Motives for Car Use among Young Drivers:
A Global Social-constructivist Pilot Study

Philippe Byosiere\textsuperscript{1}, Hideki Tanaka\textsuperscript{2}, Denise Luethge\textsuperscript{3}, Marcos Amatucci\textsuperscript{4}, and Alain Vas\textsuperscript{5}

\textsuperscript{1}Doshisha University-Kyoto/The University of Michigan, \textsuperscript{2}Aomori Public University, \textsuperscript{3}Northern Kentucky University, \textsuperscript{4}ESPM-Sao Paulo, \textsuperscript{5}Universite Catholique Louvain,

Automotive Futures Conference, April 13 2016,
The University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, USA
Fallout of Mr. Akio Toyoda’s address September 26 2013

“Toyota CEO puzzled why young Japanese men not interested in cars”
Japan Daily Press

Casanovas on Foot Baffle Toyota CEO as Japan Sales Shrink: Cars
Bloomberg

Why loving a car like a pet will never happen with GEN Y
Automotive News

Japanese automakers hope to make cars cool again
Detroit Free Press
“In the PAST, if you wanted to date someone, you couldn’t ask her out if you didn’t have a car”

“It’s all changed NOW. Money goes on a monthly phone bills. Also, parking is expensive and it’s easy to get around Tokyo on public transportation”
Practical Question:
Is Mr. Toyoda accurate in his perception of why young Japanese men (women not mentioned) are not buying cars anymore?

Research Question:
How do young Japanese (males and females) perceive and experience the motives of car use?
Result of our initial pilot study in 2014 in JAPAN:

Mr. Toyota clearly is not seeing the entire picture in his reasoning as to why young Japanese are not buying cars
Global Trend of Young People not buying cars

Online Freedom has replaced the freedom of car ownership
Car Guide April 2012

Young People aren’t buying cars because they’re buying smart phones instead
The Atlantic Cities August 2012

Why aren’t young people buying cars?
Autocar September 2013

Why car companies can’t win young adults
CNN August 2013

Japan’s Young won’t rally round the car
Wall Street Journal February 2008

5 Reasons Young People are not buying cars or getting their drivers license
Digital Trends September 2013
Practical Question:
Is Mr. Toyoda’s perception generalizable globally or not?

Research Question:
How do young drivers (males and females) perceive and experience the motives of car use? Are there common trends? Are there country, gender, lifestyle differences?
Studies on Motives for Car Use

Mobility (transportation efficiency)
Consumer Psychology (Material possession)
Environmentalism (reducing car use)
Marketing (sales argumentation)

Social Constructivist approach

- A theory of knowledge that argues that humans generate knowledge and meaning from an interaction between their experiences and their ideas.

- **Social constructivism** emphasizes the importance of culture and context in the process of knowledge construction. Learning is meant to be a **social** process that occurs when individuals take part in **social** activities. Instructional models based on this perspective stress the need for collaboration among learners and with practitioners in society.
Based on the hypothesis that “products are bought to reflect self-identity” three major factors as motives for car use were identified:

1. Instrumental
2. Symbolic
3. Emotional (Affective)

Our questions were:

1. Is this true?
2. Is this universal?
3. What are the similarities and differences?
Four datasets from the four countries:
Japan N= 445
USA N= 173
Brazil N= 180
Belgium N= 329
Motives for Car Use Questions

- **Instrumental motives of car use**
  - The car has only instrumental functions
  - I do not care what kind of car I have
  - For me, car only bring me from A to B
  - The functional quality of a car is more important than the make
  - I only would buy a car if I really need one

- **Symbolic motives of car use**
  - A car provides me status and prestige
  - A car shows others who I am
  - I may be jealous of people with a nice car
  - You can know a person by looking at his or her car
  - The brand of a car is more important than the functional qualities

- **Emotional motives of car use**
  - I love driving
  - There is a dream car that I would love to buy
  - I would love to have the newest sports cars
  - I would like to drive just for fun
  - A car gives me the freedom and independence
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INSTRUMENTAL</th>
<th>EMOTIONAL</th>
<th>SYMBOLIC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BELGIUM</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>USA</td>
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<tr>
<td>JAPAN</td>
<td>BELGIUM</td>
<td>BRASIL</td>
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<tr>
<td>BRASIL</td>
<td>JAPAN</td>
<td>JAPAN</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Motives for Car Use: Means Country Comparison

INSTRUMENTAL SYMBOLIC EMOTIONAL

JAPAN
USA
BELGIUM
BRAZIL
Means Motives by License Holding

INSTRUMENTAL  SYMBOLIC  AFFECTIVE

JAPAN Yes  USA Yes  BELGIUM Yes  BRAZIL Yes
JAPAN No  USA No  BELGIUM No  BRAZIL No
## Country Comparisons

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Sample Size</th>
<th>Affective</th>
<th>Instrumental</th>
<th>Symbolic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>JAPAN (n=445)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>3.07</td>
<td>2.98</td>
<td>2.37</td>
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<tr>
<td>1. Instrumental</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Affective</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Symbolic</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>USA (n=173)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>3.78</td>
<td>2.87</td>
<td>2.62</td>
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<tr>
<td>1. Affective</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Instrumental</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Symbolic</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>BELGIUM (n=329)</strong></td>
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<td>3.68</td>
<td>3.29</td>
<td>2.45</td>
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<tr>
<td>1. Affective</td>
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<td>2. Instrumental</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Symbolic</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>BRAZIL (n=180)</strong></td>
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<td>3.13</td>
<td>2.69</td>
<td>2.61</td>
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<tr>
<td>1. Affective</td>
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Conclusions assuming three Motives of Car Use

- Major differences in Motives for Car Use among and between the four countries. Gender, Driver’s license and living effects.

