


“Interplay between subjective norm, emotions, and purchase intention towards foreign brands: Evidence from Vietnam”

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INTERPLAY BETWEEN SUBJECTIVE NORM, EMOTIONS, AND PURCHASE INTENTION TOWARDS FOREIGN BRANDS: EVIDENCE FROM VIETNAM

Abstract

Understanding the mechanisms through which social groups impact consumers' purchase decisions is of particular interest to scholars and practitioners. The purpose of this study is to contribute to the cognitive-affective model by examining the roles of the subjective norm and its contingency factors in the cognitive-affective model and the indigenous consumers' purchase intention towards a foreign footwear brand. The validity of the model is tested using data collected from 257 Vietnamese consumers. The results of PLS-SEM and SPSS Macro PROCESS reveal that subjective norm positively influences the emotional value ($\beta = 0.219$, $p = 0.002$) and perceived quality ($\beta = 0.239$, $p = 0.000$) for the foreign brand. In addition, face consciousness positively moderates the indirect effects of subjective norm on purchase intention through emotional value ($\beta = 0.08$; LLCI = 0.02; ULCI = 0.13) while the moderating effect of perceived behavioral control is significantly negative ($\beta = -0.1074$; LLCI = -0.182; ULCI = -0.05). In conclusion, this study can offer insight into the roles of social groups and their contingency factors in the cognitive-affective model and purchase intention. On this ground, managers of foreign brands are advised to focus on the impacts of social groups in their marketing campaigns, together with underlining the social status and superbness of their offerings to attract new consumers.

Keywords

social groups, cognitive-affective model, purchase decisions, global brands, behavioral control, face consciousness, Asian countries, wealthy consumers

JEL Classification

M16, L67, M31

INTRODUCTION

The footwear industry has already become a mature industry considering the increasing competition worldwide (Abrunhosa & Santos, 2006). A notable example is that European footwear firms struggle to sustain a significant growth rate (Draganić, 2014). Remarkably, the competitive advantage of the US and Southern European countries has been eroded in light of the fierce competition from such emerging countries as India, China, or other Eastern European countries that possess low labor costs, developing infrastructure, and improving access to the world market (Abrunhosa & Santos, 2006). Likewise, given that Vietnam has emerged as a notable developing country in Asia with a marked growth rate (O'Cass & Ngo, 2011), this study aims to give insights into how to help global brands significantly increase their growth rate in this Vietnamese market.

Since consumer behavior is strongly influenced by both affective and cognitive elements (Li et al., 1994), the cognitive-affective model has significantly been used to predict the purchase behavior of local consumers towards both foreign brands and local brands



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Conflict of interest statement:

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(Kumar et al., 2009b; Asshidin et al., 2016). Nevertheless, the findings on the relationships between cognitive and affective elements and purchase intention have been somewhat inconsistent in which the relationship between perceived quality and purchase intention hardly remained stable (Kumar et al., 2009b; Lee et al., 2008; Asshidin et al., 2016; Yoo & Donthu, 2001). This growing body of research has revealed the limitations of the cognitive-affective model in explaining purchase behavior. To that end, some research was performed to enhance the predictability of this cognitive-affective model (Siu et al., 2016; Matthes & Beyer, 2017). This study aims to contribute to and complement the cognitive-affective model by adding more meaningful factors into the model. Following the approach of Holbrook and Hirschman (1982) in applying individual differences to better explain the cognitive-affective model, this paper shift the focus onto the notion of subjective norm, a combination between an individual characteristic (i.e., the extent to which an individual can be affected), and the actual impact of other significant people (Ajzen, 1991), to directly predict the cognitive-affective model.

There is also a need to articulate the essential roles of other significant contingency factors in the model. Notwithstanding that face consciousness has a vital role to play in those countries impacted by the Confucian culture (Kim & Nam, 1998), its effects on the cognitive-affective model and more specifically, on the association between subjective norm and purchase intention have received scant attention. Since price is traditionally considered an important factor affecting consumer behavior in developing countries (Bullis, 1997), perceived behavioral control (i.e., the capability of an individual to conduct a specific behavior (Ajzen, 1985)), is expected to influence the relationship between subjective norm and purchase intention towards a foreign brand.

