

Does Perceived Risk Mediate Affect and Foreign Product Purchase?

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ABSTRACT--- *This paper examines the triangular relationship between perceived risk, affect toward foreign country (affinity and animosity) and intention to buy product from those affinity/animosity country. The 307 questionnaires from internet survey toward the citizens of five big cities in Indonesia were retained for data analysis using Baron and Kenny mediation analysis and Structural Equation Model. Result suggests perceived risk plays mediation role for both positive and negative affect toward foreign country and consumer intention. This paper also shows that consumer may simultaneously experiences both positive and negative affect. The paper offers unique insight about affect heuristic in Country of Origin study, about how consumer apprehends risk toward foreign country while their affective component takes place. This study result shows that affect study is also relevant in contexts of non-durable product.*

1. RESEARCH BACKGROUND

Consumers are exposed by uncertainty or risky decision making situation on daily basis. On this uncertainty situation, consumers' perceptions of risk are considered to be central to their evaluations, choices, and behaviors. Perceived risk constitutes an important facet of consumer behavior because consumers are frequently motivated by avoiding risk rather than maximizing utility during the consumption process [1]. People judge a risk not only by what they think about it but also by how they feel about it. If consumer feelings toward a stimulus are favorable, they tend to judge the risks as low and the benefits as high; if their feelings toward the stimulus are unfavorable, they tend to make the opposite judgment high risk and low benefit. This phenomena is called the affect heuristic: the experienced feelings are used as information to guide judgment and decision making [2].

Related to country of origin (COO) study - the affect heuristic does have an important role to consumer behavior. In some cases, consumers are concerned about the COO because the mention of a particular country triggers feelings in the consumer's mind. Consumers may evolve a positive feeling toward foreign country for example admiration and affinity. Consumer may also commit a negative affect toward specific country, for example animosity. If negative affect is experienced when making risk judgments, the perceived risk should increase.

Although affect and affect heuristic has long played a key role in many behavioral theories, still there are some voids from affect heuristic previous study. Firstly, affect has rarely been recognized as an important component of perceived risk, human judgment and decision making. The main focus of descriptive decision research has been cognitive, rather than affective [3]. Consequently the first goal of this study is to examine the role of perceived risk that triggered by affect, in determining consumer purchase intention. Does perceive risk serve mediating role between this two extreme affect toward foreign product purchase intention?

The second void is still there is a debate whether positive affect and negative affect are polar opposite on the same continuum or are they different constructs, not a polar opposite. This unresolved debate brings the possibility of positive and negative affect occurs simultaneously is being neglected. In fact, marketers would like to be informed 'why consumer does not buy foreign product' as well as 'why consumer buy foreign product'. Wongtada *et al.*, suggest that positive and negative affect may simultaneously occur [4]. Thus present study would like to examine simultaneously the impact of the positive and negative affect toward specific country and investigate any conflict between those two affects.

Thirdly, previous study shows that the animosity studies usually use durable product as research setting, while non-durable product is being neglected. In fact, consumer would take different decision making mechanism for different product category, for example choosing durable and non-durable product. The present study attempts to fill in this void

by using non-durable product setting to determine whether the relationship of affect, perceived risk and intention are relevant for the non-durable product.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Perceived Risk and Behavioral Intention

Numerous occasions have shown that perceived risk affect consumer behavior and purchasing pattern. Perceived risk is defined as the consumer's subjective expectations of loss for each of the possible choice alternatives for a given decision goal [5]. In most circumstances, according to the theory of perceived risk the highest preference will be associated with the brands which have least perceived risk [6]. For example tourists tend to avoid destinations they perceive as risky and choose ones they consider safe [7].

Hypotheses 1: Perceived risk positively affects consumers' unwillingness to buy foreign products

Affect Heuristic

Evidence of risk as feelings was present in early studies of risk perception, showed that feelings of dread were the major determiner of public perception and acceptance of risk. There is inverse relationship between perceived risk and perceived benefit of an activity was linked to the strength of positive or negative affect associated with that activity as measured by rating the activity on bipolar scales such as good/bad, nice/awful, and so forth [8]. If someone feelings toward an activity are favorable, they tend to judge the risks as low and the benefits as high; if their feelings toward the activity are unfavorable, they tend to make the opposite judgment, high risk and low benefit. This phenomena usually known as the affect heuristic [3]. Finucane and colleague argue that affect heuristic is more efficient than analytic processing.

