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Exploring the Dynamics of Consumer Motivations, Cultural Influence, and Socioeconomic Factors related to Purchase Decision of Japanese Domestic Market Cars in Thailand

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ABSTRACT

The passion for Japanese Domestic Market (JDM) cars extends beyond mere vehicle ownership, representing a deep-rooted passionate, emotional, and financial commitment among enthusiasts. This study explores the key factors influencing JDM car purchase decisions in Thailand, focusing on psychological factors, financial factors, societal perspectives, cultural values, financial capability, and educational background. By using a mixed-methods approach, the research first employed quantitative analysis through multiple regression models to identify significant predictors of purchase decisions. Findings revealed that psychological attachment, financial factors, and financial capability play the most crucial roles in influencing JDM ownership. Specifically, psychological factors such as personal passion, self-identity, and emotional connection to JDM culture; financial factors—including long-term maintenance expectations; financial capability, such as income level and ability to absorb ongoing expenses, significantly drive purchase decision. Meanwhile cultural, societal, and educational factors have minimal impact. The qualitative phase further contextualized these findings, highlighting themes such as childhood aspirations, inherited automotive legacy, the active engagement in JDM car culture, and the immersive experience of JDM ownership. The study offered valuable insights for enthusiasts, automotive businesses, and policymakers, emphasizing the need for better support in JDM-specific parts, financing options, and regulatory frameworks to sustain this niche automotive culture. By bridging statistical evidence with real-world narratives, this research contributed to a deeper understanding of JDM car ownership dynamics in Thailand, providing a foundation for future studies on performance car markets and automotive subcultures.

Keywords: Psychology Factors, Financial Factors, Financial Capability

Introduction

Technological advancements, cultural trends, and consumer preferences can be found in such dynamic sector like the automotive industry. Within a wide variety of automobile market segments, the specialized car market is considered as a distinct category, which can be characterized by vehicle like Japanese Domestic Market (JDM) cars. These vehicles are not only designed to act only as modes of transportation, but they emphasize engineering advancement, aesthetic appeal, and cultural significance. Their appeal and characteristics are beyond generic transportation functionality, yet car enthusiasts view them as personal expression, community engagement, and status affirmation. The customers of this car segments are special group which are different from the normal personal car customers.

There are several critical factors related to consumers' decision-making process in the specialized performance car segment: Japanese Domestic Market (JDM) cars. Consumers tend to purchase their vehicles of choice based on their identity and self-image. There is the alignment between a car's brand identity and individual's self-preference can significantly influence purchasing decision. Moreover, luxury or performance car owners are usually associated with social status. The desire over symbolic value upon specialized performance vehicles can also lead to intention towards the purchase (Abraham, 2021). Besides, brand attachment and loyalty toward specific car brands influence purchasing decision, which is often influenced by positive word-of-mouth endorsements (Rodrigues et al., 2023).

In Thailand, the market for Japanese Domestic Market (JDM) car is vibrant. The JDM car culture in Thailand involves enthusiastic individuals actively seeking and modifying these cars. Evidenced by platforms like Facebook Marketplace, it is known for sourcing JDM car, both locally modified and authentic imports (Lenspeed, 2022). There are families and communities collaborating to restore and preserve the classic cars for their younger

generations, which highlights the significance of the classic car culture. Such collaboration not only maintain the car culture but also tighten social bonds and reduce generational gaps (Arora, 2024).

Statista (2025) projects that revenue of sports cars in Thailand segment reaches approximately \$1,402 million in 2025, with expected annual growth rate of 2.04% from 2025 to 2029. Sales in units are expected to reach 16,060 vehicles by 2029. Meanwhile, in Thailand, the precise statistical data of JDM is scarce – however, the presence of importers, specialized restoration garages, and online marketplaces and communities demonstrate a niche yet active market.

In the global market, sports car market reached \$110.25 billion in 2024, with an expectation to reach \$153.7 billion by 2023, and a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 2.5% (Statistics MRC, 2024). While precise figures on global Japanese Domestic Market exports are limited, the JDM has influenced automotive enthusiasts worldwide. Iconic car models such as the Nissan Skyline GT-R and Mazda RX-7 have become the symbols of performance and aesthetic, sustaining global interest in JDM car culture (Vida, 2024).

The automotive market contains the contrast between niche car enthusiasts, driven by identity, passion, and customization, and majority of normal car users, emphasized on practicality, affordability, and reliability. Even though there are differing perspectives in both groups, they are influenced by shared factors like brand identity, perceived value, and economic constraints.