1. LITERATURE REVIEW

Previous literature has suggested that affective elements are strong predictors of product purchase (Mizerski & White, 1986; Li et al., 1994). Emotions include different shades such as weak and strong or negative and positive (Keller, 2001). The positive emotion of customers is associated with such positive outcomes as customer loyalty, product purchase decisions, and firm profitability (Morrison & Crane, 2007). Therefore, affective elements are inseparable from cognitive elements and have simultaneously been examined in consumer behavior research (Zajonc & Markus, 1982; Lee et al., 2008; Matthes & Beyer, 2007; Goyal & Sadasivam, 2010). These affective and cognitive elements can be considered single-dimensional or multidimensional constructs (Elsäßer & Wirtz, 2017). They have been widely used in other industries such as green products (Wu & Chen, 2014), organic food (Watanabe et al., 2020), and the fashion industry (Kumar et al., 2009a). Notably, consumer behavior towards local brands and foreign brands has attracted scholarly attention from multiple emerging countries ranging from Malaysia (Asshidin et al., 2016), China (Siu et al., 2016), to India

(Kumar et al., 2009a). However, the cognitive and affective aspects have been well established as the antecedents of purchase intention towards these brands (Sinha, 2003; Kumar et al., 2009a). While emotional value has been well established as a strong predictor of purchase intention, the relationship between perceived quality and purchase intention is unstable. It can be significantly negative, significantly positive, or even insignificant (Kumar et al., 2009b; Lee et al., 2008; Li et al., 1994; Yoo & Donthu, 2001).

Particularly, with respect to foreign brands, a review of the literature has also shown the positive effects of emotional value (i.e., affective aspect) on purchase intention (Kumar et al., 2009b) while the impact of perceived quality (i.e., cognitive response) on purchase intention has been negative (Kumar et al., 2009a; Lee et al., 2008; Kumar et al., 2009b), contrary to traditional beliefs (Saleem et al., 2015). This unexpected result has been explained by the findings from other studies, for example, the more significant impacts of such other factors as price, product serviceability, patriotism (Kumar et al., 2009a), color, or fashionable design (Kumar et al., 2009b). In addition, it has shown the limi-

tations of the cognitive-affective model in explaining customers' purchase behavior. Other studies struggled to enhance the predictive power of the cognitive-affective model, such as using emotional value as a mediator between perceived quality and purchase intention (Lee et al., 2008) or adding affective involvement as a mediator between cognitive involvement and customer trust (Matthes & Beyer, 2017).

Past research has also encouraged various individual differences to explain better the cognitive-affective model (Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982). Such individual characteristics as the need for uniqueness (Kumar et al., 2009b), self-concept, or clothing interest (Kumar et al., 2009a) have been used to predict the cognitive-affective model to explain the purchase intention towards foreign or local brands. This study contends that subjective norm, a psychological factor related to the influences of other important people (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975), impacts the cognitive-affective model. Subjective norm reflects the degree to which other significant people think a consumer should perform an action and the extent to which he or she would rely on these opinions to make decisions (Ajzen, 1991). Subjective norm has also been well established as a predictor of purchase intention in the theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 1985). Therefore, friends, family, and peers can be seen as indispensable enablers of consumer behavior (Pavlou & Chai, 2002). A review of literature has shown that subjective norm is a predictor of attitude (Shin & Hancer, 2016) and purchase intention (Liu et al., 2020). As such, an attitude towards a specific behavior is influenced by various groups of family members, colleagues, friends, and experts, influencing purchase behavior (Kim et al., 2013).

Nonetheless, it is worth mentioning that attitude and emotions are two different concepts. While attitude has been established as a continuing judgment of a specific behavior (Allen et al., 1992), emotions denote individuals' feelings about continuing status or circumstances (Barret et al., 2007). Moreover, while behavior can be explained by an attitude which is a function of cognitive elements, emotions also occupy a crucial role in predicting behavior (Allen et al., 1992;

Jacobs & Vaske, 2019). Unfortunately, however, empirical research on the links between subjective norms and emotions is still scarce.

In the marketing context, emotional value refers to the benefits obtained from joy, feelings, and enjoyment towards an offering (Sweeney & Soutar, 2001). Drawing on this premise, this study posits that subjective norm is a significant factor in predicting consumers' emotional value. It is so because consumers from such countries impacted by the Confucian culture like Vietnam, Japan, or Korea (Hieu, 2015; Hofstede, 1980) tend to conform to group norms (Yau, 1986) and be influenced by social groups (Hofstede, 1980) than those from individualistic cultures. Thus, these consumers are inclined to experience positive emotions towards a product or service once they perceive that other significant referents favor that product. Further, previous studies have shown that emotional value is an essential antecedent of purchase intention for local and foreign brands (Kumar et al., 2009a; Ariffin et al., 2016). Thus, the subjective norm might exert a considerable impact on emotional value, which in turn influences purchase intention.

The literature has shown that the contingency factor in the model, face consciousness, denotes an individual's "desire to enhance, maintain, and avoid losing face" relating to other important people in their social network (Bao et al., 2003, p. 736). The face might include one or two dimensions: the desire to gain face and the fear of losing face (Geng et al., 2019). Given that face is considered a crucial factor in Confucian value-based societies (Nakata, 2009), several people from these societies tend to spend their whole lives seeking face (Kim & Nam, 1998). While foreign brands are regarded as having superior quality, status, or wealth (Batra et al., 2000; Shen et al., 2002; Kinra, 2006), people with high levels of face consciousness are likely to experience higher levels of emotional value and purchase intention at the same level of the subjective norm. Nonetheless, research into consumers' purchase decisions virtually ignored the interaction dynamics of face consciousness and subjective norm.