The role of affect in risk perception and other evaluations is supported by notion of 'affective primacy' [9]. This study was known as strong proponent of the importance of affect in decision making. This entails people always making an affective evaluation before a cognitive elaboration of a stimulus. The affective evaluation is based on the approach-avoidance distinction, which is actually a fundamental response or gut reaction to a hazard: is this situation safe or should I avoid it? Such an evaluation is quick. Affective responses to risks have provided survival benefits to humans. Consequently, people still have instantaneous, affective responses to the risks they encounter, regardless of whether these risks have always threatened human life or have only recently been introduced. According to 'affective primacy' all perceptions contain some affect. 'We do not just see A house: We see a *handsome* house, an *ugly* house, or a *pretentious* house'.

Affect and Purchase Intention

In International marketing context, consumer may evolve some feeling toward foreign country. They develop affect in order to evaluate or judging some stimulus. Many literatures have drawn increasing attention to different types of affect toward counterpart country and foreign product. Animosity is one of several possible affect that individuals might experience towards members of other countries. The international animosity model first introduced by Klein *et al.*, [10]. Animosity is defined as remnants of antipathy related to previous or ongoing military, political or economic events. Consumer animosity will influence willingness or unwillingness of consumers to purchase foreign products from opposed country. Consumer animosity consisted of two dimensions such as politic or war animosity, and economic animosity. The politic or war animosity stems from acts of aggression or warlike behavior, while economic animosity results from feelings of economic dominance or aggression. In recent situations, current study extend that politic animosity is included war animosity, diplomatic disputes, border conflict and psychological war conflicts. It is found that consumers' might harbor different levels of animosity toward different COOs [11].

Proceed on Klein *et al* (1998) working that animosity has negative impact into foreign product purchase intention, this study propose hypotheses as below:

Hypotheses 2: Consumer animosity positively affects consumer unwillingness to buy product originating from the animosity country.

Related to affect heuristic on perceived risk, some studies mention that if consumer feelings toward the activity are unfavorable, they tend to make the opposite judgment, high risk and low benefit [3] [8]. People in the state of negative affect have a tendency to evaluate object as 'more harm' or 'more dread' than people whom on the positive affect.

Hypotheses 3: Consumer animosity positively affects consumers' perceived risk.

Animosity might decrease and be overcome a positive feeling, affinity – for example, might interact with the animosity impact toward willingness to buy in foreign product

Affinity - a construct of favorable affect toward specific foreign countries. Consumer affinity refers to a feeling of liking, sympathy, and even attachment toward a specific foreign country [12]. The sources of consumer affinity span from similarity—for example, in terms of language, culture, political, and economical situation—to personal experience of the country. Accordingly it is stated that *emotional attachment to the country [rather than] ... cognitive beliefs about the country's ability to produce reliable, high quality, or fashionable goods affects the consumer's decision to buy products from the affinity country*[12]. This is consistent with recent evidence that consumers' attachment to and concern for a country transcend *directly* into shoppers' preferences [13].

Hypotheses 4: Consumer affinity negatively affects consumers' unwillingness to buy products originating from the affinity country.

Related to perceived risk, previous study found that affinity country and its products constitute such a familiar option [14]. Since consumers prefer familiar options to unfamiliar ones in risky consumption situations and affinity country constitutes a positively valence out-group or is even included in a consumer's in-group affect perceptions of risk. Echoing previous study studies that if consumer feelings toward the activity are favorable, they tend to judge thing as low risk and high benefit. Thus this study proposes:

Hypotheses 5 : Consumer affinity negatively affects consumers' perceived risk

Animosity and Affinity

It is still debatable whether positive affect and negative affect are the same constructs or not. Several studies suggest that positive and negative affect are polar opposite on the same continuum [15] [16] [17]. This stream mention that people rarely or even impossible experience of positive and negative affect at the same time. In contrary, some studies propose that positive and negative affect are different construct [18] [19] [20] and found that positive and negative affect have different operationalization.

In the country of origin study, there are only few study that examine simultaneously positive and negative affect toward specific country. Some study argue that affinity and animosity are different construct [4] [12], furthermore, previous study shows that consumer may experience both affinity and animosity at the same time and affecting purchase intention. Relaying those findings, this study propose hypotheses below:

Hypotheses 6: Consumer affinity and Consumer Animosity simultaneously affect consumer unwillingness to buy product originating from the affinity / animosity country

3. METHODOLOGY

Data Collection

This study was conducted in several cities in Indonesia, employed successive stages to test the hypotheses. First stage was identifying a target country which Indonesian felt both like and dislike. We asked 30 master students in several universities in Indonesia to identify the countries that they like the most and dislike the most without providing reasons for their responses. The U.S. was the country that ranked the highest in both categories (liked and dislike), followed by Netherland, Japan and China. To complement the pre - test result, this study consider the cultural history that exist between Indonesia and Netherland. Indonesia was 350 years colonized by Netherland and still has several economic disputes. In other hands, a lot of Indonesian citizen choose Netherlands as country destination to study abroad. Then Netherland being used as the study setting,

