Key drivers of automobile brand choice in Jakarta

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Abstract: The paper aims to investigate the determinants of automobile brand choice in Indonesia. Specifically, the paper seeks to hypothesize that consumers of automobiles make their purchases based on a multiplicity of factors namely brand image, emotional connection and price. This study was conducted using questionnaires. 212 respondents gathered from selected automobile centers within the province of Indonesia. The data were interpreted using structural equation model in order to measure the hypothesis. The results revealed that brand image and price significant related to brand choice. However, emotion connections did not influence customer towards the brand choice in Indonesia. The result can be used by the car manufacturer, marketing expert and salespeople to plan their advertisements and sales kit in order to closed deal and attract more customers. Further study on the customer decision making is necessary as the action taken by customer may also took into the considerations of the current economy situations and their ability to commit over a long term of time should the purchase was made intentionally through hire purchase scheme.

Keywords: Automobiles, Brand choice, Brand image, Emotional connection

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I. INTRODUCTION

Latest report on passenger vehicles sales in Indonesia recorded that Toyota is the most popular passenger car in Indonesia followed by Daihatsu, Honda, Mitsubishi and Suzuki. Indonesia offered large market for passenger car as the population is reaching more than 270 million (Utama & Inayati, 2019). High numbers of population provide such a great potential market for automotive industry to penetrate. Based on trend, Toyota have been the leader of brand choice since the past year and followed by the Daihatsu. Industry reports indicates that Japanese car brands control over 98% of Indonesian market (Afriani Sigiro, Rachma Putri, & Ilfandy Imran, 2016). One of the reason highlighted based on recent research is because Japanese car brand is easier to sell as second hand and despite that it is also pretty much easy for the user to order for spare parts since Japanese have invested in Indonesia car components industry (Wibowo, Sari, & Saidani, 2017).

Industry players in Indonesia need to carefully understand the reason why Toyota have been the preferred passenger since 2014. There must be a strong reason why Toyota becoming the brand choice and is there any emotional connection that may contribute to the selection of the brands. This study is focusing on the passenger car by focusing on two factors that may lead to brand choice. The first factor is about the brand image followed by the emotional connections (Irawati & Charles, 2010). The results of this research is also important to Toyota in strengthen their position in the Indonesia market. Other brand may study the reason given and investigate whether there is any chance they will get closer to the Indonesian brand choice (Wibowo et al., 2017). Industry market players may need to improve their communication and listen to the market about their comment on the brand. As per Toyota, it has been mentioned because it is easier to resell, and the sales of spare components is easier to get.

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Other brand such as Daihatsu and Honda may look at the same angle or finds out what else that can override the interest of selecting Toyota as their brand choice (Hafram & Hasim, 2018).

The huge market in Indonesia make it worth for any brand to study and invest about the actual likes of the customer and user. Other brands may need to invest as well in the components in order to get additional supports on after sales services. Recent market suggested that other brands to focused more on awareness and post sales service in order to increase the brand choice. Such suggestion should be taken into serious notes in order to get ready for future market. Overall, it can be concluded that understanding the brand choice and emotional connections is very important in order to plan for market growth in long term.