By understanding the motivations and barriers of both groups, this study aims to investigate the dynamic influences of cultural, psychological, and socioeconomic factors that shape consumer purchase decisions in the JDM car market in Thailand. The purpose of this research is to identify the key drivers behind JDM ownership, particularly focusing on what differentiates these enthusiasts from the general market. The findings are expected to contribute to academic literature on niche consumer behavior, while also offering practical insights for automotive businesses and policymakers to better serve and support the JDM enthusiast community.

Purposes

- 1) To study consumer motivations, cultural influence, and socioeconomic factors related to Japanese Domestic Market car purchase decision in Thailand market.
- 2) To explore in-depth the underlying motivations, cultural meanings, and socioeconomic factors associated to JDM car ownership through qualitative inquiry.
- 3) To study the Japanese Domestic Market car purchase decision in Thailand market.

Literature Review and Conceptual Framework

Psychology Factors

According to Abraham (2021), in the context of luxury car purchase, several psychological aspects are explained, including self-motivation, self-experience, symbolism, and social identity. For instance, self-motivation is described as the portion of self-recognition in the society to gain higher social status. Accordingly, brand attachment plays a crucial role in psychological motivation point of view. Specific brand with strongly identified value and image, associating with customers' self-concept can lead to emotional loyalty towards the brand (Li, 2023). In the context of the purchase of Porsche cars in Thailand, Boonyanuson (2021) explains psychology factors as internal motivations, desires, and self-attitudes that influence consumers to purchase luxury products. To broaden, there are several aspects to psychology, such as self-identity and self-expression, which consumers aim to reflect their character and status via their luxury cars of choice; emotional connection towards luxury products or brands, whereabouts customers' ownership of luxury cars provide pleasure, pride, and confidence.

Financial Factors

In accordance with Gokhale et al. (2021) and Bwalya and Mweemba (2024), in the luxury car segment, these target groups contain flexible budget, especially when they perceive more value from the higher-tier models. It is added that resale value is considered as one of the financial motivators. Some customers view this type of purchase as an investment, particularly in specific brands or models that hold their value over period of time. Additionally, maintenance costs (or after-sales service costs) of certain brands also play a role in purchase decision-making processes. Furthermore, Kargeti (2022) reflects that the use of luxury products depicts the showcase of wealth, which customers determine the high price of luxury products based on their superior quality and brand heritage.

Cultural Values

Different cultures define different meanings to luxury products, which lead to varied demand of high-end purchases: some cultures see luxury products as social status, in which individuals seek for prestige; others with limited economical capability and minimalism may be discouraged to own luxury items (Li, 2023). Culture in the context of automobile purchases is explained as a deeply rooted values, beliefs, and tradition among the society, which are formed based on reference group with shared customer (Wong et al., 2024). Another study by

Stathopoulou and Balabanis (2019) explains that cultural values refer to a combination of beliefs and traditions that shape individuals' attitudes and behaviors, which is dependent on personal experiences and social influences.

Societal Perspectives

To reflect individuals' social status to align with common ground of norms, the chosen car of choice is recognized as status symbols among their social group (Boonyanuson, 2021). To identify oneself in specific community, the purchase decision tends to align with values, interests, and behaviors of the social or reference group (e.g., family, friends, colleagues) there are in (Rozy et al., 2019). In the context of luxury car purchase, these cars represent status symbols that differentiate individuals among a social hierarchy, where individuals prefer luxury brands that are well-accepted and appreciated by their social circles to maintain their social status and avoid social exclusion (Abraham, 2021).

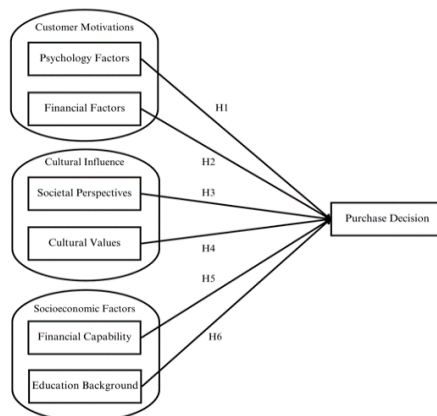
Financial Capability

Income level is one of key socioeconomic factors that is directly connected to consumers' purchasing power, and spending behavior, which lead to the product segments that they decide to purchase. It is suggested that disposable income is usually obtained by consumers with higher income, which allow them to decide to purchase luxury products with more ease. Meanwhile, price-sensitivity is often faced with lower income consumers when pursuing for luxury goods (Lugioyo, 2022). Kithandi and Ondabu (2024) support that financial capability is the key socioeconomic determinant influencing purchasing behavior in automobile industry, which includes disposable income, referring to money after spending for basic needs, and purchasing power, depicting capability to acquire high-cost products. Ultimately, Boonyanuson (2021) confirms that higher-income individuals contain less price sensitivity when it comes to luxury vehicle consumption, particularly Porsche.