Cite on suggestion that non-durable goods have been neglected in consumer animosity studies [21], this study use non-durable goods product category, that is Netherland's automobile lubricant product that distributed in Indonesia. Car / motorcycle lubricant is a well-known and well standardized product among other product originating from Netherland. Moreover as the enforcement of Indonesia Law no. 22/2001 about Natural Gas and Petroleum that permit public and foreign company to enter Indonesian market, lubricant as derivative product of petroleum, pose a strategic and very competitive product in Indonesian market.

Next, this study conducts internet survey. It purposively spread for those who live in 5 cities in Indonesia, that is Jakarta, Bogor, Depok, Tangerang and Bekasi. This limitation is based on data from PT. Pertamina Tbk. (State Petroleum and

Gas Company), that the city of Jakarta, Bogor, Depok, Tangerang, and Bekasi (usually called JABODETABEK Region) account the biggest amount of national lubricant annual sales. So that local and import lubricants are well distributed in Jabodetabek region, and Jabodetabek region respondent being assumed has sufficient exposure and easiness to consider and buy both local and import automotive lubricant.

There were 319 questionnaires collected. Due to incomplete responses, only 307 questionnaires were retained for data analysis. The 67,7% of the sample being male, with 20,5% of respondents are below 25 years old, 38,4% are between 26 – 30 and 41% are above 30.

Measures

Measurement scales from Klein et al., [10] is adopted and adapted to examine the animosity and willingness to buy. Perceived risk measurement was adopted from Oberecker and Dimantopolous [14]. Affinity scale was adopted from Wongtadaet al., [4]. Each participant was asked to indicate their opinion on a set of Likert scale items (1=strongly disagree and 5= strongly agree).

Construct Validity and Reliability

Confirmatory factor analysis was conducted to test the extent to which a-priori theoretical pattern of pre -specified construct represent actual data . This study also use CFA to determine the convergent and discriminant validity of the constructs. The quality of the factor analysis models was assessed using Bartlett's test for sphericity and the Kaiser - Meyer-Olkin (KMO) test. Bartlett's test is a measure of the probability that the initial correlation matrix is an identity matrix and should be <0.05 . The KMO test measures the degree of multicollinearity (based on partial correlations) between the included items and varies between 0 and 1 (should be greater than 0.50- 0.60). All data were analyzed using IBM SPSS statistic 20. Noticed on Table 2 that Bartlett's test was statistically significant at 0.001 and KMO value is greater than 0.5 represent the goodness of the factor analysis.

Measurement validation procedures outlined by Hair et al., [22] were used. The items that are indicators of a specific construct should converge or share high proportion in common or known as convergent validity, measured by high loading on a factor that converge on a common latent construct. We provided the factor analysis result on table 2. Showing that all items loaded significantly ($p < .001$) on their respective constructs, supporting convergent and discriminant validity for each construct. This study use 0.6 as cut off point. The item about affinity: All of the leading companies in the world are located in the Netherland has factor loading less than 0.5. Thus that item is removed from the analysis.

The result of discriminant analysis shows that affinity and animosity are two different construct. Thus it supports the postulate that positive affect and negative affect are different construct.

Construct Reliability

Reliability was measured in terms of the degree of consistency between multiple measurements of variable [22] that the individual items of the scale should all be measuring the same construct and thus be highly inter-correlated. In this study, the construct validity being assessed by employing Cronbach's alpha. The generally agreed upon lower limit for cronbach alpha is 0.7. As presented on table 2, all of construct cronbach alpha has greater than 0.7 that serve the measurement reliability

