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THE EXPERIMENTAL INVESTIGATION FOR COUNTRY OF MANUFACTURE EFFECT ON CARS' BRAND

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research is to offer a new perspective of Country of Origin effects on consumers' brand personality of domestic versus imported automobiles. It aims to assess the perceived differences between automobiles with same brand but produced by different two countries, moreover the consumer distinguished upon involvement level segmentation. This is an experimental design study with Cluster Analysis to classify consumer involvement level and the main method is MANOVA. The study investigated the impact of longitudinal experimental set of field treatments on participant brand personality who are the owners' two consimilar cars: Toyota cars made in Indonesia; and cars originally imported from Japan. The findings of this research indicate that Country of Brand and Country of Manufacturing with clusters of consumer's involvement level basis have various effects on consumers' brand personality. This experimental research has recommended a concept Enduring Country of Manufacturing Effect which had two arguments, i.e. the country of manufacture exerts a greater enduring influence on the perceived personality than the country of brand. Furthermore, the local country of manufacture showed more influences to the enduring and situational involved level consumers cluster, in the contrary, the response of involved consumers level cluster tend to think otherwise.

INTRODUCTION

The automobile market has historically been dominated by manufacturers based in developed countries. Developed country manufacturers serve their home markets first, then export to foreign country and direct investing in developing country markets such as Indonesia and Malaysia. In addition, as pressure increases to reduce costs, they might look to Indonesia as a source of inexpensive manufacturing and might increasingly manufacture their cars in Indonesia and export them to developed countries. The blend of rising incomes of middle positive consumption climate has made car makers can

take benefit from consumer's motivations to make their ability to access a certain level of individual mobility as an expression of rising prosperity. In this context, the purchase of car allows its owner to climb the social ladder and acquire higher regard among peers. In other words, in an developing economy like Indonesia, a car is a generally recognized and widely aspired as a symbol of success. Indonesia has appealed to go further than just providing market growth. As the most populated nation in ASEAN, Indonesia offers significant volume perspectives to an auto industry which faces a structural decline of vehicle sales throughout the whole of Europe.

Currently in Indonesia, the major automotive companies are ATPMs (*agen tunggal pemegang merek*/the sole agent) for foreign principals. The market in Indonesia is dominated by Group companies, the largest is Astra International (Toyota, Daihatsu and Isuzu, Peugeot, BMW and Lexus) with 54 percent market share. However, stiff competition is provided by Indomobil (Nissan and Suzuki) and Krama Yudha (Mitsubishi). Japanese brands are the undisputed leaders when it comes to individual market share within Indonesia and Toyota sits at top of the leaderboard. In terms of manufacturing, Indonesia is viewed as an ideal country by Japanese automotive players, largely in part to low labor costs. This has produced aggressive competition among the top Japanese manufacturers players from China, India and the US in which they also seek to get a foothold in the market. It increases competitiveness in Indonesia; one of the efforts is building great Brand Personality. Hence, how will Toyota cars consumers react to cars originating from or manufactured in developing countries? A key question that arises is how consumers perceive the Country of origin of a Brand (COB) versus the Country of Manufacturing (COM) for the same car, and specifically where the differences arise. Therefore, it needs a research focusing on the effects of country of origins in the car manufacture research context, it is about the comparison between two car products. NOAH and NAV1 are the perfect TOYOTA's products, because one is manufactured in home country (Japan), and the other one is manufactured in developing country (Indonesia). They are actually the same product; boxy shaped luxury MPV car made by TOYOTA. In Japan, the brand name is 'NOAH', while in Indonesia, it is called 'NAV1' or 'Navigator1' which have 'Alphard'-interior look alike. Meanwhile, some studies investigate developed country consumers' brand perceptions of developing and developed country cars and analyze the relationship between them. Moreover, little is also known about how consumers' brand perceptions are varied and affected by the level of involvement of the consumer.