- Except for Japan where INSTRUMENTAL motives are strongest for car use among young people, AFFECTIVE is the strongest for USA, Brazil and Belgium.

- SYMBOLIC motives for car use are the lowest in all 4 countries.

- Mr. Toyoda alluded to SYMBOLIC motives in his speech. *We advise him to switch to AFFECTIVE motives in order to convince young people to drive cars in USA, Belgium and Brazil and to INSTRUMENTAL motives in Japan.*
Motives for Car Use Correlations

FOR ALL 4 COUNTRIES
Motives for Car Use Structure among Young Drivers - JAPAN

F1
Jealous of Others
Brand Important
Know person by car
Shows who I am
Status/Prestige

F2
Instrumental Function
A to B
Functional Quality
Dispose if no need
Any type

F3
I love driving
Free Independent
Dream Car
Drive for fun
Sports Car

SYMBOLOC

EMOTIONAL

INSTRUMENTAL

Motives Car Use
JAPAN
Motives for Car Use Structure among Young Drivers - USA

**Motives Car Use USA**

- **F1** Status/Prestige
  - Shows who I am
  - Jealous of others
  - Know person by car
  - Sports Car

- **F2** Drive for fun
  - I love driving
  - Dream Car

- **F3** Dispose no need
  - Instrumental only
  - Any type

- **F4** Functional Quality
  - Brand Important (-)
  - Free and Independent

**Symbols**
- **Symbolic**
- **Emotional Others**
- **Emotional Self**
- **Instrumental**
Motives for Car Use Structure among Young Drivers BELGIUM

**F1**
- Dream Car
- Sports Car
- Jealous of others
- Any type (-)
- Functional Quality (-)

**F2**
- A to B
- Instrumental only
- Dispose no need

**F3**
- Shows who I am
- Know person by car
- Status/Prestige
- Brand important

**F4**
- I love driving
- Free and Independent
- Drive for fun

**Motives Car Use BELGIUM**

**EMOTIONAL CAR**

**EMOTIONAL SELF**

**INSTRUMENTAL**

**SYMBOLIC**
Dear Philippe,

The main difference is that Brazilians seem to emphasize the FUN aspects of driving! Cars must provide pleasure! It is really an emotional motive, but it is detached from the others because it is very important here. Symbolic aspects are spread throughout other factors because wanting to be VIP it is a feature we inherited from monarchy. If you were common people you had no social respect (even today if you are stopped by a policeman).

Good luck with your presentation!
Possible reasons for NOT buying a car

1. High cost (purchase, insurance, license)
2. Available Public Transportation
3. The smartphone, Internet and Technology
4. Environmentalism
5. Available alternatives (parents, friends)
Present and Future
GLOBAL CHALLENGES FOR CAR COMPANIES

TREND YOUNG PEOPLE IN INDUSTRIALIZED NATIONS POSTPONE OR FORFEIT GETTING A DRIVER’S LICENSE

EVEN IF THEY GET DRIVER’S LICENSE TREND IN SOME MARKETS FOR CAR SHARING (PARENTS, FRIENDS, RENTAL)

DECLINE OF PURCHASING OR DELAYING VEHICLE PURCHASE AS A RESULT OF THE ABOVE

LITTLE KNOWN ABOUT THE MOTIVES FOR CAR USE FROM AN AUTOMOTIVE/OEM/SUPPLIER PERSPECTIVE

MOST STUDIES ON MOTIVES FOR CAR USE FROM POLICY AND TRAFFIC CONGESTION PERSPECTIVE
VEHICLE PURCHASE REMAINS THE SECOND MOST EXPENSIVE MATERIAL GOOD

VEHICLE BRAND LOYALTY IS OFTEN ESTABLISHED BASED ON THE FIRST PURCHASE EXPERIENCE

INCREASED FOCUS ON ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES CHANGES THE MINDSET REGARDING FOSSIL FuELS IN YOUNG ADULTS

INCREASED AVAILABILITY OF ALTERNATIVE “IT BASED” MEANS FOR COMMUNICATION AND PURCHASING WHICH REDUCES THE NEED FOR PERSONAL VEHICLE
Thank You!
Mui Obrigado!
Merci Beaucoup!
Dank u wel!
ありがとうございます!

Contact info:
Hideki Tanaka: hideki.s.tanaka@gmail.com
Marcos Amatucci: marcosamatucci@espm.br
Denise Luethge: luethged1@nku.edu
Alain Vas: alain.vas@uclouvain.be
Philippe Byosiere: byosiere@mail.doshisha.ac.jp or byosiere@umich.edu
Bruce Belzowski: bbl@umich.edu