Table 2: Validity and Reliability

Variable	Item	Cronbach Alpha	Factor Loading
Perceived Risk	Getting products from Netherland is risky		0.744
	Buying products from Netherland can have uncertain outcomes	0.932	0.845
	Getting products from Netherland can lead to bad results		0.844
Animosity	I dislike the Netherland.		0.832
	I feel angry toward the Netherland		0.877
	I will never forgive Netherland for 350 years colonizing Indonesia		0.825
	Netherland should pay for what it did to Indonesia during the occupation.		0.697
	Netherland is not a reliable trading partner	0.861	0.611
	Netherland wants to gain economic power over Indonesia		0.627
	Netherland is taking advantage of Indonesia		0.636
	Netherland has too much economic influence in Indonesia		0.795
	The Netherlands are doing business unfairly with Indonesia		0.704
Affinity	The Netherlands are friendly		0.741
	The Netherlands are likable		0.786
	Netherland is the world business leader		0.749
	Netherland companies are very competitive.		0.842
	*All of the leading companies in the world are located in the Netherland	0.946	0.205
	I admire the quality of education in the Netherland		0.809
	The education in the Netherland stresses the importance of analytical thinking instead of merely memorizing information		0.784
	Netherland people are well educated		0.788
	All Netherland people have the opportunity for a good education		0.769
Unwillingness to buy	I would feel guilty if I bought a Netherland product		0.733
	I would never buy a Netherland's car lubricant.		0.741
	Whenever possible, I avoid buying Netherland's car lubricant.	0.964	0.742
	If two products were equal in quality, but one was from Netherland and one was from Indonesia, I would pay 10% more for the product from		0.686

* Item deleted

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy = 0.86

Bartlett's Test of Sphericity, Approx. Chi-Square = 9713.24, Sig 0.000

Testing For Mediation

Mediation requires significant correlation among all three constructs. To test the mediation role of perceived risk, we use the outline from Baron and Kenny [27].

Triangular Relationship: Animosity, Perceived Risk, Unwillingness to buy

The successive stage of mediation testing shows on table 3. On the step 1, this study establishes that animosity has positive, significant and direct relationship to the unwillingness to buy. Step two provides that the perceived risk as the mediator has positive and significant relationship to the animosity. The result of step three shows that the mediator does have a significant and positive relationship with unwillingness to buy. The last step was put together the animosity and perceived risk relationship toward unwillingness to buy.

The path of (A) was reduced but remains significant when perceived risk was put as additional predictor. This result suggest that perceived risk is a partial mediator between animosity and unwillingness to buy foreign product. Thus it supports the hypotheses 1, 2 and 3

Table 3: Animosity- Perceived Risk – Intention

Step	Path Analysis	Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
1	(A) Animosity --> Unwillingness to buy	.626	14.026	.000
2	(B) Animosity --> Perceived risk	.415	7.973	.000
3	(C) Perceived risk --> Unwillingness to buy	.619	13.757	.000
4	Animosity --> Unwillingness to buy	.446	10.522	.000
	Perceived risk --> Unwillingness to buy	.434	10.223	.000

Triangular Relationship: Affinity, Perceived Risk, Unwillingness to buy

In this section, the similar procedure with the previous one was conducted (see table 4). This section examines the mediator role between perceived risk, affinity and unwillingness to buy. The result shows that the path (A) – the relationship between affinity and unwillingness to buy was reduced but remains significant when we included perceived risk as additional predictor. Thus it suggests that the perceived risk also mediating the relationship between affinity and unwillingness to buy. This result supports the hypotheses 1,4 and 5.

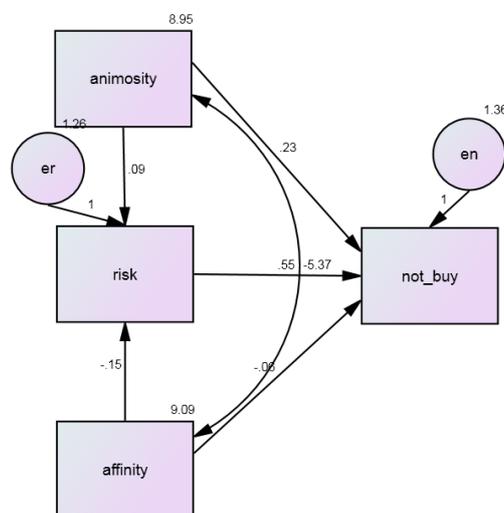
Table 4: Affinity - Perceived Risk - Intention

Step	Path Analysis	Standardized Coefficients Beta	T	Sig.
1	(A) Affinity --> Unwillingness to buy	-.526	-10.813	.000
2	(B) Affinity --> Perceived risk	-.468	-9.258	.000
3	(C) Perceived risk --> Unwillingness to buy	.619	13.757	.000
4	Affinity --> Unwillingness to buy	-.303	-6.322	.000
	Perceived risk --> Unwillingness to buy	.477	9.947	.000

Path Analysis: Affinity, Animosity, Perceived Risk, Unwillingness to buy.

Path analysis was conducted to measure the effect of affinity and animosity simultaneously. Figure 1 and table 5 revealed that animosity and affinity simultaneously has statistically significant impact on perceived risk and unwillingness to buy foreign product. Animosity has a positive and significant effect toward perceived risk and unwillingness to buy, whereas affinity has a negative and significant effect toward perceived risk and unwillingness to buy. This result supports hypotheses 6.