Perceived behavioral control is considered an element of the theory of planned behavior and is

defined as people's beliefs about their capability to conduct a particular behavior (Ajzen, 1985). Perceived behavioral control has been well established as a predictor of purchase intention (Wang et al., 2013; Hamzah & Tanwir, 2021). The opportunities and resources of individuals (Ajzen, 1985) tend to predict their purchase intention towards a given product. However, little attention has been paid to exploring other roles and tenets of perceived behavioral control. This study contends that perceived behavioral control has a negative moderating role in the association between subjective norm and emotional value, which influences purchase intention. The rationale behind this suggestion is that while the perception of other significant people such as family members, friends, and peers might arouse consumers' emotions towards a brand, as noted earlier, those consumers with considerable resources and opportunities are less likely to be influenced by these important people. This is so because once consumers are rich in resources, they can afford even more appealing brands on the market, which can hinder their emotions and purchase intention towards a given brand.

Perceived quality denotes consumers' judgment about the greatness of a product based on such features as performance, endurance, and brand name (Asshidin et al., 2016). Perceived quality has been featured as the cognitive reaction to an offering, which in turn influences purchase intention (Kumar et al., 2009b). Indeed, customers tend to compare the quality of different brands before making purchase decisions (Zeithaml et al., 1996; Yoo et al., 2000; Wang et al., 2020). The literature has shown that foreign brands have achieved outstanding quality in overall performance (Kinra, 2006; Crawford & Garland, 1988), suggesting high levels of perceived quality of consumers towards a foreign brand. Further, this study argues that other significant people not only provoke consumers' emotions towards a given foreign product but also impact the evaluation of consumers about its excellence. This is especially the case for such Confucian value-based countries where social groups strongly influence people (Hofstede, 1980). In addition, perceived quality is inclined to stir up consumers' emotions to-

wards the given product, which in turn impacts purchase intention (Lee et al., 2008).

2. AIMS AND HYPOTHESES

This study aims to help resolving the limitations of the cognitive-affective model by exploring and verifying the effects of the subjective norm on the cognitive-affective model and purchase intention. In addition, the contingency effects of face consciousness and perceived behavioral control on the key relationships in the model are also clarified. This study, therefore, boosts the understanding of the mechanisms through which social members impact the purchase intention of local customers. In doing so, this study aims to fill in a new gap in the literature. For this purpose, six hypotheses are proposed:

- H1: *Subjective norm is positively related to emotional value for a foreign brand.*
- H2: *The association between subjective norm and purchase intention will be mediated by emotional value for a foreign brand.*
- H3: *The indirect effect of subjective norms on purchase intention via emotional value is conditional on face consciousness for a foreign brand. The indirect effect is weaker for consumers who report low levels of face consciousness.*
- H4: *The indirect effect of subjective norm on purchase intention via emotional value is conditional on perceived behavioral control for a foreign brand. The indirect effect is stronger for consumers who report low levels of perceived behavioral control.*
- H5: *Subjective norm is positively related to perceived quality for a foreign brand.*
- H6: *The effect of subjective norm on purchase intention for a foreign brand is serially (and positively) mediated by perceived quality and emotional value, correspondingly.*

Figure 1 demonstrates the conceptual framework utilized in this study.