II.   LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1   Brand choice

Customer make decision based on various factors (Mannering, Winston, Griliches, & Schmalensee, 1991). The fact is customer is well informed (Foroudi, Cuomo, & Foroudi, 2019; Jia En Lee, Goh, & Mohd Noor, 2019; Šerić & Gil-Saura, 2019; Wesana, Schouteten, Van Acker, Gellynck, & De Steur, 2019). Customer is knowledgeable and know exactly what they required (Ahn & Back, 2018, 2019; Bapat, 2020; Biscaia, Trail, Ross, & Yoshida, 2017). Recent research by (Yu & Yuan, 2019) indicates that customer today do not like to be forced for immediate decision making (Rapp, Beitelspacher, Schillewaert, & Baker, 2012; Smirnova, Rebiazina, & Frösén, 2018; Terho, Eggert, Haas, & Ulaga, 2015; Zang, Liu, Zheng, & Chen, 2020). Customer may take their time on decision making as there is no urgency at their side (G. I. Huang, Chen, & Wong, 2020; Jaiyeoba, Abdullah, & Dzuljastri, 2019; Kakalej & Bucko, 2020). The most important things are for the seller to know which brand is actually choosing by the customer and from whom they going to deal and buy. (Khan, Razzaque, & Hazrul, 2017; Jia En Lee et al., 2019). Understanding customer is important as seller need to know what exactly the process and factors that lead to their decision making (Legendre, Cartier, & Warnick, 2019; Letters, 2016; Mathew & Thomas, 2018). (M. F. M. F. Shamsudin, Esa, & Ali, 2019) claimed that it is better to know customer preferences in order to focused on the next steps of marketing and sales elements that may lead to quick win in the market. Seller need to know the point of brand preferences and brand recall on customer mind in order to match the customer preferences and sales messages. Past research (N. Ahmad, Tariq, & Hussain, 2015; R. Ahmad & Scott, 2015; Arbaugh, Cox, & Camp, 2004; Bandura & Lyons, 2014), indicates that customer may have various options and selection before making the decision. The modern marketing elements in 21st century indicates that customer steps in selecting and making decision is getting complicated (Journa, 2014; Kakar, Raziq, & Khan, 2017; Kickul, 2001) The process stated with the awareness followed by search instead jump straight to interest. Dealing with customer at the 21st century requires the sales team to understand the characteristics of customer and the needs and want based on their demographic and psychographic. (Biscaia et al., 2017) argued that there is no shortcut in winning the customer acceptance and close deal. Customer have more bargaining power and they demand alternatives before making choices (Xie, Poon, & Zhang, 2017).

In marketing, (M. F. Shamsudin, Nurana, Aesya, & Nabi, 2018) stated that the process of decision making and brand choices started with the awareness of the product. Customer must have some basic information about the brands before enable to make choices (Jia En Lee et al., 2019). Very frequent today, that customer have multiple choices because of competition (Shamim & Mohsin Butt, 2013). (Mathew & Thomas, 2018) claimed that customer will start to do search on which products that meet their demand from various channel such as product comparison, product features and cost benefit analysis (Ahn & Back, 2019). Seller need to understand the process or otherwise left behind with the current trend of decision making or choice preferences (Trudeau H & Shobeiri, 2016). Customer today is data rich where they have the access to all information's that may assist them to make the best decision making (Trudeau H & Shobeiri, 2016).

Numerous past studies on brand choices (Hassan, Shamsudin, & Mustapha, 2019; M.F. Shamsudin, Ali, Ali, & Shabi, 2019) indicates that customer choice on their branding is not uniform based o0n products and geography. Past research on automobile from various of countries proofed that the choice of brand differs between one to another (G. I. Huang et al., 2020). Another surprise element is the different in brand choice also contributed by the different of respondent (M. Razak, Hidayat, Launtu, Kusuma Putra, & Bahasoan, 2020). (Trudeau H & Shobeiri, 2016) stated that n, gen Y provides a different result as compared to gen X. The same goes to the millennia that may look at other side of brand choice that the current brand X may not interested because of the age factors, economy and priority. Past studies shows a different decision making in terms of customer brand choices (M. Razak et al., 2020).

(Ding & Tseng, 2015) claimed that brand choice is among the major aspects in customer purchase decision. Selection of brand choice involves the elements of preferences and choice based on the factors that suitable to the customer (M.F. Shamsudin, Ali, et al., 2019). Customer background and actual needs is important to be recognized in order to meet and satisfied them (Kim, 2012).

Customer interest should have derived from the information obtained from the data collected during search (Chicu, Pàmies, Ryan, & Cross, 2019). The result of the search will result to interest that may eventually lead to action (Khan et al., 2017). Brand choice at interest level may need little bit influence from the sales team before customer making decision (Mohd Farid Shamsudin, Ali, Wahid, & Nadzri, 2019). The decision made could reflects the current need and preferences of customer or the state of economy of the individual based on the situation during that moment. (Trudeau H & Shobeiri, 2016) defined brand choice as "the extent to which the customer favors the designed service provided by his or her present company, in comparison with the designated service provided by other companies in his or her consideration set."