The objectives of this research are: 1) to make Consumer Involvement Level Segmentation, 2) to investigate both in Pre-Test and Post-Test of The Country of Origins effects towards Brand Personality on Enduring Involvement Level segmented consumers, 3) to investigate the effects both in Pre-Test and Post-Test of The Country of Origins towards Brand Personality on Situational Involvement Level segmented consumers, and 4) to investigate both in Pre-Test and Post-Test of The Country of Origins effects towards Brand Personality on Response Involvement Level segmented consumers.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Country of Origins (COO)

COO is defined as the perception of country of manufacture, production, or where product comes from. Hamin and Eliott (2006) describe that the concept of Country of Origin can occur based on the consumer's experience when visiting the Country of Origin of such products, news adopted in the country, certain beliefs, and can also be a common perception that people have in certain areas. The COO affects the equation of information and perception of a country, when consumers evaluate the product or brand of the country. Beliefs and perceptions of a product from a country in a set of attributes are called the image of the country. Image of the country which attached to a product is one of the clues that help shape the image of the extrinsic overall products. The effect changes over time; image of a country will change as consumers become more familiar with the country, or when the quality of the actual product is increasing. Brands from countries with a favorable country image typically are more readily accepted than brands from countries with less favorable images (Yasin, Noor & Osman, 2007). The reputation of a country to the product categories tends to be more influential than the overall attractiveness (O'Shaughnessy & O'Shaughnessy, 2004). Sometimes COO perceptions may cover the entire product of a country. Rahman (2001) concludes the effects of Country of Origin filled with complex phenomenon. In this case, the effect of COO is influenced by demography depends on the category and product dimensions.

Therefore, the implications of a favorable country image become extremely important to brand that has not been established in a given market as is the case with developing country car brands. Other factors that contribute to the hierarchy are country and product familiarity, culture, political climate and openness to foreign cultures (Balabanis, Mueller & Melewar, 2002; Laroche, Papadopoulos, Heslop & Mourali, 2005; Ahmed & d'Astous, 2008).

Country of a Brand (COB) versus Country of Manufacture (COM)

The increased occurrence of bi-national products may result in potential dissonance for consumers; they may carry a brand associated with one country but are increasingly manufactured and assembled in another country, potentially prevent their chance to enter new markets.

A perspective change on the Country of Manufacturing can have a deleterious effect on a brand name. When a company chooses to change the country of manufacturing of a given product from a country that consumers have a favorable perception to a country with less favorable associations, the brand name could be hurt as result of lower consumer brand perceptions arising from the Country of Origin effect. Japanese cars suffered erosion of brand attractiveness when production was shifted from Japan to less developed countries. Even in the case of prestigious global brands, consumers' perception of quality and their purchase decisions are likely to be influenced not only by the brand name but also by where the products are manufactured or assembled (Pappu, Quester & Cooksey, 2006).

Understanding how COB and COM impact brand perceptions will increase the effectiveness of marketing and brand managers by providing

insights to manage production, marketing and ultimately their brand management which will influences consumers' perception of cars and their purchasing behavior. We define Country of Origin of a Brand (COB) as the country where the brand is originally from, where the headquarter is located; and the Country of Manufacturing (COM) is defined as the country where the product is primarily produced and assembled.

Brand Personality

Building a global brand is a dream of all automotive companies. Briefly, brands are inanimate objects, yet consumers often see brands as having human characteristics, creating a brand personality (Aaker, 1997, Kotler, Keller, Ancarani & Costabile, 2014). Like human personality, brand personality can be thought as a relatively enduring predisposition about a product's image or trait characteristics. Aaker has developed dimensions of Brand Personality which includes:

- Sincerity (Down-to-earth, Family-Oriented/Wholesome, Honest, and Sincere). It reflects pure human nature; reflects how the brand really shows its consistency in fulfilling consumer's needs, wants, and expectations.
- Excitement (Daring, Spirited, Imaginative and Up to Date). It reflects how the brand gives joy to its users.
- Competence (Reliable, Intelligent, and Successful). It means that the brand has competence to show its presence in the market.
- Sophistication (Upper class and Charming). It reflects how the brand gives value to its consumers.
- Ruggedness (Outdoorsy and tough). It shows how the brand could survive in the competition. The elements refer to solid and strong elements.

Consumer Involvement Level

Schiffman has suggested that "Involvement is a heightened state of awareness that motivates consumers to seek out, attend to, and think about product information prior to purchase". It is the perceived interest and importance that a consumer attaches to the acquisition and consumption of a product/service offering. Consumers approach the marketplace and the corresponding product/service offerings with varying levels and intensity of interest and personal importance.