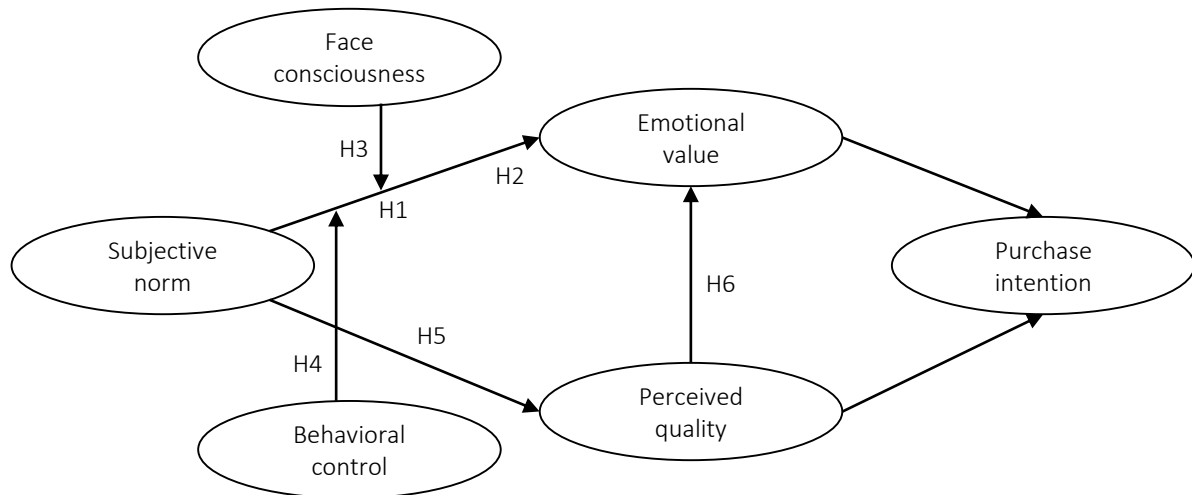


Figure 1. Conceptual framework

3. METHODS

This study applied the convenience sampling method (Malhotra et al., 2006) to collect data. In doing so, online invitations were sent to many consumers in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, and 257 satisfactory questionnaires were collected. Among 257 respondents, most of them are at a young age, of which 30.7% are 18-20 years old, and 48.2% are from 21 to 23 years old. Further, most respondents frequently buy footwear at online stores (37.7%) and footwear stores (33.9%).

Ten interviews were conducted with local consumers beforehand and revealed that Adidas is

one of Vietnam’s most well-known foreign footwear brands. Thus, the paper selected Adidas as the foreign footwear brand used throughout the study. Given that the constructs utilized in this study are well established, the paper adopted all measures from past studies with appropriate modifications (Table 1). A seven-point Likert scale with two extreme poles was used, 1 for strongly disagree and 7 for strongly agree.

The structural equation model was utilized to analyze both the measurement and structural models (Sarstedt et al., 2017). In addition, SmartPLS 3.0 (Ringle et al., 2015) with a satisfactory sample size of 257 was used (Hair et al., 2011).

Table 1. Evaluation of measures

Constructs and items (source) quality criteria	Item mean	SD	Standardized factor loadings
Face consciousness (Bao et al., 2003) CA = 0.781, CR = 0.870, AVE = 0.691			
It is important that others like the products and brands I buy	3.86	0.138	0.818
Name-brand purchase is a good way to distinguish people from others	3.71	0.116	0.839
Name products and brands purchase can bring me a sense of prestige	3.89	0.119	0.836
Subjective Norms (Huang & Ge, 2019), CA = 0.786, CR = 0.870, AVE = 0.690			
If people around me use a specific footwear brand, this will prompt me to buy	4.27	0.062	0.807
People who have an influence on me (such as family and friends) impact my choice of footwear	4.40	0.068	0.808
News media propaganda will prompt me to buy a specific footwear brand	4.86	0.035	0.875
Perceived behavioral control (Huang & Ge, 2019), CA = 0.790, CR = 0.878, AVE = 0.708			
I can largely decide whether or not to buy this brand at home	5.93	0.059	0.724
I will have the ability to buy this brand in the future	5.97	0.025	0.889
I am confident that if I want to, I will be able to choose this brand for my next purchase	5.74	0.018	0.9

Table 1 (cont.). Evaluation of measures

Constructs and items (source) quality criteria	Item mean	SD	Standardized factor loadings
Perceived quality (Dodds et al., 1991) CA = 0.908, CR = 0.942, AVE = 0.844			
This brand is reliable	6.00	0.011	0.933
The quality of this brand is high	5.81	0.018	0.918
This brand would seem to be durable	5.86	0.02	0.906
Emotional value (Sweeney & Soutar, 2001) CA = 0.939, CR = 0.956, AVE = 0.846			
This brand is one that I would enjoy	5.69	0.014	0.923
This brand would make me want to use it	5.61	0.01	0.943
This brand is one that I would feel relaxed about using	5.67	0.019	0.908
This brand would give me pleasure	5.35	0.013	0.905
Purchase Intention (Pavlou, 2003; Kumar et al., 2009b; Wang et al., 2016) CA = 0.854, CR = 0.912, AVE = 0.776			
I intend to buy this brand frequently	4.45	0.025	0.823
Given a chance, I intend to buy this brand	5.18	0.015	0.899
If I replace my footwear, I will consider this brand	5.11	0.011	0.919

4. RESULTS

Common method variance (CMV) denotes the “variance that is attributable to the measurement method rather than to the constructs the measures represent” (Podsakoff et al., 2003, p. 879). While data were collected from the same respondents for exogenous and endogenous variables, CMV can be a problem (Lindell & Whitney, 2001). Following Podsakoff et al. (2003), such ex-ante approaches as complete anonymity of participants and the simplicity of the survey were applied. Regarding the ex-post approach, the study conducted Harman’s single-factor test (Podsakoff et al., 2003). The first factor has explained 39.8% of 69.6% of the total variance, suggesting that CMV is not likely in this study.

