainability aspects (Wang et al., 2023). Higher perceived benefit strengthens a firm's competitive advantage by enhancing value differentiation, increasing customer satisfaction, and encouraging positive word-of-mouth (Chen & Lin, 2022). In the context of electric vehicles, perceived benefits such as lower operating costs and environmental friendliness significantly improve consumers' evaluations of the product (Li et al., 2024). Furthermore, perceived benefit has a strong positive effect on purchase intention, either directly or indirectly through mediating variables such as perceived value and attitude toward the product (Nguyen et al., 2023).

H5: Perceived Benefit has significant effect on Competitive Advantage

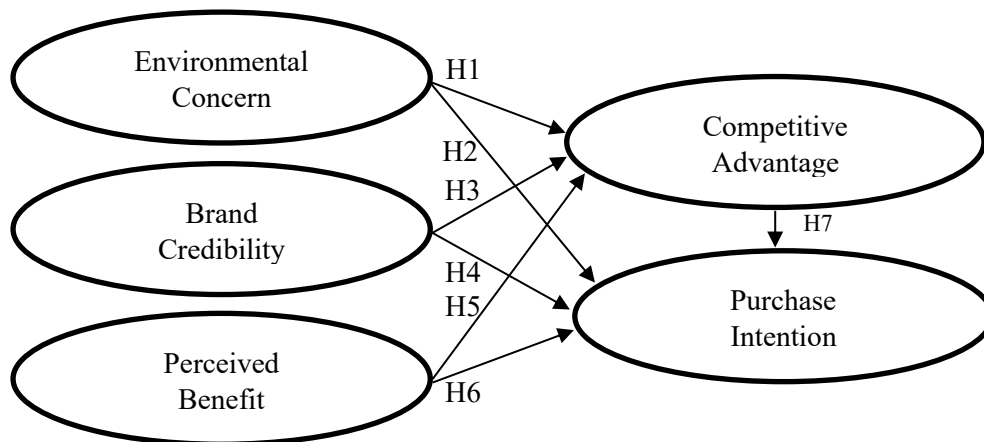
H6: Perceived Benefit has significant effect on Purchase Intention

2.4 Competitive Advantage to Purchase Intention

Competitive advantage refers to a firm's ability to create superior value compared to competitors through differentiation, cost leadership, or innovation (Porter, 2021). It reflects how effectively a company positions its products or services to be more attractive in the marketplace (Barney, 2021). A strong competitive advantage enhances customer perceptions of quality, value, and uniqueness, which in turn strengthens brand preference and market performance (Baek et al., 2022). In the context of electric vehicles, firms that achieve competitive advantage through technological innovation, sustainability, and pricing strategies are more likely to influence consumer evaluations positively (Li et al., 2024). Furthermore, competitive advantage has a significant positive effect on purchase intention, as consumers tend to choose products that offer superior benefits and reliability compared to alternatives (Chen & Chang, 2022).

H7: Competitive Advantage Perceived Benefit has significant effect on Purchase Intention

3. Research Model



3.1 Measurements and Instruments

The instrument used to measure Environmental Concern is based on Joshi & Rahman (2022), for Brand Credibility is based on Hur et al. (2014, adapted in Zhang et al., 2025), for Perceived Benefit is based on Wang et al. (2023), for Competitive Advantage is based on Liu et al. (2025), for Purchase Intention is based on Wang et al. (2023). Regression equation for Credibility, Perceived Benefit, to Competitive Advantage is as follows. $CA: b1.EC + b2. BC + b3. PB$. For second equation, we will study the impact of Environmental Concern, Brand Credibility, Perceived Benefit, and Competitive Advantage to Purchase Intention. $PI: b4.EC + b5. BC + b6. PB + b7.CA$.

4. Results and Discussion

The respondents were defined as internal combustion engine vehicle owners who are interested in purchasing electric vehicles, either to replace their primary vehicle or as an additional vehicle. The total number of respondents is 100 respondents gathered from Surabaya area. Respondents comprised of 85 male and 15 female internal combustion engine vehicle owners aged between 25-45 years old. The regression equation to explain the independent variables of Environmental Concern, Brand Credibility, and Perceived benefits toward Competitive Advantage is as follow.

$$CA: 0.282 EC + 0.351 BC + 0.256 PB$$

The regression equation to explain the independent variables of Environmental Concern, Brand Credibility, Perceived benefits, and Competitive Advantage toward Purchase Intention is as follows $PI: 0.222 EC + 0.641 BC + 0.556 PB + 0.315 CA$. Also, to better understand the regression relationship between variables, especially validity, mean, and cronbach alpha can be seen as follows.