Education Background

It is explained that education levels affect knowledgeability, information-processing, and confidence before making purchase. Individuals with higher educational background tend to compare several alternatives by research and assessment (Lugioyo, 2022). By focusing on Porsche vehicle consumption behavior, education is related to consumer awareness, ability to assess brand reputation and quality, and confidence while making decision (Boonyanuson, 2021). Wang & Tong (2017), who studied an influence of educational background on luxury purchases, describe that education levels help shape purchasing attitudes, including brand preferences, motivational purchases, and final decision-making.

Conceptual Framework



Formulated from: Boonyanuson (2021), Bwalya and Mweemba (2024, Wong et al. (2024), and Lugioyo (2022)

Hypotheses

- H1o: Psychology factors do not influence purchase decision of Japanese Domestic Market (JDM) car in Thailand
- H2o: Financial factors do not influence purchase decision of Japanese Domestic Market (JDM) car in Thailand
- H3o: Societal perspectives do not influence purchase decision of Japanese Domestic Market (JDM) car in Thailand
- H4o: Cultural values do not influence purchase decision of Japanese Domestic Market (JDM) car in Thailand
- H5o: Financial capability does not influence purchase decision of Japanese Domestic Market (JDM) car in Thailand
- H6o: Education background does not influence purchase decision of Japanese Domestic Market (JDM) car in Thailand

Research Methodology

In this study, researchers investigate the influencing factors in purchase decision of Japanese Domestic Market (JDM) car in Thailand. Researchers implemented mixed-method research methodology – combination of quantitative and qualitative research as a primary data. As for a quantitative research, researchers started conducting a reliability test with 31 respondents to ensure that all questions for each independent variable contain internal consistency. After testing that all questions are reliable based on Cronbach's Alpha concept, the questionnaires were distributed to the target population using purposive sampling, following by snowball sampling, and convenience sampling. As there is no determination of an exact target population along with the scarcity of JDM car in Thailand due to a very niche target group Francis (2024). The researcher therefore collected as much data as possible, which was accumulated to 67 respondents to form a quantitative analysis. Researcher then used a qualitative research method by conducting in-depth interviews with 5 highly significant interviewees, who are JDM car enthusiasts and automotive business owners to provide in-depth insights. The questionnaire utilizes the Five Point Likert Scale to evaluate respondents' level of agreement on the set of questions used to measure each variable, which is rated as 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral, 4 = agree, and 5 = strongly agree. Besides, after a successful data collection, primary data are analyzed using descriptive analysis, assisting research to summarize characteristics of respondents in this study. Most importantly, correlation analysis and multiple linear regression were selected to examine the influence of independent variables towards dependent variable, and to test the hypotheses by using IBM SPSS and Jamovi software.

Results

A total number of 67 respondents successfully filled the surveys via Google Form. Therefore, 91% of the respondents were qualified and reliable, which is accounted for 61 respondents (N = 61) meaning 9% of respondents did not pass the screening question. Researcher mainly used Jamovi software to evaluate and analyze the demographic data of the respondents. All of which, the demographic data are categorized as: gender, educational level, income level, numbers of JDM car owned, and JDM car model(s) owned. To analyze the data, descriptive analysis is used to explain respondents' demographic information.

It is shown that individuals deciding to purchase JDM car(s) are purely male, which is accounted for 61 respondents (100%) of the demographic result – with no female and other genders owning the JDM car. From the result, it demonstrates that the majority of sample who decided to purchase JDM cars are 26 individuals aging 46-55 years old (42.60%). It is found that respondents owning JDM cars are bachelor's degree holders as responded by 47 respondents (77.0%). Furthermore, from all 61 samples, up to 24 respondents (38.30%) have a monthly income more than 80,000 baht, which is considered as the majority. The biggest demographic of numbers of JDM car ownership is obtaining just one JDM car, as claimed by 41 individuals (67.20%). In this study, there are 91 unique JDM cars owned by 61 respondents. From the open-ended response, researcher initially categorize the car models based on their manufacturers to facility clearer understanding. The JDM car manufacturer owned most by respondents in this study is Subaru, with the numbers of 28 cars (30.77%) among different manufacturers. In accordance with mean score interpretation by Sini et al. (2015), all variables contain a mean score over 3.41, indicating at least "agree" responses, where four variables receive "strongly agree" rating among respondents – including purchase decision, which is the dependent variable.

Multiple Linear Regression

In this study, multiple linear regression (MLR) was selected to evaluate the relationship between independent and dependent variables. Researcher examined factors related to Japanese Domestic Market (JDM) car purchase decision, including psychology factors, financial factors, societal perspectives, cultural values, financial capability, and education background.