Such conventional criteria as Cronbach’s alphas and composite reliabilities have been applied to assess the measurement model (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). As shown in Table 1, composite reliabilities and Cronbach’s alphas were greater than the minimum threshold of 0.7, indicating satisfactory reliability of all measures (Nunnally, 1978). Further, the average variance extracted (AVE) values were higher than the benchmark of 0.5, and factor loadings were higher than the benchmark of 0.7, signaling satisfactory convergent validity of all constructs (Hair et al., 2011).

Discriminant validity of all constructs has been examined in this study using the Fornell-Larcker criterion (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). As illustrat-

ed in Table 2, square roots of AVEs of every construct were higher than the focal construct’s correlations with any other constructs, signaling the adequate discriminant validity of all constructs. Further, another robust approach, as recommended by Henseler et al. (2015), has also been adopted to evaluate the discriminant validity of all constructs. Accordingly, the heterotrait-monotrait (HTMT) ratios were lower than the benchmark of 0.85, indicating satisfactory discriminant validity with respect to HTMT85 (Garson, 2016).

Variance inflation factors (VIFs) were from 1 to 2.180, therefore significantly lower than the suggested threshold of 5 (Hair et al., 2011), indicating that multicollinearity is unlikely a severe issue in this study. As shown in Table 3, R^2 values of purchase intention for the direct effect model (Model 1) and the moderating effect model (Model 2) were at 0.519 and 0.523, suggesting the adequate predictive power of this construct (Cohen, 1988). The model’s predictive accuracy was further investigated using blindfolding procedures in which Q^2 values were greater than zero and are all acceptable (Hair et al., 2014).

5,000 resamples using bootstrapping were applied to examine the proposed relationships. As illustrated in Table 2, subjective norm has a significant effect on emotional value ($\beta = 0.219$, t -value = 3.055, $p < 0.01$), supporting $H1$. Likewise, the results have shown that subjective norm significantly impacts perceived quality ($\beta = 0.239$, t -value = 3.612, $p < 0.001$), thereby supporting $H5$.

Table 2. Fornell-Larcker and HTMT criteria

	EMO	FACE	PBC	PERQ	PUR	SN
EMO	0.92					
FACE	0.156 (0.177)	0.831				
PBC	0.476 (0.549)	0.144 (0.18)	0.842			
PERQ	0.732 (0.792)	0.118 (0.13)	0.516 (0.602)	0.919		
PUR	0.719 (0.802)	0.21 (0.25)	0.369 (0.442)	0.541 (0.61)	0.881	
SN	0.219 (0.235)	0.576 (0.74)	0.181 (0.225)	0.239 (0.263)	0.22 (0.255)	0.831

Note: Numbers in parentheses show values for HTMT ratios. EMO: Emotional value; FACE: Face consciousness; PERQ: Perceived quality; PUR: Purchase Intention; PBC: Perceived behavioral control; SN: Subjective Norms.

Following Hair et al. (2017), the paper examined the mediating effect of emotional value on the relationship between subjective norm and purchase intention by gauging the indirect effect of subjective norm on purchase intention. The indirect effect was significant ($\beta = 0.152, t\text{-value} = 2.917, p < 0.01$). Additionally, the direct effect of subjective norm on purchase intention was insignificant ($\beta = 0.063, t\text{-value} = 1.142, p > 0.05$), indicating that emotional value fully mediates the association between subjective norm and purchase intention, supporting *H2*.

SPSS Macro PROCESS Model 7 (Preacher & Hayes, 2008) has been adopted to examine the moderated mediation impact of face consciousness. Accordingly, 5,000 bootstrap samples have been applied to estimate the moderated mediation effect (Hayes, 2013). One standard deviation (+SD) was added to the mean value to describe high levels of face consciousness, while one standard deviation (-SD) was subtracted to portray low levels of face consciousness. As shown in Tables 4 and 5 and Figure 2, the conditional indirect effects of subjective norm on purchase intention through

emotional value have changed significantly at different levels of face consciousness (0.08; LLCI = 0.02; ULCI = 0.13), supporting *H3*.

Likewise, SPSS Macro PROCESS Model 7 has also been utilized to examine the moderated mediation impact of perceived behavioral control. As shown in Tables 6 and 7 and Figure 3, the conditional indirect effects of subjective norm on purchase intention through emotional value have changed significantly at different levels of face consciousness (-0.1074; LLCI = -0.182; ULCI = -0.05), supporting *H4*.

Finally, the link between subjective norm and purchase intention through perceived quality and emotional value has been examined using SPSS Macro PROCESS 6 (Preacher & Hayes, 2008). Whilst this indirect effect was significant (0.1015; SE = 0.038; LLCI = 0.035; ULCI = 0.1810), subjective norm was not directly associated with purchase intention (0.0608; $p = 0.14$; LLCI = -0.0201; ULCI = 0.14), thereby supporting *H6*. Table 8 summarizes the results of hypotheses testing.