Table 1. Validity, mean, and Cronbach Alpha values

Indicator	Validity	Mean	Cronbach Alpha
EC1	0.473	3.84	0.915
EC2	0.653	4.04	
EC3	0.523	3.91	
EC4	0.787	3.96	
BC1	0.763	4.15	0.932
BC2	0.821	4.11	
BC3	0.737	4.01	
BC4	0.910	4.10	
PB1	0.823	4.06	0.932
PB2	0.761	3.99	
PB3	0.731	4.00	
PB4	0.910	4.07	
CA1	0.802	4.06	0.888
CA2	0.618	4.06	
CA3	0.571	4.12	
CA4	0.862	4.03	
PI1	0.743	4.18	0.825
PI2	0.731	4.87	
PI3	0.794	4.84	
PI4	0.896	4.14	

Source: Author (2026)

Table 2. Direct Relationship between variables

Hypothesis		Standardized β	Sig	Results
H1	EC→CA	0.282	0.064	<i>Rejected</i>
H2	EC→PI	0.222	0.00	Accepted
H3	BC→CA	0.351	0.013	Accepted
H4	BC→PI	0.641	0.345	<i>Rejected</i>
H5	PB→CA	0.256	0.00	Accepted
H6	PB→PI	0.556	0.009	Accepted
H7	CA→PI	0.315	0.00	Accepted

Source: Author (2026)

First hypothesis stated that Environmental Concern has a significant effect on Competitive Advantage. The result of the study showed that Environmental Concern does not have significant impact on Competitive Advantage. One reason is that Environmental concern alone may not directly translate into competitive advantage because it doesn't automatically improve core business drivers like cost efficiency, product quality, or market differentiation. If customers don't strongly value or reward environmentally friendly practices or if competitors adopt similar practices then environmental concern becomes a baseline expectation rather than a unique advantage. This is aligned with Widyantoro et al (2025) Environmental concern often does not directly affect competitive advantage because its impact is usually indirect and mediated by factors such as green innovation or firm capabilities

Second hypothesis which stated Environmental Concern significantly impact Purchase Intention is supported. Environmental concern significantly impacts purchase intention toward electric vehicles because consumers who are more aware of environmental issues tend to prefer products that reduce negative ecological effects. In the context of EVs, environmentally concerned consumers are motivated to lower carbon emissions and dependence on fossil fuels, making electric vehicles a more attractive option. BYD, as a brand associated with clean energy and sustainable mobility, benefits from this perception, as consumers align their values with the company’s environmental positioning. This alignment increases positive attitudes and strengthens the intention to purchase. Empirical studies confirm that environmental concern plays a significant role in shaping consumers’ attitudes and intentions toward electric vehicles, as individuals with higher concern are more likely to adopt environmentally friendly transportation options (Wang et al, 2021).

Third hypothesis stated that Brand Credibility significantly impacts Competitive Advantage, the result shows that this hypothesis is supported as Brand credibility enhances customer trust and confidence in a company’s products or services. When consumers perceive a brand as credible, they are more likely to believe its claims, reducing uncertainty and perceived risk in purchase decisions. BYD has been putting effort in so many ways to gain consumer trust. This trust encourages word of mouth and fosters long-term customer relationships, which are essential for sustaining a strong market position. In addition, credible brands can differentiate themselves from competitors and justify premium pricing, leading to higher profitability. Empirical evidence supports this relationship, showing that brand credibility positively affects customers’ willingness to pay and strengthens a firm’s competitive position in the market (Wang, 2023). As a result, companies with higher brand credibility are better able to maintain customer loyalty and outperform competitors over time.

Fourth hypothesis stated that Brand Credibility does not significantly Purchase Intention because consumers often rely more on functional and economic considerations when making purchasing decisions. Factors such as price affordability, product performance, features, and personal needs can outweigh the influence of how credible a brand is perceived to be. In addition, in markets where most brands have already established a similar level of credibility, consumers may no longer view credibility as a key differentiator. Instead, it becomes a basic expectation, reducing its direct influence on purchase decisions. Furthermore, brand credibility may only affect purchase intention indirectly through other variables such as perceived value or customer satisfaction. Empirical studies indicate that without strong mediating factors, the direct relationship between brand credibility and purchase intention may not be statistically significant (Rather, 2021).

Fifth hypothesis stated that Perceived Benefits significantly impact Competitive Advantage. The results shows that perceived benefit does provide a significant impact on competitive advantage. Perceived benefits significantly impact competitive advantage because they directly shape how customers evaluate and prefer a product or service over alternatives. When consumers perceive higher functional, economic, or emotional benefits, they are more likely to choose that offering, leading to increased customer satisfaction and loyalty. These advantages help firms differentiate themselves in competitive markets, as customer’s associate greater value with the brand compared to its rivals. In addition, strong perceived benefits can justify premium pricing and enhance overall market positioning. Empirical research supports

this relationship, indicating that perceived benefits positively influence a firm’s ability to create superior value, which translates into stronger competitive advantage. As a result, companies that effectively communicate and deliver clear benefits are better positioned to outperform competitors and sustain long-term success (Chen, 2022).

Sixth hypothesis stated that Perceived Benefit impact Purchase Intention significantly. And the research result shows that perceived benefit indeed impact purchase intention on EV cars significantly. Perceived benefits significantly impact purchase intention because they represent the value that consumers expect to gain from a product or service. When individuals believe that a product offers strong functional, economic, or emotional advantages, they are more likely to develop a positive attitude toward it and proceed with a purchase decision. These benefits reduce uncertainty and increase the attractiveness of the offering compared to alternatives. In addition, higher perceived benefits enhance customer satisfaction expectations, which further strengthens buying intention. Empirical studies confirm that perceived benefits play a crucial role in shaping consumer behavior, as they directly influence how consumers evaluate products and make decisions (Kim, 2022).