Table 1: Model Summary of Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics		Change Statistics		
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.712 ^a	.507	.452	.34041	.507	9.250	6	54	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), Education Background, Societal perspectives, Psychology factors, Financial capability, Financial factors, Cultural values

According to table 1, the adjusted R² value is 0.452, showing that 45.2% of customers deciding to purchase Japanese Domestic Market (JDM) cars can be explained by the independent variables selected in this study, including psychology factors (PF), financial factors (FF), societal perspectives (SP), cultural values (CV), financial capability (FC), and education background (EB). Therefore, other 54.8% of purchase decisions made

by customers to purchase JDM cars possible could be explained by other independent variables.

Significant Value & Beta Coefficient Analysis

Table 2: The Summary of Multiple Linear Regression Results

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	1.075	.481		2.237	.029		
H1o: Psychology Factors	.251	.120	.321	2.098	.041*	.389	2.571
H2o: Financial Factors	.273	.083	.363	3.282	.002*	.748	1.338
H3o: Societal Perspectives	.075	.052	.147	1.452	.152	.895	1.118
H4o: Cultural Values	-.008	.102	-.012	-.075	.941	.382	2.620
H5o: Financial Capability	.235	.081	.309	2.898	.005*	.801	1.248
H6o: Education Background	-.033	.086	-.043	-.381	.704	.721	1.388

a. Dependent Variable: Purchase Decision

Unstandardized coefficient (B) of psychology factors (PF) is 0.251 (Std. Error = 0.120), indicating that when each unit in this variable increases, the dependent variable will increase by 0.251 units. Standardized coefficient (β) is 0.321, showing relative importance of psychology factors compared to other independent variables in this study. The t-Statistic (t) is 2.098. For collinearity test, tolerance is $0.389 > 0.1$, and VIF is 2.571, which do not show multicollinearity. The significance (p-value) is 0.041 – since $0.041 < .05$, psychological factors are statistically significant at 5% significance level, depicting that psychological factors (PF) significantly influence the dependent variable – purchase decision (PD). Therefore, the null hypothesis (H1o) is rejected.

Unstandardized coefficient (B) of financial factors (FF) is 0.273 (Std. Error = 0.083), demonstrating that when 1-unit in this variable increases, the purchase decision (PD) score will increase by 0.251 units. Standardized coefficient (β) is 0.363, which shows the strongest influence among all variables due to the highest Beta value. The t-Statistic (t) is 3.282. For collinearity test, tolerance is $0.748 > 0.1$, and VIF is 1.338, which there is no multicollinearity concerns. The significance (p-value) is 0.002 – since $0.002 < .05$, this variable is statistically significant at 5% significance level, proving that financial factors (FF) strongly influence the dependent variable – purchase decision (PD). Therefore, the null hypothesis (H2o) is rejected.

Unstandardized coefficient (B) of societal perspectives (SP) is 0.075 (Std. Error = 0.052), demonstrating that when 1-unit in this variable increases, the purchase decision (PD) score will increase by 0.075 units – representing a small positive influence, but not significant. Standardized coefficient (β) is 0.147, which shows relatively low influence on dependent variable. The t-Statistic (t) is 1.452. For collinearity test, tolerance is $0.895 > 0.1$, and VIF is 1.118, describing no multicollinearity concerns. On the other hand, the significance (p-value) is 0.152 – since $0.152 < .05$, this variable is not statistically significant at 5% significance level, indicating there is no strong evidence that societal perspectives (SP) influence purchase decision (PD). Therefore, the null hypothesis (H3o) is failed to reject.

Unstandardized coefficient (B) of cultural values is -0.008 (Std. Error = 0.102), revealing a negative result, but containing an extremely small influence on the dependent variable. Standardized coefficient (β) is -0.012, showing nearly zero influence on purchase decision which is the dependent variable. The t-Statistic (t) is -0.075. For collinearity test, tolerance is $0.382 > 0.1$, and VIF is 2.620, proclaiming there is some correlation with other variables, but it is still within acceptable limits. Additionally, the significance (p-value) is 0.941 – since $0.941 < .05$, this variable is not statistically significant at 5% significance level, indicating cultural values (CV) have almost no influence on purchase decision (PD). Therefore, the null hypothesis (H4o) is failed to reject.

Unstandardized coefficient (B) of financial capability (FC) is 0.235 (Std. Error = 0.081), manifesting that when a unit in this variable increases, the purchase decision (PD) score will increase by 0.235 units. Standardized coefficient (β) is 0.309, which shows a strong positive influence towards the dependent variable. The t-Statistic (t) is 2.898. For collinearity test, tolerance is $0.801 > 0.1$, and VIF is 1.248, intimating there is no multicollinearity concerns. The significance (p-value) is 0.005 – since $0.005 < .05$, this variable is statistically significant at 5% significance level, proving that financial capability (FC) strongly influences the dependent variable – purchase decision (PD). Therefore, the null hypothesis (H5o) is rejected.