Table 3. PLS results of the structural model

Effects	Model 1		Model 2	
	Path coeff.	t-value	Path coeff.	t-value
DV: Emotional value				
Subjective norms	0.219	3.055**	0.269	3.314***
Face consciousness			-0.003	0.046
Perceived behavioral control			0.323	4.394***
Subjective norms * Face consciousness			0.178	3.588***
Subjective norms * Perceived behavioral control			-0.211	3.948***
R ² (Q ²)	0.049(0.04)		0.321(0.264)	

Table 3 (cont.). PLS results of the structural model

Effects	Model 1		Model 2	
	Path coeff.	t-value	Path coeff.	t-value
Adjusted R ²	0.045		0.307	
DV: Perceived quality				
Subjective norms	0.239	3.612***	0.239	3.628***
R ² (Q ²)	0.058(0.044)		0.057	
Adjusted R ²	0.055		0.053	
DV: Purchase Intention				
Emotional value	0.698	10.394***	0.693	10.134***
Perceived quality	0.03	0.434	0.018	0.256
Subjective norms			0.063	1.139
R ² (Q ²)	0.519(0.394)		0.523(0.043)	
Adjusted R ²	0.516		0.517	

Note: * Significant at 0.05 level; ** Significant at the 0.01 level; *** Significant at the 0.001 level.

Table 4. Moderation effects of face consciousness

Paths	Effects	SE	Bootstrap 95% CIs	
			Lower	Upper
Subjective norm → EMO → PUR	0.08	0.03	0.02	0.13

Note: EMO: Emotional Value; PUR: Purchase Intention.

Table 5. Conditional effects of subjective norm on purchase intention

Face consciousness	Effect	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
-1.5144	0.044	0.0681	-0.085	0.1832
0	0.1646	0.0534	0.0593	0.2711
1.5144	0.2851	0.0707	0.1484	0.4275

Note: EMOADI: Emotional value; SN: Subjective norm; FACEADI: Face consciousness.

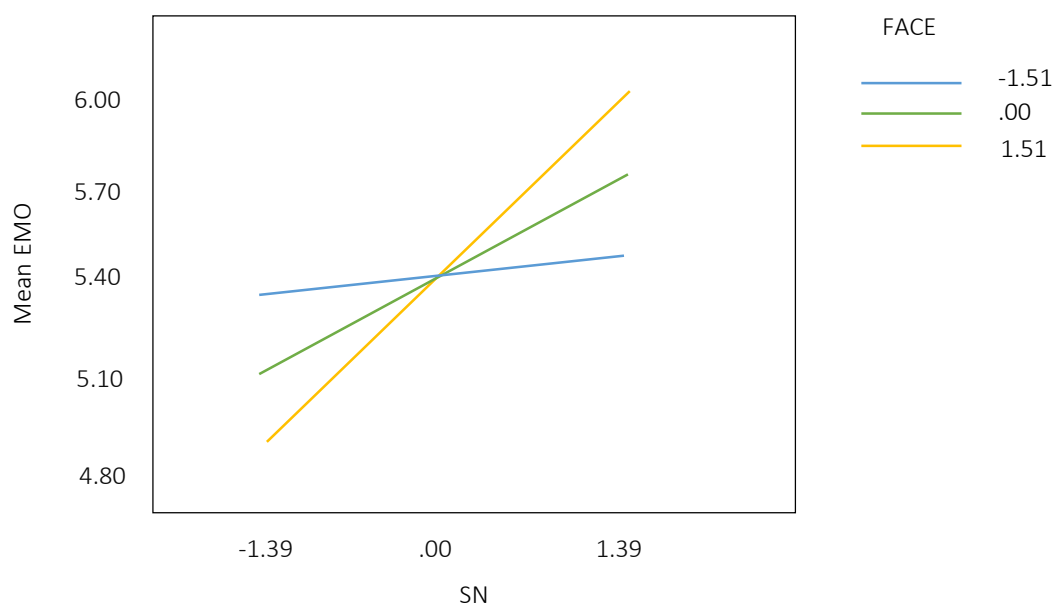


Figure 2. Moderating effects of face consciousness on the relationship between subjective norm and purchase intention (through emotional value)

Table 6. Moderation effects of PBC

Paths	Effects	SE	Bootstrap 95% CIs	
			Lower	Upper
PBC → EMO → PUR	-0.1074	0.033	-0.182	-0.05

Note: EMO: Emotional Value; PUR: Purchase Intention; PBC: Perceived behavioral control.

Table 7. Conditional effects of subjective norm on purchase intention

Perceived behavioral control	Effect	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
-1.1294	0.2227	0.0670	0.1052	0.3733
0	0.1014	0.0398	0.0275	0.1854
1.1180	-0.0187	0.0381	-0.0907	0.0595

Note: EMOADI: Emotional value; SN: Subjective norm; CONTADI: Perceived behavioral control.