This classification embraces the first distinction of involvement proposed by Houston and Rothschild (1978) and noted further by Michaelidou and Dibb (2008) and Karaatli (2015) suggesting that involvement has three types, namely:

Enduring Involvement

This approach is viewed as a property of an attitude, i.e. enduring or stable over time marked by long-term attachment, personal value connected, and committed to one brand, and categorized as cognitive-based definitions (Havitz & Mannell, 2013). In the consumer behavior domain, involvement is defined as the degree of psychological connection between an individual and a stimulus object, such as a product, brand, advertisement, task, or idea. Thus, individuals will form a psychological attachment with an object reflecting

the extent to which the object is perceived as self-related and relevant with their 'cognitive elements'.

Situational Involvement:

It represents a 'mental state' in the form of a temporary concern, 'short-term phenomenon' with a stimulus object. Once the purchase has been completed, the situational involvement subsides (Rehman, Shaaref & Ishaque, 2012). It is affected because the situations happened to consumers. It includes needs that match with the situation and product promotions (i.e. discounts and cashbacks).

Response Involvement:

Response involvement is represented in the third distinction between the types of involvement; both 'mental state' and 'behavioral' processes. It is commonly accepted that they represent possible outcomes of involvement (such as extended problem solving).

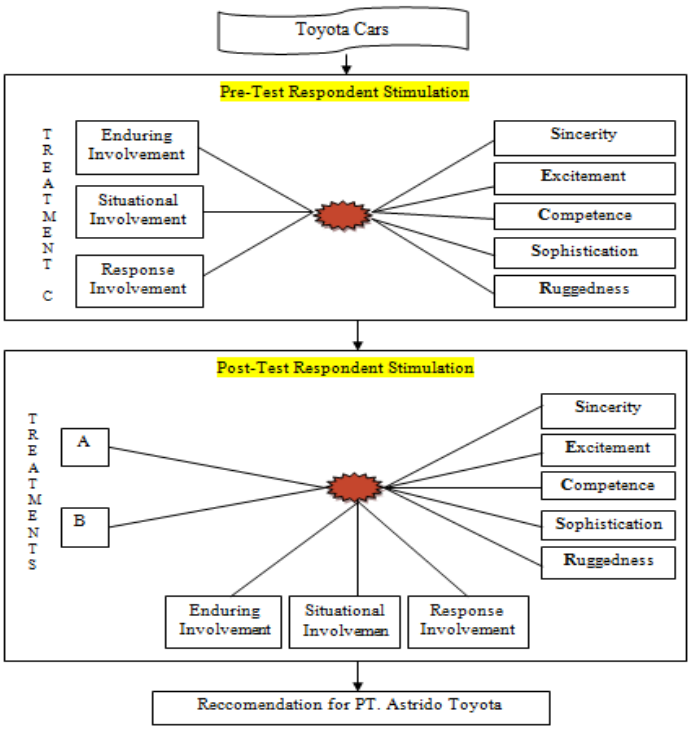

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

MATERIALS AND METHODS

An experimental design (Subject Design with One Group Pre-Test – Post-Test Block Design) is used to test the hypothesis. Two types of questionnaire are developed in each longitudinal time horizon (Hair, Black, Babin & Anderson, 2013). As a preliminary survey, exploratory qualitative data from respondents are to strengthen the indicator which later will be turned into a quantitative data for this experimental method (Aryanto & Sarjono, 2010). The Pre-Test included the personal questions and involvement level to get a specific Consumer Involvement Level Segmentation and statements related to the Brand Personality indicators. The Post-Test were given for minimum spare time of 3 days for the same respondent included two pictures with descriptions of cars based on the Country of Origin and same questions related to the Brand Personality indicators to know if there will be any differences or changes. The items are scored on a five-point Likert-type

scale. For the Control Group, they are given Pre-Test 2 times to measure if there are any differences in consumer's perception of Brand Personality after days.

To obtain good results, the sample size for experimental study, according to Sekaran and Bougie (2010), is more than 30 and less than 500 are appropriate for most research. If sample is split into subsamples, a minimum sample size of 30 for each category is appropriate.