Unstandardized coefficient (B) of educational background (EB) is -0.033 (Std. Error = 0.086), conveying that there is a small negative influence, but not meaningful towards the dependent variable. Standardized coefficient (β) is -0.043, which shows low influence towards the purchase decision. The t-Statistic (t) is -0.381. For collinearity test, tolerance is $0.721 > 0.1$, and VIF is 1.388, expressing there is no multicollinearity issues. The significance (p-value) is 0.704 – since $0.704 < .05$, this variable is not statistically significant at 5% significance level, proving that educational background (EB) does not influence the dependent variable – purchase decision

(PD). Therefore, the null hypothesis (H₀) is failed to reject.

Confirmative Analysis of Multiple Linear Regression

As researcher found that some variables are not significant in the context of JDM car purchase decision. Therefore, researcher would like to conduct a confirmative analysis by excluding independent variable that are not significant to the equation, including societal perspectives (SP), cultural values (CV), and educational background (EB).

Meanwhile, this section emphasizes on significant variables based on previous multiple linear regression analysis, consisting of psychological factors (PF), financial factors (FF), and financial capability (FC). Moreover, qualitative findings evaluated from five interviewees, who are the owners of JDM cars and businesses related to JDM cars.

Table 3: Model Summary of Confirmative Analysis

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics		Change Statistics		
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.695 ^a	.483	.456	.33915	.483	17.772	3	57	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), Financial Capability, Psychology factors, Financial factors

In accordance with table 3, the model is now more refined by removing insignificant variables from the previous multiple linear regression analysis. The confirmative analysis discloses the adjusted R² value of 0.456, depicting that 45.6% of the independent variables that are significant after the first multiple linear regression analysis: financial capability (FC); psychological factors (PF); financial factors (FF) can explain the influence of Japanese Domestic Market (JDM) car purchase decision (PD), which is the dependent variable.

Table 4: The Summary of Confirmative Analysis

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta				Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	1.243	.445			2.793	.007		
Psychology Factors	.256	.077	.328	3.318	.002		.929	1.077
Financial Factors	.268	.077	.355	3.464	.001		.861	1.162
Financial Capability	.222	.078	.292	2.832	.006		.855	1.170

a. Dependent Variable: Purchase Decision

In accordance with table 4, the confirmative analysis claims that unstandardized coefficient (B) of psychology factors (PF) is 0.265 (Std. Error = 0.077), indicating that when each unit in this variable increases, the dependent variable will increase by 0.265 units. Standardized coefficient (β) is 0.328, showing a positive influence on purchase decision. The t-Statistic (t) is 3.318. For collinearity test, tolerance is 0.929 > 0.1, and VIF is 1.077, which do not show multicollinearity. The significance (p-value) is 0.002 – since 0.002 < .05, psychological factors (PF) are statistically significant at 5% significance level.

The confirmative analysis points out that unstandardized coefficient (B) of financial factors (FF) is 0.268 (Std. Error = 0.077), emphasizing that when 1-unit in this variable increases, the dependent variable (PD) will increase by 0.268 units. Standardized coefficient (β) is 0.355, uncovering the strongest positive influence on purchase decision among all significant variables. The t-Statistic (t) is 3.464. For collinearity test, tolerance is 0.861 > 0.1, and VIF is 1.162, which do not show multicollinearity issues. The significance (p-value) is 0.001 – since 0.001 < .05, highlighting that financial factors (FF) are statistically significant at 5% significance level.

Lastly, the confirmative analysis confirms that unstandardized coefficient (B) of financial capability (FC) is 0.222 (Std. Error = 0.078), indicating that when 1-unit in this variable increases, the purchase decision (PD) will increase by 0.222 units. Standardized coefficient (β) is 0.292, which is a moderate effective size. The t-Statistic (t) is 2.82, considered as significant but slightly lower than the previous variables. For collinearity test, tolerance is 0.855 > 0.1, and VIF is 1.170, which do not emphasize multicollinearity concerns. The significance (p-value) is 0.006 – since 0.006 < .05, underlining that financial capability (FC) is statistically significant at 5% significance level.