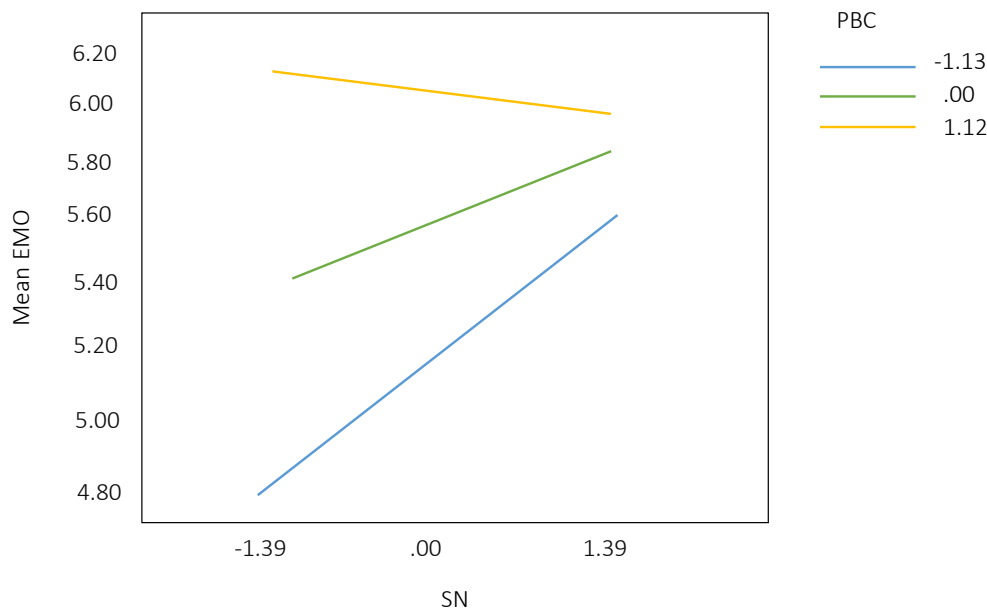


Figure 3. Moderating effects of perceived behavioral control on the relationship between subjective norm and purchase intention (through emotional value)

To reevaluate the mediating effects hypothesized by H2, SPSS Macro PROCESS (Preacher & Hayes, 2008) was applied using Model 4. Accordingly, subjective norm was significantly indirectly associated with purchase intention through emotional value (0.1283, SE = 0.05; LLCI = 0.0301; ULCI =

0.234) whilst the direct effect of subjective norm on purchase intention was insignificant (0.062; SE = 0.0408, $p = 0.1311$; LLCI = -0.0185; ULCI = 0.1420), thereby supporting H2. The results gauged by SPSS Macro PROCESS were in line with those calculated by SmartPLS.

Table 8. Hypothesis testing

Hypotheses	Path	t-value	p-value	f ²	Result
H1: SN → EMO	0.219	3.111	0.002	0.051	Supported
H2: SN → EMO → PUR	0.152	2.917	0.004		Supported
H3: SN – (FACE) → EMO → PUR	0.08		CI[0.02;0.13]		Supported
H4: SN = (PBC) → EMO → PUR	-0.107		CI[-0.18;-0.05]		Supported
H5: SN → PERQ	0.239	3.634	0.000	0.06	Supported
H6: SN → PERQ → EMO → PUR	0.1015		CI[0.035;0.181]		Supported

Note: EMO: Emotional value; FACE: Face consciousness; PERQ: Perceived quality; PUR: Purchase Intention; KNOW: PBC: Perceived behavioral control; SN: Subjective Norms.

5. DISCUSSION

Notwithstanding that the cognitive-affective model has been widely used to predict purchase intention, scant attention has been given to subjective norms, face consciousness, perceived behavioral control, and their complicated interplay in the cognitive-affective model to explain the purchase intention. This study makes a positive contribution to the literature by shedding light on their essential roles and complex interactions.

Specifically, given that subjective norm has a critical role in Confucian value-based countries (Hofstede, 1980), this study contributes to the literature by exploring the direct relationships between subjective norm and the cognitive-affective model. This study significantly supported the view that subjective norm is a profound predictor of the cognitive-affective model. More specifically, the results of this study point out that subjective norm is associated with both emotional value and perceived quality, which in turn impacts the purchase intention of local consumers for a foreign brand. This finding is reasonably consistent with the findings of other studies that pointed out the positive effect of subjective norms on purchase intention (Md Husin et al., 2016). Thus, other significant individuals tend to exert profound influences on both emotions and the sense of excellence of local consumers towards a foreign brand, which in turn impact purchase intention. These effects can be explained by the important roles of social groups (Hofstede, 1980) and group norms (Yau, 1986) in such countries affected by the Confucian culture as Korea or Vietnam (Hieu, 2015; Hofstede, 1980). Therefore, foreign firms are encouraged to perform mass marketing campaigns by which their products are advertised more widely to a large number of people. In turn, these people could impact each other based on their social networks. Besides, while this paper identified the essential relationships between subjective norm and the factors in the cognitive-affective model, additional research is encouraged to examine the effects of other contingency factors on these relationships.

