

RISKY BEHAVIOR WHEN DRIVING LUXURY CARS: THE PERSPECTIVE OF CAR TRADER

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Abstract

High-risk behavior, speeding, and breaking traffic on the road by wealthy people while driving their luxury cars are a common phenomenon on roads that often occur in Indonesia and in other countries. This study aims to explore the meaning of driving a luxury car for luxury car dealers who have experience driving several types of luxury cars. The phenomenological method was used in this study, which was conducted through online interviews with several used luxury car dealers. Some of the observed features include the type of luxury car, speed, safety, and security while driving. This study shows that, indirectly, driving a luxury car can be a risky behavior on the road.

Keywords: luxury car; phenomenon on roads; speeding; risky behavior on the road.

Abstrak

Perilaku berisiko tinggi, ngebut, dan melanggar lalu lintas di jalan oleh orang-orang kaya saat mengendarai mobil mewah mereka merupakan fenomena umum di jalan yang sering terjadi di Indonesia dan di negara-negara lain. Studi ini bertujuan untuk menggali makna mengendarai mobil mewah bagi pedagang mobil mewah yang telah memiliki pengalaman mengendarai beberapa jenis mobil mewah. Metode fenomenologi digunakan pada studi ini, yang dilakukan melalui wawancara daring dengan beberapa pedagang mobil mewah bekas. Beberapa fitur yang diamati meliputi jenis mobil mewah, kecepatan, keselamatan, dan keamanan selama berkendara. Studi ini menunjukkan bahwa, secara tidak langsung, mengendarai mobil mewah bisa menjadi perilaku berisiko di jalan.

Kata-kata kunci: mobil mewah; fenomena di jalan; ngebut; perilaku berisiko di jalan.

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia has a high potential to automotive business (Sutanto, 2015). The number of cars consumed by Indonesians, especially in urban areas, has always increased year after year, including luxury cars. Luxury brands are a modern set of symbols that Asians (including Indonesia) used to redefine their identity and social position. Despite the global economic crisis, the luxury market in Indonesia was not severely affected (Chada and Husband, 2006).

Actually, the Indonesia's economy growth was strong during 2018. The growth was influenced by the highly increases of industries such as tourism, manufacturing, and textiles. Even though the economic growth was not reflected in sales of luxury cars, the increasing demand for luxury sports cars is continuously attracting luxury car companies to bring new products into Indonesia. The newcomer within luxury sports cars is Porsche GT3, which was launched worldwide in 2017 and launched in Indonesia in June 2018. Luxury car market in Indonesia is niche and Mercedes-Benz is the long-standing brand and has high awareness in Indonesia.

The COVID-19 global pandemic had a serious impact on the global luxury market. In 2021, the global market declined by approximately 15% compared to that in 2020. Luxury product in Asia Pacific sales was decline by 7% in 2020, but the region's share of global personal luxury goods increased from 32% in 2019 to 37% in 2020. The outlook for personal luxury product in Asia Pacific remains profitable, even though facing the negative impact of COVID-19. As of August 2020, the 4 luxury car sales in Indonesia were BMW (0.37%), Mercedes Benz PC (0.32%), Lexus (0.15), and Mercedes Benz CV (0.14%). Although it looks small in percentage, Salim (2020) mentioned that the number of luxury cars sold in Indonesia, from January to August 2020, was BMW (1,244 units), Mercedes-Benz CV (657 units), Lexus (610 units), Hyundai (437 units), Volkswagen (390 units), Mini Cooper (325 units), Peugeot (163 units), and Audi (27 units).

A study showed that respondents who used luxury products considered the luxury products they owned to be fun and worth the price they paid (Nia and Zaichkowsky, 2000). In particular, Indonesian consumers consider that German brand car (BMW) has quality value, social value, and hedonic value, while the Japanese luxury car brand, Lexus, has a conspicuous value higher than that of BMW (Namuri and Kusuma, 2014).