Discussion

Psychology Factors

Supported by qualitative findings gathered from five interviewees, psychological factors, such as personal identity, perceived experience, and emotional attachment to Japanese Domestic Market (JDM) cars strongly influence their purchase decisions. Enthusiasts claim that JDM car ownership is not purely about practicality, but it represents their passion and self-expression. Initially, the owner of Subaru Impreza WRX STI

2010 stated that JDM automobile has been his passion since he was a kid. So, one day when he was capable of purchasing one of these cars, he chose his Subaru as his JDM car of choice due to its performance and handling, stating, *"I have been car enthusiast since I was a kid, especially car with four-wheel drive system", and "I select Subaru as my JDM car of choice, mainly for its handling and performance. I somehow personally believe that Subaru pure performance is better than other four-wheel drive car, like Evo"*.

Similarly, the owner of JDM car tuning garage also supported that he was passionate about cars and kept educating himself until one day he could make living out of it, which took him around twenty years to open specialized car tuning garage, stating, *"Like others, I have always liked cars since I was a child. And my family business has been involved around cars, until one day it was passed down to me"*. It is added that high-performance specialized cars are not purposefully for everyday driving, yet it acts as a passionate and relaxing toy. When he felt exhausting, he often picked up the key and drove out for couple U-turns, then he felt relieve, expressing, *"JDM cars are considered as boys' toys; with these cars, even though we do not daily drive them, just picking up keys then driving out to the gas station and making U-turn can heal you after a stressful day"*.

Another JDM car owner claimed that if individuals liked machinery advancement starting from bike to motorbike, it usually evolved to car enthusiasm in the end, while other as kids might prefer robots or computer gaming. He involved around cars like street racing at downtown back in his teenage years, voicing, *"Imagine yourself as a boy, if you started liking automobiles, like motorbike, it usually leads to cars – at least for me. Also, personally, I was not so into gaming or robot, like other boys – it has always been fast cars"*.

All in all, as found by Boonyanuson (2021) that Porsche car owners' psychological needs outweigh the practical consideration, this study can confidently confirm that most specialized performance and/or luxury car consumers prioritize their psychological and emotional attachments toward preferred brands over basic functionality. Similar to the studies by Abraham (2021) and Rozy et al. (2019), this research confirms that the purchase of luxury, specialized, and/or JDM cars also represent buyers' identity and self-esteem, which is beyond the basic safety and transportation needs.

Financial Factors

By adding the qualitative results regarding financial factors, one of the interviewees and the owner Subaru Impreza WRX claimed that it was certain that normal consumer cars contain lesser cost of maintenance, but since JDM cars were his passion. Hence, most individuals owning JDM cars are likely to have normal cars as their daily use. Plus, he informed that maintenance, restoration, and other related fixing were calculated and examined in advance what needs to be modified or fixed, as he stated: *"Maintenance is the major factor that JDM car players must prepare. If we put all of our money into these cars, it may affect living condition. It must be predetermined with our financial capability"*. Still, he did not consider his JDM car as a long-term investment, despite the increase in price throughout the years, as he said, *"I did not think that my car is in my investment portfolio. But as the price has gone up since the COVID, I would take it as a coincident win"*.

As for the perspectives of JDM car tuning garage, as the business owner, it is claimed that some of his customers manage their money by splitting the bills to pay for their car project, as some projects take more than a year to complete. The budget can be set based on customers' preferences and needs of their car-build, by stating, *"Most of the time, as a tuner, I would ask customers first what the purpose of this car-build and budget are"*. With a slight difference to the previous owners, he considered JDM cars as a financial investment, as he used to collect up to four JDM cars in his garage. But when customers reached out and bargained for acceptable price, he would sell them and looked for new on, which he said, *"I used to have four JDM cars parked over there (in the showroom), but I sold them during its peak (after COVID when price reached its peak). For me, as a long-time player in this JDM car culture – these cars were worth more than gold back then"*.

To add more depth to the financial factors of JDM cars, based on the owner of Subaru Impreza WRX 2002 and the JDM car tuner himself, it was declared that even though the maintenance cost of JDM cars is higher than normal cars, but it is still significantly lower than European cars. By comparing the price paid with maintenance and perceived performance, he stated that it is worth it, by stating, *"If I tell you that JDM cars, especially these Subaru, have lower maintenance cost and concerns compared to European cars – and still the performance is challengeable, will you believe me? – It is the fact that more people in the car community should know"*.

More interestingly, being the owner of JDM car garage (Motor GT) for over twenty years, he would always ask for customers' expectations of each car-build before proceeding it. For instance, each individual has different taste of playing along with the JDM cars: some may want to be able to daily drive their cars, while others may want to bring their car to track days and win trophies with their cars. In which, the price and purposes of car-builds are varied, as he put it, *"I would ask them (JDM car customers) firsthand on what the purpose of this car-build is – whether it is for daily driving, focusing on cosmetics; the focus is on performance to win races"*. Most importantly, the main reason why he owns up to five JDM cars is the resale value. As these cars are limited

in demand despite its old age, 90's people still seek to own these cars of their dream – as he shared, *"I currently own five Subaru Impreza WRXs in various model years. Like this white Stink Eye, I once had purchased her for just a million and made nearly twice out of it"*.