Unsurprisingly, the findings suggested that face consciousness moderates the indirect effect of subjective norms on purchase intention

through emotional value. These findings align with the findings of some other studies that highlight the significant role of face consciousness in consumer behavior in Asian countries (Nakata, 2009; Kim & Nam, 1998). Accordingly, face consciousness strengthens the association between subjective norms and purchase intention through emotional value. Those consumers with higher levels of face consciousness are inclined to experience higher levels of emotional value and purchase intention at the same level of the subjective norm. To that end, the mass marketing campaigns of foreign firms should emphasize the high social status and superior excellence resulting from foreign brands. This strategy is able to capture full attention from a multitude of Asian consumers who desire to gain face.

As speculated, perceived behavioral control was found to negatively moderate the association between subjective norm and purchase intention through emotional value. This finding is somewhat contradictory to other research findings regarding the positive interaction between perceived behavioral control and subjective norm in affecting purchase intention (Al-Swidi et al., 2014). Accordingly, this study identified and confirmed a negative interaction between subjective norm and perceived behavioral control in affecting purchase intention through emotional value. Consumers with substantial resources can afford a wide range of tempting choices. To this end, given the same level of subjective norm, those consumers with high levels of perceived behavioral control are less likely to purchase a specific foreign brand. As such, foreign firms are encouraged to invest in technology, quality, fashionable design, color (Kumar et al., 2009b) to make their brand an appealing choice for local consumers regardless of their resources or capability. On this basis, additional research is therefore required to explore the complex relationships between subjective norms and perceived behavioral control.

Finally, the results show that subjective norm impacts purchase intention (serially) through perceived quality and emotional value. This finding is consistent with the findings of Lee et al. (2008) regarding the mediating effect of

emotional value on the association between perceived quality and purchase intention. There is a complex mechanism in which subjective norm is likely to give rise to the sense of overall performance, which in turn leads to emotions and purchase intention towards a foreign brand. This finding underlines the critical but complex role of the subjective norm in affecting consumers' purchase intention towards a foreign brand.

The direct relationship between perceived quality and purchase intention for a foreign brand was found non-significant, somewhat contradictory to the positive or negative links found by Yoo and Donthu (2001), Kumar et al. (2009b), and Lee et al. (2008). It can also be explained by the effects of other more significant factors

such as price, patriotism, product serviceability (Kumar et al., 2009a), color, or fashionable design (Kumar et al., 2009b). Nonetheless, perceived quality still has an essential role in consumer behavior because perceived quality is likely to impact purchase intention through emotional value indirectly. Thus, this study examined the predictability of the cognitive-affective model in explaining purchase intention for foreign brands. It confirmed that though perceived quality hardly directly affects purchase intention, its roles are undeniable in light of its complex interactions with other factors in the model: subjective norms and emotional value. Future research could also be performed to reexamine the results of this study in different contexts to enhance their generalizability.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study is to strengthen the cognitive-affective model by clarifying the processes through which social members impact the purchase intention of indigenous consumers through the cognitive-affective model. More specifically, this study examines the direct roles of the subjective norm in the cognitive-affective model and local consumers' purchase intentions towards a foreign brand. In addition, the unrevealed moderating effects of face consciousness and perceived behavioral control on the relationship between subjective norm and purchase intention through emotional value have also been examined.

This study indicates that social groups positively influence both affective and cognitive aspects, which in turn impact customers' purchase intention. In addition, the moderating effect of face consciousness on the relationships between subjective norm and purchase intention through emotional value is significantly positive, while the moderating effect of perceived behavior control is significantly negative. Furthermore, the effect of subjective norm on purchase intention is serially (and positively) mediated by the perceived quality and emotional value, respectively. This study improves the knowledge of the roles of subjective norms and the contingency factors in the local consumers' purchase intentions towards foreign brands.

The findings of this study provide considerable implications for both managers and scholars. It will help global brands understand the complex processes through which social members impact local consumers' behavior. Friends, family members, and peers are inclined to impact both consumers' emotions and perceived quality, which in turn influence the purchase intention of local consumers. Further, the results of this study indicate that the impact of social groups on the purchase intention of customers is likely to be increased once foreign firms promote the social status and superior quality of their brands. Remarkably, the effect of social members on purchase intention is prone to become weaker for wealthy consumers because these consumers can afford several brands. Hence, it can be suggested that marketers should launch massive marketing campaigns underlining social status and the excellence of their foreign brands, together with continuously improving their offerings aiming at achieving absolute perfection to attract affluent consumers.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

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