(Mahendrawathi, Astuti, & Nastiti, 2015) claimed that customer decision making was based on the alternatives availability and the brand quality. (M. F. M. F. Shamsudin, Ishak, Hashim, et al., 2019) at the same times recommended that seller to focused on customer needs and wants followed by the demand. (Belwal & Amireh, 2018) claimed that the needs and wants could be sometime beyond the customer ability but the actual decision will be based on the actual state of customer ability to pay for the transactions (Iwashita, Shimogawa, & Nishimatsu, 2011). (Gerpott & Bicak, 2016) highlighted that the "demand" ability will than make customer to shift from the needs to a more reasonable decision making that reflects their financial status and purchase group. It was also suggested that brand choice is actually just a customer hopes and ambition but seller need to focused on the brand execution for a real market demand (M. F. M. F. Shamsudin, Ali, Nadzri, & Wahid, 2019). Past research (Abror et al., 2019; Hapsari, Clemes, & Dean, 2017) also recommended that understanding the brand choice helps the seller and other sales channel to have a concrete market situation in which representing the purchasing power of the market.

The most crucial point is for the seller to accommodate customer options and choices, past studies on customer choices revealed that there are too many factors that lead to customer decision making (M. F. M. F. Shamsudin, Ali, Wahid, & Saidun, 2019). Past research on brand choices are also not limited to the purchase of automobile (M. Razak et al., 2020). Seller need to give priority to the customer so that they can practiced the best elements (Šerić & Gil-Saura, 2019) and focused on their long term marketing strategy (Khan et al., 2017) in order to increase the market share (A. A. A. A. Razak & Shamsudin, 2019) and sustain the market growth (Khan et al., 2017).

According to (A. A. A. A. Razak & Shamsudin, 2019; M. F. Shamsudin, Razak, & Salem, 2018), customers make judgement based on the alternatives that they have. Too many choices may lead to slow decision making because customer need to realign the features and benefits that can match their requirements. Consumer choices for brands reflect three responses which are psychological, loaded with feeling, and conative, behavioral actions (Shamim & Mohsin Butt, 2013). Many past research related

to sales performances indicates that customer purchase and make decision based on emotion (M. F. Shamsudin, Shabi, & Salem, 2018). Various feeling presented in customer brand choices based on the available products in the market (Ding & Tseng, 2015). Volvo car is associated with safety while BMW brand is associated with sports performance (Kim, 2012). Each manufacturer and products team is manipulating the emotion feeling in order to get response and moderate the decision making process (Trudeau H & Shobeiri, 2016).

The multiple brand choice available in the market leads to a separation of market segment in the market (M. Razak et al., 2020). The split in market segments can helps seller to approach and design their sales activities in a better way. The split in segments also helps manufacturer to understand the actual customer preferences and market situation towards automobile. Overall brand choice is important in marketing as marketing and sales need to know exactly how the market population is behaved (M. F. Shamsudin, Nurana, et al., 2018). There is a chance for manufacturer to design a special model that is going to be produced based on the current state of demand from customers.

2.2   Brand Image

Brand image is important for marketing purposes. It is a general impression from the customer perspective about the products or services (Ding & Tseng, 2015). Brand image is related to customer perceptions and is unique set of relationship stored in customer mind. Customer memory will have stored the image of the promises with regards to the products or services (Kim, 2012). Brand image is also related to the type of tangibles or intangibles and represents both internal and external environments (Shamim & Mohsin Butt, 2013). Brand image of a car can be divided into three components that may affect the customer choice of their car. The first components are related to attributes. The attributes of car are referring to various dimensions but it depends on the capability of the manufacturer to provide all in one products (Jia En Lee et al., 2019). The fact is the manufacturer will produce a certain model based on the best attributes that may attract the interest of a certain market. Attributes could be the size of a car, fuel economy, exterior styling, reliability, value and safety (Naeem, 2019). Brand choices on the attributes will highly depends on the best selection of the model available with the highest points that meet the customer requirements. The model should be able to meet customer needs, wants and demand where it will reflect the ability of customer to pay for the car (Santos Corrada, Flecha, & Lopez, 2020; Valentini, Romenti, Murtarelli, & Pizzetti, 2018). It is very difficult to get all attributes in one model as it may involve a lot of cost and further more will be sell at the higher prices due to the technology and cost of research and development.