The word luxury comes from the word in Latin "Luxus", which had its origin in agriculture and it meant exceeding growth and became the word for exceeding in general (Mehta, 2014). According to Kapferer and Bastien (2012), the term luxury comes from "lux" that means light in Latin. Luxury is glitters, like light and enlightening. Luxury also defines beauty (Kapferer and Bastien, 2012). Some of the characters from luxury include superior quality, durability performance or design, very high price, scarcity and uniqueness, ancestral heritage, and personal history (Brun and Castelli, 2013; Vigneron and Johnson, 2004). The respondents of the study by Dubois et al. (2001) mentioned that luxury objects' prices are very high in comparison with non-luxury objects and the very high price is perceived as an indicator of luxury. Then, it can be concluded that luxury car are vehicles that offer features what is basic in a car, associated with very high prices, high quality, durability performance or design, scarcity and uniqueness, and excessiveness.

Several cases that have gone viral in mainstream media and social media are related to the behavior of rich people who drive luxury cars and violate traffic regulations in Indonesia. For example, a Porsche Boxster owner has violated traffic regulations by crossing the Transjakarta lane on Jalan Sultan Iskandar Muda, South Jakarta. Another example is

when a traffic police arrested a driver of a Toyota Fortuner car for allegedly pointing a gun at a motorcyclist in the Duren Sawit area of East Jakarta. In Surabaya, 2 luxury cars, 1 Ferrari and 1 Lamborghini, were involved in a wild race on Jalan Manyar Kertoarjo. The two luxury cars drove very fast and caused the Lamborghini to crash into a stall on the side of the road and leave 1 person dead and 2 others injured. In Japan, a luxury sports car outing crashed and ended up with a pile on highways. This event destroyed 8 Ferraris, 1 Lamborghini, and 3 Mercedes-Benzes. At Gotthard Pass, Swiss Alps, there was a car crash involving expensive luxury cars. The accident showed the crash involving 1 Mercedes-Benz C-Class wagon, 1 Porsche 911 Cabriolet, and 1 Bugatti Chiron.

THE OBJECTIVE OF THIS STUDY

This study aims to explore the meaning of luxury cars for car traders. Car traders are chosen assuming that they have the experience of driving a wide variety of cars, including luxury cars. Participants were asked 5 questions: 1) what kind of luxury car do you drive, and does the car have engine capacity of 2,000 cc or more? 2) what do you feel when you first entered the steering room of the luxury car? 3) when you start driving the luxury car, what do you feel? 4) what features do you like about the luxury car? 5) when you drive a luxury car on a freeway, what do you do? Each answer to questions number 2, 3, 4, and 5 is probed again for getting a deeper answer.

This study uses a phenomenological qualitative approach. Phenomenology is the study of human experience and the way things present themselves in and through that experience. Online semi-structured interviews were conducted with 5 used car dealers as participants. The data was obtained through interviews with the help of the WhatsApp application, due to restrictions related to health protocols during the COVID-19 pandemic. Initially the researchers got the first participant, who was a psychology graduate student and a used car dealer. By using snowball-sampling, the first participant was asked to find 4 colleagues who had driven luxury cars.

The study used data analysis according to Moustakas (1994), which consisted of:

- 1) *Epoche* or bracketing is a systematic attempt to set aside preconceptions about the phenomenon under investigation. In doing epoche, it is necessary to put aside all perspectives, understandings, judgments, and everyday knowledge possessed.
- 2) Phenomenological reduction is separating and removing expressions or statements from participants that do not refer to the question, whether these expressions are the essence of the participant's experience or if these expressions can be grouped and given a theme.
- 3) Imaginative Variations or Structural Descriptions. In phenomenology there is the term textural description, which is written about "what" is experienced, and describes the meaning experienced by participants related to their experience. After doing the texture description. Furthermore, imaginative variation can be carried out, which aims to find

all possible meanings, look for different perspectives, by utilizing imagination or varying the terms of reference about phenomena to achieve individual structural descriptions of participants.

- 4) Synthesis is a combination of texture and structural descriptions to convey the overall essence of experience. The final conclusion is a brief description that characterizes the experiences of all participants in a study.