Japan and Indonesia were selected as developed country and developing country in the experiment, respectively. Japan was chosen because it is the largest producer automobile market in the world and Indonesia. Indonesia was chosen because it is the third largest automotive producing country in the world, and Indonesian automotive companies are on the verge of entering developed country markets either by exporting or foreign direct investment. Therefore, TOYOTA is the perfect representative company. NAV1 (Indonesia) and NOAH (Japan) are perfect experiment tools since both of them are the same product.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Using cluster segmentation analysis, 3 clusters made are as follows:

- Cluster 1 or Enduring Involvement Level consists of 33 respondents. Committed, have long term attachment, purchase match personal value.
- Cluster 2 or Situational Involvement Level consists of 30 respondents. Affected by promotions, purchase based on needs.
- Cluster 3 or Response Involvement Level consists of 35 respondents. Hard of evaluations, do extensive attitudes searching.

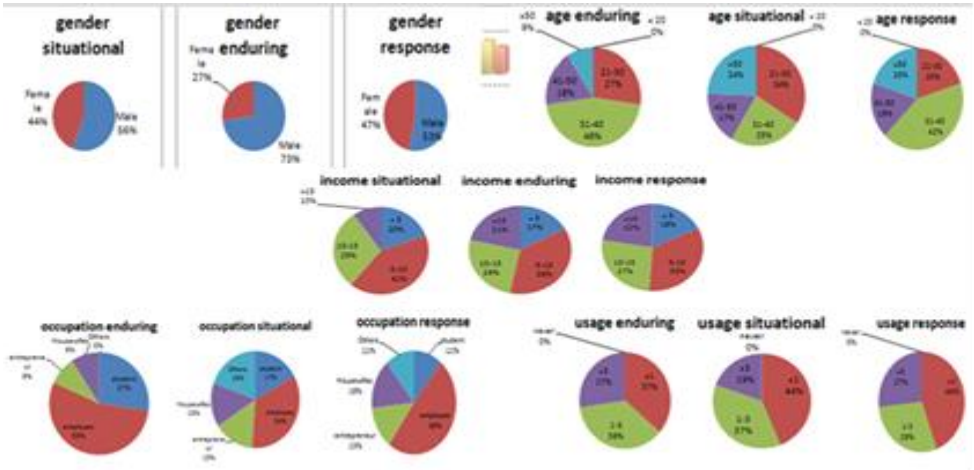

Figure 2. Participants Clustering

In MANOVA, the Levene's Test indicate all values of the Sig are <0.05; it means that each Brand Personality dimension in every Consumer's Involvement Level doesn't have same variant-covariant matrix on every test. On the Between Subject Test, the all values of Sig are <0.05 and R-squared value are all >0.5. It means every Brand Personality dimensions in every Consumer's Involvement Level is affected by COO, and shows differences on Pretest, Post-Test of Indonesia, and Post-Test of Japan.

Table 1. *Multivariate Test of Brand Personality Dimensions on Consumer's Involvement Level*

	ENDURING		SITUATIONAL		RESPONSE		CONTROL	
	F	**Sign**	**F**	**Sign**	**F**	**Sign**	**F**	**Sign**
Sincerity	1110.136	,000	1.770	,015	1.504	,213	2,696	,030
Excitement	179,668	,000	7,036	,001	2,617	,038	5,598	,001
Competence	118,835	,000	7,938	,001	1.330	,027	2,668	,031
Sophistication	3772,796	,000	1.838	,001	4,223	,010	20.142	,000
Ruggedness	97,226	,000	,929	,021	1.349	,026	3.902	,005

Table 2. *Comparative Brand Personality Dimensions on Consumer's Involvement Level based on Tests between Subject Effect*

	ENDURING			SITUATIONAL			RESPONSE			CONTROL	
	Pre-Test	**Post-Test Indonesia**	**Post-Test Japan**	**Pre-Test**	**Post-Test Indonesia**	**Post-Test Japan**	**Pre-Test**	**Post-Test Indonesia**	**Post-Test Japan**	**Pre-Test**	**Post-Test**
Sincerity	3.82	4,01	4,01	3.74	3.85	3.68	3.68	3.41	3.45	3.62	3.63
Excitement	3.45	3.8	3.5	3.78	3.84	3.62	3.49	3.34	3.46	3.55	3.51
Competence	4,53	3.84	4,15	4,07	4,18	3.91	3.68	3.17	3.64	4,2	3.77
Sophistication	2,27	3.88	3	3.27	3.75	3.3	2,81	3.68	3.26	3.87	3.71
Ruggedness	3.67	3.76	4,23	3.55	3.88	4,37	3.3	3.14	3.86	3.36	3.47
BP Means	**3.55**	**3.86**	**3.78**	**3.68**	**3.9**	**3.78**	**3.39**	**3.35**	**3.53**	**3.72**	**3.618**