Research also highlighted the important of the benefits based on the brand image of a car. Each model may have their own benefits positioning that may attract customer interest and desire. Among the popular benefits that being advertised consistently is Volvo brand that is popular with the safety benefits (Huaman-Ramirez & Merunka, 2019). BMW at the same time introduced themselves as the best car in terms of handling. The different kind of customer objectives make the variability of brand and products seem good to the market. Customer may look for space, speed or capacity. It all depends on the customer choices. Next is important is the brand attitudes. Brand attitudes is referring to the brand itself whether it is high quality or others. Some cars could be known as performance car as compared to other known as family car, town car and many others. The brand image itself translated the attitude of it from the perspective of customer (Mathew & Thomas, 2018).

Car manufacturer may have enjoyed the advantages of the brand perceived by the customer. The perceived brand image should be match with what the manufacturer is expecting. There could something wrong in the product positioning should the perceived brand image is not according to the purpose and intentions of the manufacturer (Yu & Yuan, 2019). Past research indicates that the positive brand image will keep the brand in the mind of customers. Customer can recall easily the brand should there is any matters related to the brand. Brand image also helps the manufacturer to be perceived as reliable and trustworthy (Mathew &

Thomas, 2018). Customer make choices based on their preferences and needs. There is possibility that the needs and wants to exceed the demand. In that case customer may need to abundant their interest due to financial or economy positions (Ahn & Back, 2019).

A good brand image may bring benefits to the manufactures especially in helps the customer to make decision on the best car that they preferred. The brand image can be used as a tool to confirmed the manufacturer credibility (Mathew & Thomas, 2018). Volvo was known as the leader in safety and that is the important for them in order to use the technology related to safety and promote their products along that line. The brand also may help customer to maintains loyal. There are for example customer who are strong supports to Daihatsu and they will choose the same brand for their automobile needs as Daihatsu have passenger car, vans and also lorry. Such things create a positive value to the manufacturer as customer those who trust the brands can extend their interest not only limited to specific choices only (Yu & Yuan, 2019).

Overall, brand image is important in customer choice since it can motivate customer to buy the products. Manufacturer should play positive role in communicating their products attributes, benefits and attitudes so that customer can have a clear information and easier for decision making process.

2.3 Emotional Connections

Emotional connections scored the highest criteria in terms of criteria for customer purchase. Customer have brand bonding that may persuade them to select the brand that have closer emotions to them either by preferences or customer experiences (Klein & Jakopin, 2014). Brand connections provides advantages to the manufacturer as customer will choose the brands that are closed to them. The customer can be categorized as loyal to the brand because of the emotion sentiments. The cause of emotions connections is varying. Research claimed that emotion connections is because of customer past experiences, the products or services that create an overall satisfaction level to customer may lead to a strong emotional connection (Amin et al., 2019).

Past research indicates that emotional connections may influence the result of the brands that stands important to the customer. The customer experiences using a previous model without much hassle can lead to the brand connections. Customer will make another purchase on the same brands as the brands served them well and there is a brand bonding between them. Brand emotion connections could also be lead from the perceptions that people surrounding is looking the brand as vibrant and intense (Klein & Jakopin, 2014). Customer make the selection brand because of the influence from the multiple level of social that may derive from a several senses. The brand emotional connections are important as the manufacturer will have enjoyed a long term benefits over it (Segarra-Moliner & Moliner-Tena, 2016). Manufacturer at first must make sure that customer enjoyed a positive experience over their purchase or usage of the brand. The satisfaction level lead to a higher emotion connection. In order to achieve that manufacture must ensure that they meet the customer expectations.

Research also highlighted that a unique criterion of a brand may influence towards emotion connections. Customer can easily get connected with the brand if the product or the brand focused on the unique characteristic that is not available by other manufacturer or band image (Amin et al., 2017). It has been highlighted recently that besides uniqueness, it is also the brand admirable that can be the source of brand emotion connections. Customer may have admired the brand from young age and the brand will always become the emotion connections when it come about the product category or services (Zang et al., 2020). Customer may wish to admire a luxury car and the brand will always on top of the customer minds when it come the related products line. Manufacture at the same time must focused on the consistency with the product. Each product needs to have the same characteristics that associate to the customer brand emotion connections. The connections could have been developed long time ago and it should be never disappointed customer in terms of quality or performance (Adams, Bodas Freitas, & Fontana, 2019; Li Sa, Choon-Yin, Chai, & Aik Joo, 2019; Rapp et al., 2012).