Table 1 Participant

Initial	Age	Sex	Job	Residence
GG	41	Male	Car trader	Bekasi
IS	31	Male	Car trader, Post graduate student	Bekasi
RD	29	Male	Car trader	Bekasi
SH	34	Male	Car trader	Bekasi
EI	45	Male	Car trader, Military	Bekasi

RESULTS

Although participants (GG, IS, RD, SH, EI) are not actual owners of cars, their temporary experience with luxury cars can be interpreted as having a psychological relationship between the driver and the car. The themes found including types of luxury cars, preference of the luxury car's features, feeling like the rich, speed and speeding, and risky behavior on the road.

Table 2 Type of Luxury Car

Luxury Car	GG	IS	RD	SH	EI
Toyota Fortuner (2400 cc)	X	X	X	X	X
Toyota Alphard (2500 cc)	X	X	X		X
Toyota Harrier (2400 cc)	X	X	X		
Mitsubishi Pajero (2.442 cc)		X	X	X	
Toyota Vellfire (2400 cc)			X	X	
Jeep Wrangler Rubicon (2000 cc)				X	X
Toyota Land Cruiser Prado (2700 cc)					X
Toyota Land Cruiser (3000 cc)	X				
Toyota Land Cruiser (4500 cc)			X		
BMW series 5 (2000 cc)					X
BMW X5 (3000 cc)	X				
Land Rover Discovery Sport (2000 cc)	X				
Land Rover Defender (2000 cc)				X	
Mercedes Benz GLE 450 (2999cc)					X
Mercedes Benz G Class (5.980cc)		X			
BMW X5 (3000 cc)		X			
Jeep Cherokee (3000 cc)			X		
Mazda CX 9 (2500 cc)				X	

Type of Luxury Car

There are 18 types of cars from several brands from Japan (Toyota, Mitsubishi, and Mazda), Germany (BMW and Mercedes Benz), England (Land Rover), and the United States (Jeep). Of the 18 car brands, Toyota is the most widely used brand, especially the Toyota Fortuner. Participants considered that the type of semi-luxury car was also a type of luxury car, and they all had experience in driving both types of cars.

Preference of The Luxury Car's Features

Four participants liked the safety and comfort features found in the car. The car's safety and power system is felt when the car is driven at a speed of 120 km/h. While the legs of the car feel very comfortable when passing through an uneven road. Furthermore, comfort is also obtained from tires and a good braking system. The four participants also liked the entertainment in the car. Advanced entertainment features are felt to make sound better and quieter.

There are several features that distinguish luxury cars from economical cars, namely steering, navigation, power, design, engine, chassis, technology, shock absorbers, and seats. A participant can explain further about the features he likes, namely the interior which has adequate safety systems, such as 4-point to 6-point airbags, safety controls, ABS EBS braking system, shock breaker system, and engine break system. If these features are already in the car, he will definitely feel safe, comfortable, and calm. From the exterior, the aerodynamic shape of the car body, the height of the body from the ground, and the thicker of body material, can reduce the negative impact when an accident occurs, so it is not too severe. In addition, the very bright car lights match the car body very well.

Feeling Like the Rich

Even though the participants were not the real owners of the luxury cars, they felt like rich people while driving them. They feel comfort, security, confidence, and luxury. Regarding comfort, luxury cars are different from frugal cars in terms of driving comfort and more sophisticated safety system, so they can drive without worry. This comfort makes participants feel like they really own the luxury car. Participants feel happy and comfortable, because luxury cars are different from cars in general, with quality leather seats and a luxurious-looking dashboard made of quality materials.

One participant stated that safety in luxury cars is influenced by engines with a capacity of 2000 cc or more, which are more powerful and safer on the road. The car can still provide high safety even though it is moving at a speed of 120 km/h. With the advantages of technology and adequate car safety, participants feel that their self-confidence is increasing. Participants feel that the vehicle is luxurious and classy, so there seems to be an emotional bond with the luxury car.