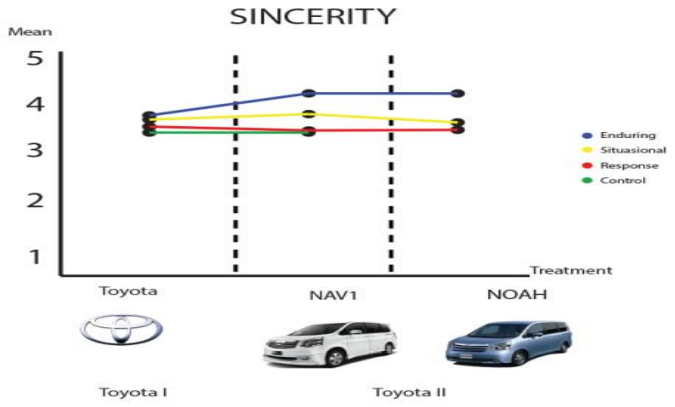

Figure 3. Car brand sincerity personality testing on each customer level

The dimension of the car sincerity brand personality effect showed that the Enduring Involved Level consumers like Sincerity both NAV1 and NOAH (same value at 4.01); it means that cars made in Indonesia are as sincere as cars made by TOYOTA's original brand in Japan. The Situational Involved Level consumers tends to like Sincerity more in NAV1 (3.85) than NOAH (3.68); it means cars made in Indonesia are sincerer than cars made from Japan. The Response Group thinks that cars made in Japan are sincerer

than cars made in Indonesia. Enduring Involved Level consumers has the highest Sincerity assessment value among the three clusters.

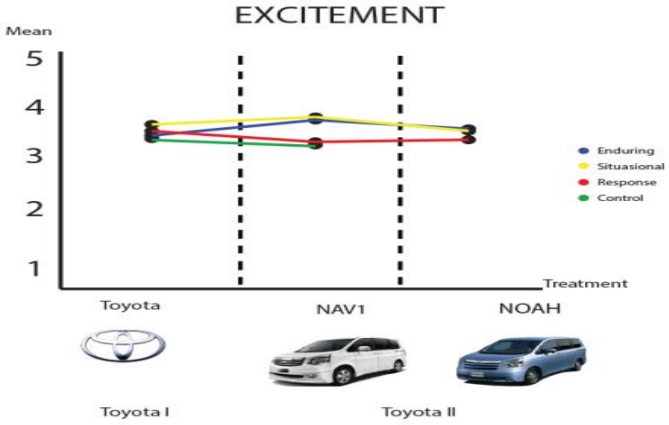

Figure 4. Car brand excitement personality testing on each customer level

The dimension of the car excitement brand personality effect showed that the Enduring Involved Level consumers like excitement more in NAV1 than NOAH; it means cars made in Indonesia are more exciting than cars made by TOYOTA's original brand in Japan. The Situational Involved Level consumers tend to like Sincerity more in NAV1 (3.84) than NOAH (3.62); it means cars made in Indonesia are more exciting than cars made in Japan. The Response Group thinks that cars made in Japan are more exciting than cars made in Indonesia. Overall, the Situational Involved Level consumers has the highest Sincerity assessment value among the three clusters.