Customer make choice in their car because they want to feel good. The choice of car is depending on the customer needs and wants. The second criteria are the ability of customer to pay for the product (Awan, Siddiquei, & Haider, 2015). Customer who have high demand will probably get the brand that they wish to have as compared to other customer that may have limitation in terms of demand.

Recent research indicates that manufacturer will have enjoyed advantages upon gaining the brand emotion connections. Customer will help the brand intimacy and support the financial advantages. The emotional connections will increase the sales of the products and helps the manufacturer to increase their market share and growth (Ma, 2017). Brand emotions connection also helps to develop customer loyalty as the customer have higher faith towards the products. Loyal customer may help the manufacturer to increase their brand positing and earn positive growth of market share. Loyal customer also will help the manufacturer not only in terms of repeat purchase but also to communicate the advantages about the process. Customer will share the information and become the spoke person of the brand (Ohiomah, Andreev, Benyoucef, & Hood, 2019).

Overall the customer purchase decision on their car will depends on the variables highlighted. Past research indicates various result that may differ based on geographical areas, type of customers, economy status and the choices that they have. Most research indicates that the emotional connection has a positive relationship but the inconsistency findings make this research more relevant in the contexts of Indonesia (Irawan et al., 2018).

2.4   Price

Basic marketing stated that customer purchase product or services based on their needs and wants. The needs and wants is the actual state or desire based on the customer situation during that time. The decision whether the actual purchase happened is control by the demand (Vijaranakorn & Shannon, 2017). Demand at this context is the ability of customer to pay as an exchange of the products against purchase process. A customer could always have BMW as dream car but the high price of the product could not help to realize the dream. As a result, the customer need to carefully select the products that fall within the customer range of financial capability (Ma, 2017).

Past research indicates that price is very subjective depending on the customer background. The financial state of every single customer could be different. Someone could say the certain amount of price is cheap but the others could say differently. It is all based on how the customer perceived about the value of the certain products (Nisar, Hajli, Prabhakar, & Dwivedi, 2019). In Marketing value is measured by benefits minus cost. The positive high value from the formula may indicates positive product value against the price. The negative value may not bring a significant effect to customer and manufacturer. Customer will not buy a negative value of a products and should the customer bought than it will results to a negative words of mouth (Chakraborty, 2019).

Very often that car manufacturer provides multilevel of price range from the customer to select. Based on research, at least there should have 2 or 3 options that customer may choose based on their preferences (Jalilvand & Samiei, 2012). High price will reflect the exclusive interior and function as compared to the low-price car. Customer need to make choice based on their affordability. Setting of prices is also depends on the competition in the market. Car seller will have determined the best price that can attract more customer to buy and the price will be set based on market intelligent (Souiden & Pons, 2009). Price should be set according to the market demand and competition. Slight lower the price may attract customer to buy as compared to price increment. High price can only be practiced on a high-end car that have their prominent brand names in the market.

Recent research indicates that price may attract customer to buy the products.it actually doesn't means that low price is better than premium prices. There is small car with good brand image sold at higher price (Y. Wang, Wiegerinck, Krikke, & Zhang, 2013). Whereas there is also a car that being sold at lower price. Manufacturer and seller can decide whether they can play price

skimming or penetration rate. Skimming price is good for a new car with less competition. Customer will choose the car because of the benefits and technology. High price at the beginning may help the manufacturer for income returns (Y. Wang et al., 2013). Price will be set lower in order to penetrate new market such as students' market or youth market. The advantage of low price may provide advantages in gaining the market share. Overall the role of price is important as a decision-making factor. Customer may like certain brands but buy different cars due to the price.

III. METHODOLOGY

This research is about measuring the role of brand image, emotional connections and price towards brand choice. The scope of the study is the local people in Indonesia that have planned to purchase a car for their personal usage. This research used quantitative method thus data were collected using the questionnaire. 245 questionnaires were distributed at selected automobile centers and out of that, only 212 are usable. The balance 33 were rejected mainly because not meeting the selection criteria and incomplete data. Questionnaire is divided into 2 sections. Section A is on respondents' profile and section B is on the items to be measured. Section B consisted of 18 questions in which 5 questions (brand image), 4 questions (emotional connections), 5 questions (price) and finally 4 questions representing brand choice. All the questions were adapted from the literature. All data will be analyzed using AMOS and SEM.