To conclude, by comparing researcher's findings with previous studies, it is statistically ensured that financial factors significantly influence the purchase of JDM car or luxury car/product. However, considering the qualitative results that provide in-depth perspectives of these unique group of population, the financial factors consideration of JDM car purchase cannot be used to interpret the purchasing behavior of luxury car/product. For instance, Gokhale et al. (2021) stated that the balance between price and perceived benefits, discounts, and extra features of luxury car are the core of financial factors motivating customer's purchase decision of luxury vehicles; JDM car owners do not consider the price paid in turn of what they receive, since it their cars are the deep-rooted passion, so they are willing to pay and willing to save up for it. Additionally, in accordance with Kargeti (2022), it can be confirmed that luxury product, like specific watches, handbags, and also automobiles are considered as an investment. In correlation with this study, as JDM car retain and is appreciated by its value, some JDM car owners collect them as a long-term investment. Lastly, another research pointed out that maintenance and resale value are considered by car buyers in the context of long-term financial planning and examining (Bwalya & Mweemba, 2024). Still, researcher found that due to the passion of JDM car enthusiasts, they overlook that reasonability towards maintenance, on the other hand, they are ready and plan in advance of which aspects of their car must be maintained or restored.

Financial Capability

Confirmed by qualitative findings, many members emphasize that financial capability is the crucial part that must be redetermined before deciding to purchase JDM cars. The owner of Subaru Impreza WRX 2010 claims that costs of living must be prioritized, then following by cars of his passion. According to his opinion, financial situation for different individual was varied and hard to set the bar or criteria to measure an exact financial capability to obtain one of these cars. Still, he mentioned that these cars of his dream were his only passion, so he spared his funding to support his needs, as he said, *"It is hard to determine how much money we should have to obtain these cars, but for me, I put my money into cars while saving money from other spendings"*.

Another statement was claimed by the owner of JDM car tuning shop that Since specialized cars cost significantly higher than normal cars, individuals with higher income are capable of owning specialized cars, like the JDM cars. Of greatest importance, when it comes to car-build project, which usually takes months or year(s), most customers pay partially based on the process of the project. Mostly, it depends on the stages of, like paintwork, engine reassembly, bodywork, or final tuning. Therefore, customers who considered to build these cars must have sufficient fundings to support their projects in long term. As he mentioned during the interview saying, *"the majority of my customers are middle- to high-aged individuals who have money left in their pockets and are enthusiast about cars; some project takes several years to complete. Like this Evo, it took around eight months to assemble the engine, a full year for paintwork and bodywork, and still today to adjust the body fitment, suspension, and final tuning"*.

Similar to other JDM car owners, as a long-time car enthusiast and the owner of Subaru Impreza WRX STI (Blob Eye) declared that to own and be able to involve in specialized car culture, at least a stable and sufficient financial status is a must. Additionally, JDM cars have different price points that serve different target groups. For instance, Nissan Skyline GT-R is very high in market price, up to seven million baht with a genuine BCNR model (not mock-up GTT); Mazda RX-7 costs around three million baht; Subaru Impreza WRX costs around one to three million baht, depending on the models. As he asserted upon the interview that, *"At least for people within my JDM car circles, they know how to manage their income to spend on their car projects; people with insufficient income might struggle and get bored of their car-build due to the lack of funding"*, and *"JDM cars also have their own tier lists: the genuine Skyline GT-R costs up to six to seven million (baht); while Mazda RX-7 costs around three to four million (baht), depending on the conditions; my car right over there (Subaru Impreza WRX) costs in total around three million (baht) with post restoration and modifications combined. Still, the price for each model is varied, depending on its popularity, demand, and condition of the cars."*

Above all, as being the JDM car garage (Motor GT) owner for over 10 years, he confidently claimed that most the demographic willing to pay for this type of car are individuals with high income, at least for his customers. In the context of payment, most customers split their bills based on the progress and the essential parts required for their cars. These people frequently visit or even wait at the garage to see the progress of their JDM car-build, so they usually keep up with mostly all processes of their beloved car and also the price to pay. As he echoing during the interview: *"Working with high- to ultra- income is much easier compared to ones struggling with monetary. Most of the time, the bills will be handed to customers when their required parts arrive, or certain stages of their project are done. As you can see, they usually visit here (Motor GT garage) after work and just observe their cars being neatly assembled day-by-day"*.