Seventh hypothesis stated Competitive Advantage significantly impact Purchase Intention. The result shows that competitive advantage does provide a support on purchase intention due to BYD has tried to suppress competition with various strategies. Competitive advantage significantly impacts purchase intention because it reflects a firm’s ability to offer superior value compared to its competitors. When a company possesses a strong competitive advantage—such as better quality, innovation, pricing, or unique features—consumers are more likely to perceive its products as more desirable and worth purchasing. This differentiation enhances customer preference and increases confidence in choosing the brand over alternatives. In addition, competitive advantage can strengthen brand positioning and create a positive market image, which further encourages buying decisions. Empirical research supports that firms with stronger competitive advantages are more successful in influencing consumer preferences and purchase intentions, as they are perceived to deliver greater overall value. Therefore, competitive advantage becomes a key driver in shaping consumers’ willingness to purchase.

5. Conclusion

This study is conducted to better understand what drives internal combustion engine vehicle owners to have a tendency to actually purchase an electric vehicle as replacement or as an additional vehicle. This study provides important insights into the factors influencing competitive advantage and purchase intention in the electric vehicle market, particularly in the context of BYD. The findings reveal that not all variables contribute equally, highlighting the complexity of consumer behavior and firm strategy.

Environmental concern was found to have no significant effect on competitive advantage, suggesting that simply being environmentally conscious is not sufficient for firms to differentiate themselves. This may be because environmental practices are increasingly becoming industry standards rather than unique strategic assets. However, environmental concern significantly influences purchase intention, indicating that consumers still value sustainability when making decisions, especially for products like electric vehicles that are closely associated with environmental benefits.

Brand credibility plays a significant role in enhancing competitive advantage by building trust, reducing perceived risk, and fostering long-term customer relationships. However, it does not directly influence purchase intention, implying that while credibility strengthens a firm's market position, consumers may rely more on tangible factors such as price and product features when deciding to purchase. Perceived benefits emerge as one of the most influential factors, significantly affecting both competitive advantage and purchase intention. This demonstrates that consumers prioritize the value they receive, and companies that effectively communicate and deliver superior benefits are more likely to succeed in competitive markets.

Competitive advantage itself significantly impacts purchase intention, confirming its role as a key driver of consumer choice. Firms that offer superior value through innovation, quality, or pricing are better positioned to attract customers. Thus, the study highlights that value creation and consumer perception are critical, and companies must strategically align environmental efforts, credibility, and benefits to enhance both competitiveness and purchase intention.

5.1 Managerial Implications

The findings of this study provide several important managerial implications, especially for companies in the electric vehicle industry such as BYD. First, managers should not rely solely on environmental concern to build competitive advantage. Instead, they need to transform environmental initiatives into tangible strategies, such as green innovation, cost efficiency, and product differentiation, to create real market value. Since environmental concern significantly influences purchase intention, firms should actively communicate their sustainability efforts in marketing campaigns. Highlighting eco-friendly features and environmental benefits can effectively attract environmentally conscious consumers. Next, brand credibility should be continuously strengthened to maintain competitive advantage. Managers can achieve this by ensuring consistent product quality, transparent communication, and reliable performance. However, since brand credibility does not directly influence purchase intention, it should be supported with competitive pricing, advanced features, and strong value propositions.

Additionally, perceived benefits should be a top priority. Companies must clearly deliver and communicate functional, economic, and emotional benefits to customers, as these directly impact both competitive advantage and purchase intention. Finally, firms should enhance their competitive advantage through innovation, pricing strategies, and unique offerings, as this will ultimately drive stronger purchase intention and long-term market success.

5.2 Future research

Future research can further expand this study by exploring additional variables and contexts to better understand consumer behavior in the electric vehicle market. First, future studies may incorporate mediating and moderating variables such as green innovation, perceived value, or customer satisfaction to examine indirect relationships, particularly between environmental concern, brand credibility, and competitive advantage. This would provide deeper insight into why certain variables do not show a direct significant effect. Future

research could consider a broader sample by including multiple electric vehicle brands beyond BYD to improve generalizability. Comparative studies across different brands or countries may reveal variations in consumer preferences and market dynamics. Longitudinal studies are recommended to observe changes in consumer attitudes and behavior over time, especially as the adoption of electric vehicles continues to grow. This would help capture evolving perceptions related to environmental issues, technology acceptance, and brand trust.

Additionally, future researchers may examine other important factors such as government policies, charging infrastructure, and technological advancements, which may significantly influence both competitive advantage and purchase intention. Qualitative approaches, such as interviews or focus groups, could complement quantitative findings by providing richer insights into consumer motivations and decision-making processes. By addressing these areas, future research can offer a more comprehensive understanding of the determinants of competitive advantage and purchase intention in the evolving EV industry.

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