Speed and Speeding

Consciously or unconsciously, 4 participants generally drive their car at high speed. While driving a luxury car, a participant felt challenged and adrenaline pumped when taking the car to a mountainous area or while driving at high speed. Other participants feel that they can subconsciously cross the specified speed limit, such as on a freeway or on a public road that looks deserted. A participant also felt faster than usual, and he managed to reach a speed of 140 km/h using the Pajero Sport and Mazda CX9. On the other hand, a participant consciously used a speed of 80 km/h to 100 km/h on the freeway just to test the car engine.

Risky Behavior on the Road

Psychologically, there are several risky behaviors shown by participants when driving a luxury car, namely lack of care, arrogance, lack of control, blaming others, being angry, violating traffic, and feeling that they have the road.

A participant feels high emotions while driving a luxury car. He becomes irritable, easily blames others, and does not care about traffic rules. This is because when driving a car, he becomes selfish and does not care about his surroundings, so it is very easy to do speeding, even though the road is narrow or the road is in a residential area.

One participant felt his driving passion became so emotional that he lost control of the atmosphere while driving a luxury car. Emotional here means not wanting to be underestimated by others, and out of control here means if he is in a luxury car, such as a Mitsubishi Pajero, Toyota Fortuner, and Land Cruiser, he suddenly feels like driving the vehicle and doesn't care about the road condition without him know what causes it.

A participant sometimes becomes arrogant and doesn't care about road conditions or road signs, even though the car being driven is not his own car. This arrogance can appear suddenly, although not all the time.

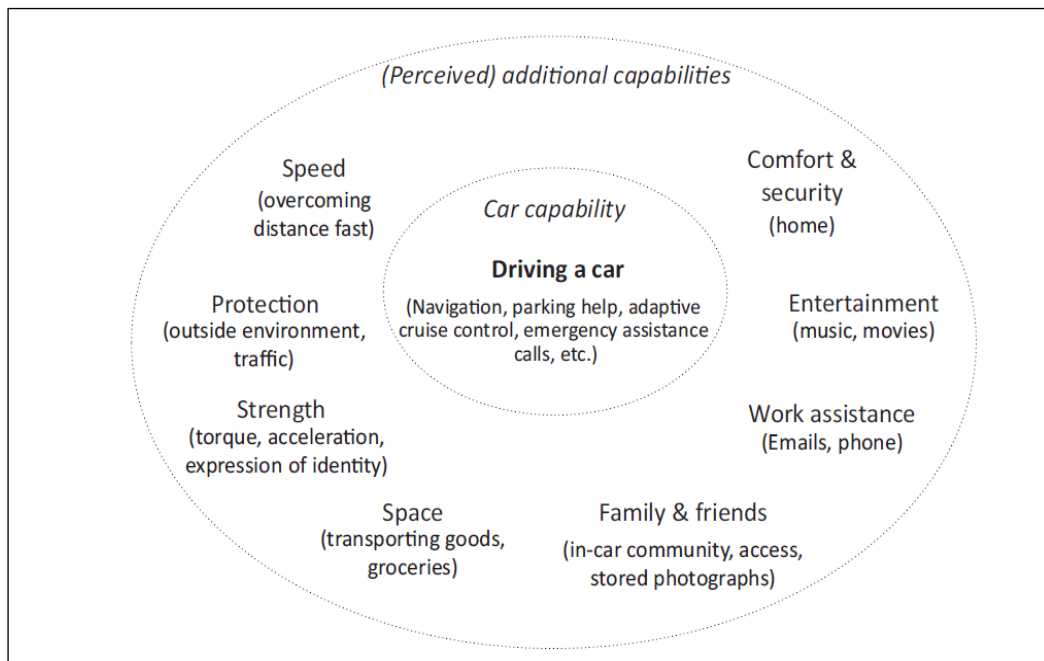
DISCUSSION

The study found that risky driving behavior can be experienced by luxury used car dealers. Even though they don't have their own luxury car, the feeling of having a luxury car makes them tend to act like rich people. This phenomenon can be explained psychologically by adopting the approach of *The Psychology of the Car* (Gossling, 2017) which starts from the emotional bond between the car and the driver to risky behavior on the road, each of which is accompanied by several influencing factors.