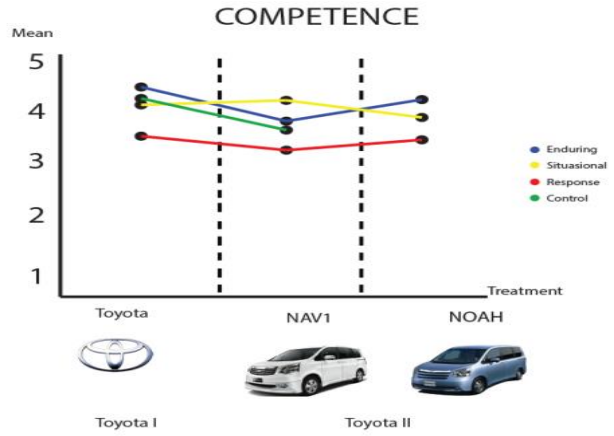

Figure 5. Car brand excitement personality testing on each customer level

Enduring Involved Level consumers like the competence more in NOAH than NAV1 (the value of Post II is higher); it means that cars made in Japan are more competent than cars made by TOYOTA Indonesia. The Situational Involved Level consumers are the opposite; they tend to like Competence more in NAV1 than NOAH; it means that cars made in Indonesia are more competent than cars made in Japan. The Response Group thinks that cars made in Japan are more competent than cars made in Indonesia.

Overall, Enduring Involved Level consumers has the highest Competence assessment value among the three clusters in Post II (NOAH-Japan), while Situational Involved Level consumers has the highest value in Post-Test

(NAV1-Indonesia). For Control Group, there is a difference between Pre-Test and Post-Test.

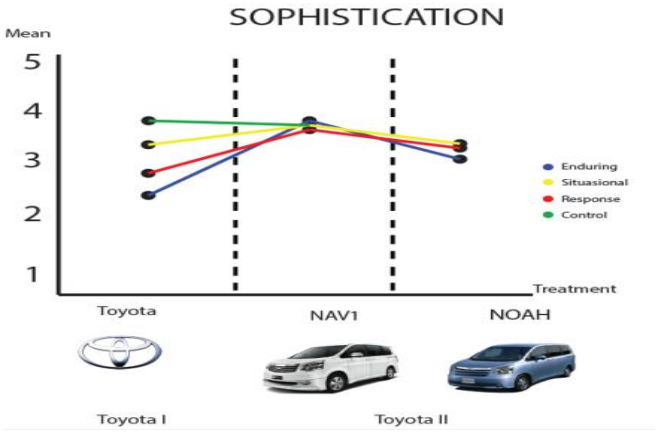

Figure 7. Car brand sophistication personality testing on each customer level

The plot shows that the means of sophistication is different, test by test. The Enduring Involved Level consumers like Sophistication in NAV1 than NOAH (the value of Post I is higher); it means cars made in Indonesia are more sophisticated than cars made by TOYOTA's original brand in Japan. The Situational Involved Level consumers are also pretty much the same; they tend to like Sincerity more in NAV1 than NOAH; it means cars made in Indonesia are more sophisticated than cars made in Japan. The Response Group thinks that cars made from Indonesia are more sophisticated than cars mad e in Japan.

Overall, all of three clusters have the same thoughts and insights, that cars made in Indonesia (NAV1) is more sophisticated than the one made in Japan (NOAH). Situational Involved Level consumers has the highest Sophistication assessment value among the three clusters. For Control Group, there is a difference between Pre-Test and Post-Test.

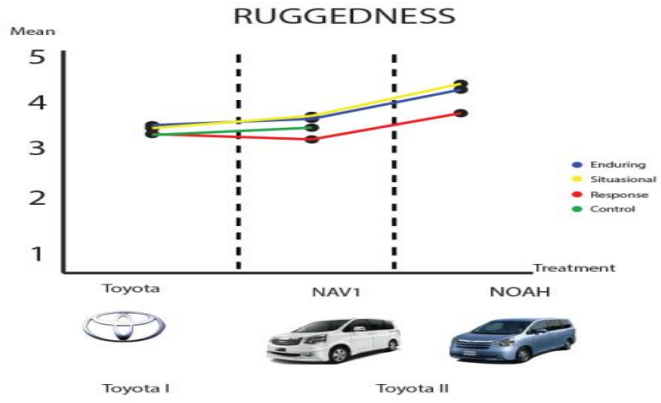

Figure 8. Car brand ruggedness personality testing on each customer level

The dimension of the car sincerity brand personality effect showed that the Enduring Involved Level consumers like the Ruggedness in NOAH than NAV1 (the value of Post II is higher); it means that cars made in Japan are more rugged than cars made by TOYOTA Indonesia. The Situational Involved Level consumers are also pretty much the same; they tend to like Ruggedness more in NOAH than NAV1; it means that cars made in Japan

are more rugged than cars made in Indonesia. The Response Group thinks that cars made from Indonesia are more sophisticated than cars made in Japan.