To conclude, all interviewees agree that individuals who decided to purchase JDM cars must have financial stability with high income level to retain these cars. While individuals with inefficient funding usually abandons their car-build due to boredom of ongoing spendings, which represents opposition to their current income level. Specific JDM car models also have their own price range for car enthusiasts to choose from. Still, these cars require much more monetary in terms of purchasing price, maintenance, and restoration compared to normal cars. Individuals with middle-income may be able to obtain and have fun with JDM car projects, yet they may have to evaluate and adjust their passion by prioritizing cost of living and saving other unnecessary expenses.

In summary, both quantitative and qualitative findings of this study correlate with previous studies discussed in the early session. As claimed by Lugioyo (2022), it was found that individuals with high-income are more likely to purchase high-priced car parts, particularly tires, while individuals with lower income are more price sensitive to branded tires. Identical to the findings of this study that most high- to ultra-income individuals tend to prepare and use disposable income to purchase and maintain JDM cars, while passionate individuals with insufficient income may struggle to achieve their car-build's goals. Another research by Boonyanuson (2021) can also be confirmed by this study that high-income supercar purchasers contain lesser price sensitivity. Meanwhile, the middle-income individuals contain higher purchase intention towards supercar, particularly the Porsche. For which can be depicted when high-income JDM car owners were willing to spend to get their project done, while younger demographic with financial restriction may find difficulty along the way to complete their build.

Conclusions

There are three independent variables that are significant in this study, meaning p-value is below .05, which statistically influence purchase decision, which is the dependent variable. Therefore, it can be concluded that psychology factors, financial factors, and financial capability significantly influence the purchase decision of Japanese Domestic Market (JDM) car in Thailand due to the rejection of null hypotheses (H1o, H2o, H5o). All of which, as regards to statistical analysis, financial factors are the most significant variables influencing JDM car purchases, following by financial capability, and psychological factors, respectively. On the other hand, other three independent variables, including societal perspectives, cultural values, and education background do not significantly influence JDM car purchase decision. Meanwhile, these statistically insignificant variables may not directly influence enthusiasts' purchases, yet the high mean score interpretation shows that they somehow contain indirect influence on the purchase decision.

Recommendations

Initially, since this study provides both quantitative findings and in-depth qualitative results, it would be beneficial to whom deciding to purchase JDM cars. Research would like to recommend both JDM car enthusiasts and potential buyers to preserve JDM passion and heritage by keep engaging with the history, engineering and cultural significance of JDM cars through restoration and participation in the scene. Enthusiasts and future buyers are recommended to ensure that JDM car purchases align with personal enjoyment and emotional fulfillment, rather than external validation or short-term trends. Potential buyers must also view JDM car ownership as an expression of personal passion, not just vehicle purchase. In terms of financial factors, enthusiasts and buyers should understand the full cost of ownership, including plan for maintenance, modifications, and potential restoration costs before committing to a JDM car. To prioritize smart spending on modifications, potential buyers should balance performance upgrades and reliability, ensuring modifications align with long-term usability and car value. Additionally, resale consideration must be taken into account, since some JDM models increase in value overtime; enthusiasts should factor in market trends when purchasing or modifying these vehicles.

As regards to recommendations for JDM car's automotive business and aftermarket industry, in the context of psychology factors, there should be community-driven engagement to gather enthusiasts by hosting JDM meetups, motorsport events, and sponsorships to strengthen community relationship. Plus, business owners are keen to provide custom tuning, restoration, and modification options that align with enthusiasts' passion. In accordance with financial factors, garage owners are recommended to provide transparent cost breakdowns by educating customers on long-term ownership costs, maintenance, and resale value of specific JDM car models. To cater collectors and high-end customers, automotive business owners can also develop premium restoration and tuning services by offering specialized, high-quality craftsmanship. Lastly, JDM garage owners should also assess customers' financial capability by introducing flexible financial and payment plans. Furthermore, to

support sustainable JDM ownership, owners are advised to encourage buyers or customers to make financially responsible purchases by offering expert consultations on long-term affordability.

This quantitative study involved a limited sample of 61 respondents who are passionate about JDM cars, acknowledging the challenge of identifying the exact population of JDM car owners in Thailand due to its relatively small size. To enhance statistical reliability, future research should aim to include a larger sample. Additionally, improvements are recommended in the questionnaire distribution process, as the current study employed a mix of probability and non-probability sampling, with many responses collected via social media. This led to irrelevant data due to misinterpretation of the term "JDM cars". Lastly, it is suggested that future studies explore new independent variables, as only three out of six variables in this study significantly influenced JDM car purchase decisions, and the adjusted R-square indicated that just 45.60% of the decision-making could be explained by the current model. Therefore, qualitative insights from show further impactful variables.

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