Figure 1: Path Analysis



Standardized Regression Weights

Path	Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
Risk <--- animosity	,211	,027	3,420	***
Risk <--- affinity	-,343	,027	-5,549	***
notbuy <--- animosity	,399	,028	8,221	***
notbuy <--- affinity	-,098	,029	-1,965	,049
notbuy <--- risk	,407	,059	9,244	***

Standardized Indirect Effects

	affinity	animosity	Risk
risk	,000	,000	,000
notbuy	-,140	,086	,000

Discussion

Previous study shows that affect would influence perceived risk. Current study again supports the postulate about affect heuristic. This study also enriches the findings related to affect heuristic: that the affect related to foreign country may govern the perceived risk and intention to purchase foreign product. This study also supporting previous study that affinity forms a different construct from animosity. Affinity stemmed from positive feelings toward a nation's people, business achievement, and education while animosity feelings toward a nation are based on war and economic conflicts. Consumer may act as heuristics when confronted with a risk and the situation that does not stimulate cognitive effort or when there is insufficient time to make an informed decision [3]. It does not imply that decisions that are based on affect and trust are bad; the quality of the decision depends on people's mental schemes, which form the input for these decisions.

If country-specific animosity and generalized negative attitudes are dominant and lead to non-consumption, managers can focus on the minimization of negative responses. If the negative affect does exist, try to re-route the decision making process from affect heuristic into cognitive processes. Avoid the presentation of foreign country image. Marketers should provide enough time and information to stimulate consumer cognitive effort. Advertising or another marketing communication that full of technical specification may stimulate cognitive effort rather than affect, thus reducing the negative affect about country image. Complement that, companies must earn the trust of that segment by focusing on them as disgruntled consumers. Building local partnership, glocalization and hybrid manufacture may also reduce the sentiment. Of course, that is unlikely to happen until firms are willing to make investments in the kinds of social activities that will convince even the skeptics.

Current study demonstrate that affective influences (as captured by consumer affinity) have complementary cognitive influences effects (for example evaluation the cues about price, specification, and attribute) on behavioral outcomes; thus, incorporating both types of influences in theoretical models investigating country-of-origin effects seems appropriate from an explanatory perspective. It is known that international marketers will require an expanding repertoire of tools and constructs to enable them to compete and position their goods more effectively. Consumer affinity is such a construct, specifically, from a managerial perspective, the finding that consumer affinity has considerable power in explaining why consumers might deliberately opt for foreign products, invest in foreign countries, or travel to these countries has clear implications for international marketers. One of them is we are able to segmenting global customer by their attitude toward foreign country.

By understanding and measuring how different types of feelings work, international marketers can design advertising strategies and executions that target specific types of feelings and that affective response are difficult to copy because of their multifaceted nature [24]. When love and hate collide toward foreign purchase decision on certain global segment, this indicating the cognitive dissonance occurs. This countervailing relationship implies that consumers might experience cognitive dissonance, a psychological state in which an individual's cognitions—beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors—are at odds [25]. It is a situation in which two cognitions are inconsistent with one another. According to cognitive dissonance theory dissonance or want of harmony or inconsistency occurs when an individual holds conflicting thoughts about a belief or an attitude object. Whenever cognitive dissonance is occurs, we can maximize the affect side rather than cognitive of consumer. We advise marketers and policy makers to undertake efforts in their communications to induce and/or strengthen feelings of affinity toward COO country rather than simply emphasize production/technological know-how and superiority (cognitive route). This effort would encourage positive beliefs that offset the negative dissonant.

4. LIMITATION AND FUTURE RESEARCH

Some product categories might be more influenced by affect than others, our study just limited to one product category. The future study might examine the heuristic affect based on other product category. Our study uses the context of habitual buying behavior setting. Regards on suggestion that perceived risk may exist on every type of consumer buying behavior, the future study might assess the affect heuristic on complex buying behavior, dissonance – reduction buying behavior, or and variety seeking behavior context. This study stemmed from country of origin study. We conclude that affinity and animosity study is a cross cultural study. It probably happens that a country experiencing mixed feeling toward multi opposed country. Previous studies have already asses the animosity toward multi opposed country, next we might complement that study by examines the affect heuristic and mixed feeling toward multi opposed country. Last, we limited our study just to assess the general perceived risk toward intention. Next study would provide the comprehensive perceived risk in consumer behavior, as financial risk, time risk, performance risk, social risk.

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