Where cars enhance human capabilities, or where humans develop identities in cars, the two become interconnected, trusted partners, and extensions of personal identity (Gossling, 2017). In general, cars provide security and protection against strangers, like a shell of intimacy for the driver and his or her spouse or family. The car body provides an extension of the human body, surrounding the fragile, soft, and vulnerable human skin with

a new steel skin, although the skin can be scratched, crushed, and broken once it encounters other car in an accident (Urry, 2006).

At first the interconnection of the car and the driver is to master the car before use. Learning how to drive a car is essential to driving the car on the road. Luxury car features support the learning process, such as for parking aids, adaptive cruise control, navigation systems, dash cams, and alarms. All of these make the driving process easier. However, to get a driver's license requires theoretical and practical knowledge, as well as passing the test (Muuss, 1970).



Source: Gossling (2017)

Figure 1 Driver-Car Emotional Bond

By interacting with cars, drivers have a wealth of experience regarding speed, safety, strength, space, social connectedness, work efficiency, entertainment, and comfort. Because of these advantages, which plays as much emotional and symbolic, real or imaginary, the car becomes very important. It becomes a social practice that contributes meaning and indeed to the structure of social identity.

Cars can affect the driver's mood, for example thrilling, exciting and relaxing and can provide important social symbols to express status and power (Gatersleben, 2007). More specifically, Gössling (2017) adds the aspect of “interconnection”, which includes increasing or expanding physical properties (speed, acceleration, torque), social desires (social status, connectivity), basic human needs (residence, protection, and transportation), as well as overcoming weaknesses (e.g. parking, cruise control, maintaining a safe distance). These aspects of the car also develop advertising exploits, where coping with anxiety is an important part of the marketing strategy, while the car is also marketed as a “home from

home” (Graves-Brown, 2000), or a “third space” that connects home and work, where a person spends a lot of time (Gossling, 2017).

According to Sheller (2004) emotional responses to cars and feelings about driving are important for people in buying, driving, and living with cars. As a result, car manufacturers manipulate brand desires through the emotional resonance of their advertising campaigns. For example, the Lexus IS200 ad states that "it's the feeling inside." This car features leather seats, automatic temperature control, and a digital audio system. In addition there is a feeling about the interior and exterior of the car, when moving or standing still, so that drivers feel not only about the car but also about themselves.

The connection is also closely related to aspects of comfort, such as the opportunity to create unmatched choices in what is considered “my time” in “my space”. Thus, the car provides unmatched protection, shelter, provision, sociality, and freedom to make unchallenged decisions (Gossling, 2017).

This has complicated outcomes; driver-car interconnection increase car attachment and transport demand, as driving intensifies self-esteem, people may additionally develop personality characterised by superior self-images. These is projected through aggressive driving, and be characterised by a decline in empathy. Upper-class drivers with high status car might also feel less obligated to respect norms and rules, such as speed limits, or traffic regulation (Piff et al., 2012). They also have a lack of modesty or humbleness (Sheller, 2004). Ultimately, the interconnection will become thus shut that distinctions between human and machine become blurred.

The analysis also revealed that characteristics, such as luxurious interior and speed, were positively correlated with the image of an exclusive luxury car, whereas other features, such as expensive, superior driving characteristics, very comfortable, or high status, were not (Krzysztof, 2007). Alternatively, drivers with increased self-esteem being challenged by other drivers will report higher levels of aggressive driving behavior (Schreer, 2002).

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION

Based on the results of the study shows that risky behavior is unconsciously driving luxury car. Therefore, we suggest to the police and related agency:

This study shows that, indirectly, driving a luxury car is a risky behavior. Therefore, the traffic police and related agencies need to install speed monitoring devices that are integrated with electronic evidence of traffic violations on highways and on expressways. In addition, sanctions are required for speed limit violators, with sanctions based on the price of the car, the capacity of the car, and the year of production of the car. Safe driving lessons are also required for drivers when taking out a driver's license or renewing a driver's license.

For further research, it is recommended to conduct a study with participants who are real luxury car owners. In addition, interviews would also be better if conducted face-to-face, to improve the quality of the research.

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