IV. FINDINGS

Table 1: Summary of statistics of the questionnaire survey

Constructs	No. of items	Mean	SD	α
Brand Image	5	5.936	1.038	0.893
Emotional connections	4	5.368	1.039	0.864
Price	5	5.312	1.025	0.896
Brand choice	4	5.055	1.258	0.965

Notes: SD, standard deviation; α, Cronbach's α; overall α = 0.903

Table 2: Result of principal component analysis

No	Brand Image	Emotional connections	Price	Brand choice
BI 1	0.854			
BI 4	0.752			
BI 5	0.822			
BI 6	0.893			
BI 7	0.754			
EC 1		0.878		
EC 2		0.865		
EC 3		0.877		
EC 4		0.787		
P 1			0.866	
P 2			0.814	
P 4			0.697	

P 5			0.811	
BC 1				0.920
BC 2				0.903
BC 3				0.864
BC 4				0.845
Eigen value	8.527	4.117	2.763	1.413
Variance explained (%)	35.521	17.135	11.531	5.889

PCA intends to explain the maximum amount of variance with the fewest number of primary components. The PCA was conducted to apprehend the fundamental association of factors data decline and to escape multicollinearity. In the PCA, cut-off point was 0.50 (absolute value less than 0.50 should be quashed), which ensures the questionnaire reliability. As suggested, through the findings of PCA, two item of "BI 2 & BI 3" (brand image) and one item of "P 3" (price) were eliminated due to the value less than 0.50. Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics and Cronbach's α values of the 3 constructs. Table 2 indicates the rotated factor loadings and their corresponding eigenvalues. The rule of thumb for Cronbach's α is 0.70 (Nunnally, 1978). In this study, the α values of each item are higher than the broadly diagnosed rule of thumb, thereby indicating a good internal consistency.

Table 3: Measurement model results

Constructs variables	Standardized loadings	t-statistics	CR	AVE
Brand image				
BI 1	0.883	15.563**	0.87	0.65
BI 4	0.910	16.421**		
BI 5	0.710	12.227**		
BI 6	0.696	11.132**		
BI 7	0.698	11.697**		
Emotional connections				
EC 1	0.812	12.678**	0.93	0.73
EC 2	0.863	13.674**		
EC 3	0.913	14.654**		
EC 4	0.863	13.245**		
Price				
P 1	0.923	18.195**	0.95	0.64
P 2	0.924	11.368**		
P 4	0.721	19.364**		
P 5	0.832	10.687**		
Brand choice				
BC 1	0.922	17.336**	0.91	0.81
BC 2	0.935	18.374**		

BC 3	0.975	15.687**
BC 4	0.812	16.389**

Notes: CR = ($\sum$ Standardized loadings) ^{2}/[($\sum$ Standardized loadings) ^{2}+$\sum$ (measurement indicator error)]; AVE = $\sum$ (Standardized loadings^2)/[$\sum$ (Standardized loadings^2) + $\sum$ (measurement indicator error)]. **Significant at p < 0.01 level

Table 3 presents the values of AVE for constructs ranged from 0.61 to 0.83, which surpassed the threshold value 0.50, thus ensuring the convergent validity. To assess convergent validity, t-statistics related to factor loadings are also taken under consideration (Rao and Troshani, 2007). Table 3 shows the t-statistics values of all items that are significant at the 0.01 level and established the convergent validity of the constructs. To test discriminant validity, AVE is also used (Fornell and Larcker, 1981). The role of thumb is that AVE values should be higher than corresponding squared inter-construct correlation estimates (SIC) in the model (Churchill, 1979).

Table 4 presents SIC values, and the supportive evidence for discriminant validity was found. For example, (Table 4), in case of perceived organizational support, SIC values were 0.13, 0.07, 0.12 and 0.06 for brand image, emotional connections, price and brand choice. The results indicate of discriminant validity. Therefore, all latent construct confirmed the discriminant validity

Table 4: Squared correlations between constructs

	Brand image	Emotional connections	Price	Brand choice
Brand image	0.13			
Emotional connections	0.07	0.05		
Price	0.12	0.16	0.02	
Brand choice	0.06	0.23	0.01	0.03

Table 5 is the result of path analysis of structural model. The results indicate that brand image influence brand choice (β = 0.335; t = 2.1302) and price is also recognized as a predictor to brand choice (β = 0.312; t = 2.628). However, emotional connections do not influence brand choice (β = -1.521; t = -5.461).