Overall, all three clusters have the same thoughts and insights that cars made in Japan (NOAH) is more rugged than the ones made in Indonesia (NAV1). Situational Involved Level consumers has the highest Ruggedness assessment value among the three clusters. For Control Group, there is difference between Pre-Test and Post-Test.

Table 3. *Overall Comparative of Brand Personality on Consumer's Involvement Level between Subject Test*

TREATMENT GROUP	Pre-Test	Post-Test Indonesia	Post-Test Japan
Enduring	3.55	3.86	3.78
Situational	3.68	3.9	3.78
Response	3.39	3.35	3.53
CONTROL GROUP	**Pre-Test**		**Post-Test**
Control	3.47		3.59

Overall, The Enduring and Situational Involved consumers tend to think that Brand Personality in NAV1 (cars made in Indonesia) is higher than NOAH (cars made in Japan). In contrary, the Response Involved consumers think that Brand Personality in NOAH (cars made in Japan) is higher than NAV1 (cars made in Indonesia). The Control Group also shows differences between Pre-Test and Post-Test. It means that their answers in indicators of Brand Personality on TOYOTA cars in general is different from Pre-Test and Post-Test. These results can trigger companies to produce domestically manufactured cars. Meanwhile, it also needs to be supported by R & D to produce new innovation and technology (So, Ridwan, Simamora & Aryanto, 2017).

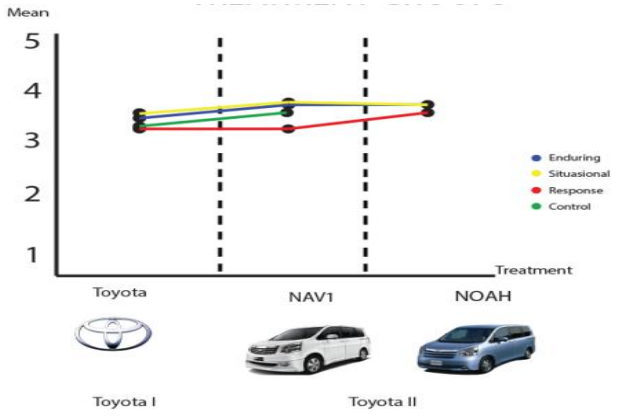

Figure 9. Overall Car brand personality testing on each customer level

CONCLUSIONS

The results show some lights on this issue and suggest interesting strategic marketing implications. The main findings of this paper are as follows.

There are 3 clusters made. Cluster 1 (Enduring Involvement Level) represents the characteristics of consumers who are committed, have long

term attachment with TOYOTA cars, and buy cars which match their personal value. This cluster consists of 33 respondents. Cluster 2 or Situational Involvement Level who has characteristics of being affected by PT. Astrido's promotion activities such as discounts and cashbacks and making a purchase based on needs. This cluster consists of 30 respondents and has higher preference in NAV1. The last, Cluster 3 or Response Involvement Level represents consumers who need long evaluation in purchase and do extensive substitute searching if they want to buy a car. This cluster consists of 35 respondents and prefer NOAH. There's also Control Group (as a control in experimental research) in order to see if there are differences between Pre-Test and Post-Test treatments.

In Enduring Involvement Level, there are strong effects between treatment tests (TOYOTA in general and COO) shown by R-squared value of >0.5. The effect changes test by test as seen (they have different value dots) on the Plot. The biggest F score of Ruggedness (6.431) is on the Post-Test for Japan. It means that every indicator of Ruggedness of NOAH cars is the one which is affected the most by Enduring involved consumers; and it is what needs to be developed. The development can be done by changing the outlook design to be tougher and the car's height to be higher.

In Situational Involvement Level, there are strong effects between treatment tests (TOYOTA in general and COO) shown by R-squared value of >0.5. The effect changes test by test as seen (they have different value dots) on the Plot. The biggest F score of Sincerity (1.229), Sophistication (5.405), and Ruggedness (1.136) are on the Post-Test for Indonesia. It means that every indicator of Sincerity, Sophistication, and Ruggedness of NAV1 cars is the one which is affected the most by Situational involved consumers; and it is what needs to be developed for them. The development could be done by giving the outlook of upper-class and tougher on the design. Moreover, the biggest F score of Excitement (0.645) is on the Post-Test for Japan. It means that each indicator of Excitement of NOAH cars is affected the most by Situational involved consumers; and it is what needs to be developed for them. The development could be done by changing design to be trendier, more spirited, and sportier.

In Response Involvement Level, there are strong effects between treatment tests (TOYOTA in general and COO) shown by R-squared value of >0.5. The effect changes test by test as seen (they have different value dots) on the Plot. The biggest F score of Sincerity (1.195) and Competence (0.828) are on the Post-Test Indonesia. It means that every indicator of Sincerity and Competence of NAV1 cars is the one which is affected the most by Response involved consumers; and it is what needs to be developed. The development is needed such as adding features so NAV1 can be more reliable and intelligent. Moreover, the biggest F score of Sophistication (1.711) and Ruggedness (0.862) are on the Post-Test for Japan. It means every indicator of Sophistication and Ruggedness of NOAH cars is the one which is affected the most by Response involved consumers; and it is what needs to be developed for them. The development needed are such as changing the design to be trendier, sportier and more luxurious.

In conclusion, COB and COM along with Consumer's Involvement Level do affect Brand Personality. The concept of brand personality does not only appear to capture the differences in consumer perceptions, but it gives

important insights as to exactly where those differences and similarities locate. It is important to recognize every characteristic of the clusters. The clusters made are the segmentation of involvement level that consumer made with TOYOTA brand; it massively affects how consumers perceive a value of car and play role in responding marketing tactics and this lead to relationship between customer and product or brand. Understanding how each of the cluster's characteristics helps the company design a marketing program which suits the most. Enduring involved consumer needs to be informed that the car suits their personal values and they need tough and rugged car. Situational involved consumer needs to be informed that the car is a solution for their need, sincere and sophisticated. Response involved consumers need a car which is sincere and competent. This suggests PT. Astrido Toyota to maintain all the three clusters made for NAV1 so that the marketers and sales people could imply what marketing tactics and what Brand Personality dimensions needs to be offered for each Involvement Level through promotional tools. These three clusters can be implied to market of every car and give cluster segmentation to simply classify the prospect consumers before they buy a car. This research recommends that image of COB affects how people perceive Brand Personality. TOYOTA Indonesia could focus on selling NAV1 and any other cars by implying Japanese work ethic; *Kaizen* (forever continuous improvement). In addition, it is advised that the marketers need to give deep and specific specifications, extensive information and describe the evaluation process to all consumers, especially for Response Involved consumers.

The results of this research are in line with the success of Toyota brand *Kijang* which has become the market leader and a legend in Indonesia; the *Kijang* brand is a collaboration of Indonesia with Japan manufacturing. The combination of bi-national country of origin effect (COB and COM) is viewed differently by Indonesian consumers. The two groups are reported massively prefer NAV1; it is also a contrast proof of several former research; the perceptions of people shifted, they put more trust on global car brand. Several research findings recommend: a global brand provides higher perceived quality, greater prestige, higher status, and reflects greater esteem (Johansson & Ronkainen, 2005) than local/domestic brands. Holt, Quelch and Taylor. (2004) found that global brands, in addition to being quality signals, are symbols of cultural ideals that are representatives of socially responsible actions. Rosenbloom and Haefner (2009) append that the purchase of a perceived of global versus local brand is smitten with the level of consumers' involvement.

Overall findings of this research show that the same car made in Indonesia is perceived to have a stronger brand personality than cars made in Japan. This suggests that the COM exerts a greater influence on the perceived personality of a brand than the COB. But interestingly, only Response involved consumers fail to prefer Japan brand cars. Finally, we note one of the most interesting aspects of this research i.e. the contributions to the body of knowledge. This experimental research has recommended a concept called Country of Manufacturing Effect (COME) for Cars' Brand which had two arguments.

- The Country of Manufacture exerts a greater enduring influence on the perceived personality of a brand than the Country of Brand, especially on car industries.
- The Local Country of Manufacture shows more influence; it means that the perceptions of people have shifted. They put more trust on local car manufacturers. Interestingly, only Response involved consumers fail to prefer Indonesian cars.

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