Table 5: Path analysis of structural model

Casual path	Hypothesis	Path coefficient	t-statistics	Results
Brand image → Brand choice	H1	0.335*	2.1302	Supported
Emotional connections → Brand choice	H3	-1.521**	-5.461	Not supported
Price → Brand choice	H2	0.312**	2.628	Supported

Note: *,**Significant at p < 0.05 and p < 0.01 levels, respectively

Figure 1: Outcome of the hypothesized structural model
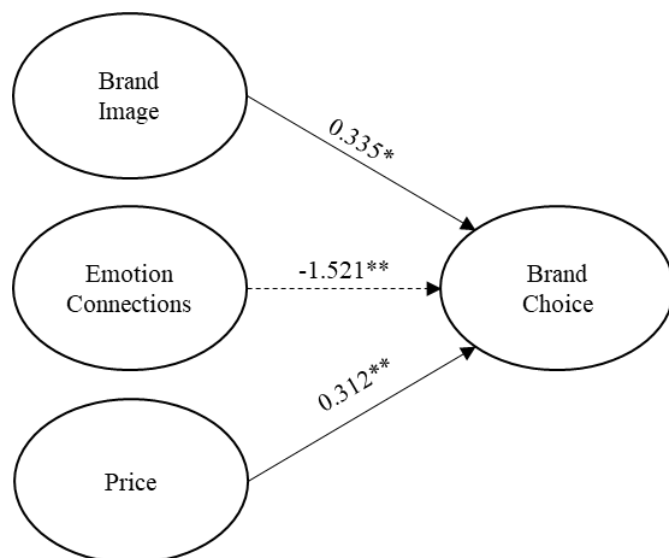
V.   DISCUSSION

This study was conducted with the objective to measure the relationship between brand image, emotional connections and price towards brand choice in selecting customer preferred automobile. The first hypothesis is about the relationship between the brand image towards brand choice. The result revealed that brand image influence customer towards brand choice. It is part of the factors that customer will consider when they want to decide based on brand. Good brand image is necessary as it can help to build customer recognition. Customer make choice based on their needs, wants and demand. In a normal circumstance, customer will make a comparison and evaluate each option that they have before making decision. Brand image helps customer to recognize the brand and identify the competitive advantage in the market. Beside that brand image is useful in crating product information. Regular or experienced customer will easily adapt the features and benefits of the automobile before making decision. The results indicate in this study supports the expectation based on previous study made in a different industry. According to past research (Ali, Xiaoling, Sherwani, & Ali, 2018; Hutchinson & Bennett, 2012; Kim, 2012; Souiden & Pons, 2009) brand image is positively related to brand choice and therefore it is important for the sales team to prepare themselves in order to closed deal in the future.

This study also supported hypothesis 3 where it revealed that price is important as a factor of decision making on brand choice. In marketing, marketers need to understand that there is a need to fulfill customer needs, wants and finally demand. Needs and wants can be easily differentiating because both have been long established. Demand in the context is the ability of customer to pay> it means that the customer is in the state of affordable to pay when it comes to the selection of model. Price is important as part of the decision-making factors. Automobile industry basically aware of the situation and based on that, each brand normally provides a series of product range for customer to choose based on their budget. The results is also parallel towards some of previous research (Djumarno, Anjani, & Djamaluddin, 2018; Jung Eun Lee & Stoel, 2014; J. N. Wang, Du, Chiu, & Li, 2018; Weisstein, Asgari, & Siew, 2014).

Emotion connections however is not significant towards brand choice. The result revealed that brand choice could be considered as one of the factors to be listed during the initial stage of compiling the options but was not listed for the final decision-making process. Customer make decision based on their capacity and ability to pay. End of the day customer might drop the factor based on the value of the purchase. There are however mixed results from the past (C. C. Huang, 2017; Monferrer, Moliner, & Estrada, 2019; Suhartanto, Gan, Sarah, & Setiawan, 2019; Umasuthan, Park, & Ryu, 2017). However, it can be justified that

the difference was due to the category of products and their price level. Customer may tolerate with certain price range in order to get the products based on the emotion connections but as for automobile the commitment is over a long term of period and need more than the emotion connections as a basis of decision making.

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