
A study on consumers brand preference towards purchasing car in tirunelveli district

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ABSTRACT: The consumer attaches considerable importance to the brand image in the purchase of products. Several branded cars are sold in Tirunelveli. There is cut turn out competition among manufacturing companies. Therefore every company has to make a study about the psychology of consumers and their attitude towards brand preference of cars. There fore studying psychology of consumers and to recommend to the companies about the consumers brand preference towards cars was taken by the researcher. Hence there is strong competition among sellers. The necessity arrives among these forms to conduct a study about consumer brand preference. The researcher realizing their necessity and understanding the present problem, undertaking this study and wants to give suggestion for this problem in his findings at the last.

Key words: Brands, Consumer, Product and Brand Preference.

Introduction

In the present age of Liberalization, Privatization and Globalization, a lot of changes have taken place because of development activities. The growth of automobiles industry in India and especially in Tamilnadu in enormous. It began to start their production also in Tamilnadu. Between 1910 and 20's the automobile industry made a humble beginning by setting up assembling plants in Mumbai, Calcutta and Chennai. Indian automobiles industry in India offers significant employment opportunities. The industry including component industry employs 0.49 million. The automotive research association of India research organization formed by the Indian automotives industry information about services offers membership and activities. Since time immemorial man has been seeking means to transport himself and his belongings and produce from one place to another. In his quest for better and cheap means of transportation, he is making many breakthroughs. Invention of motorized vehicles may be said to be the landmark in transportation or movement of persons and things. Since then, different kind and models of motorized vehicles suiting the varied requirements of diverse users are produced by many manufacturers throughout the world. Among powered motorized vehicles, passenger cars have come to occupy an enviable position both among the young and the old. Man's desire to possess his own personal transportation mode and to have social status, and versatility of passengers cars are a few of the manifold reasons for purchasing them. A consumer purchases a product to Satisfy his select needs among the unlimited requirements. In present -Buyers` Markets` state, every product has substitutes or alternative products of same kind; so, the consumers are at liberty to choose from the many products available in the markets. Once the consumer decides to purchase a product, he first selects a brand and then model (style) from within the select brand. Thus, purchasing a product may be for satisfying a single or a group of needs. But the decision to purchase a particular model from among the several models of select brand

is mainly made on the basis of taste, suitability, requirements, price, utility, etc. this perception is pertinent to every type of product and to every type of consumer.

Objectives of the Study

- To find out particular brand preference of car among various brands of cars available in the market.
- To ascertain the factors influencing purchase of car
- To evaluate the purchasing power of the customer
- To analyse the satisfaction level of the customer
- To identify the advertising media that influences the brand preference of the consumers.

Methodology: The present study is an empirical research based on survey method. About 200 customers were surveyed to study Brand Preference towards Purchasing Car. Primary data were collected directly from the customer by using questionnaire. The relevant secondary data have been collected from the Journals, and Internet. The Collected data were coded, calculated and analyzed with the help of statistical tools like measures of chi-square test, Anova table, percentiles and tabulation were used.

Operational Definition

Brand

-A brand is a name, term, symbol or design or a combination of them, which is intended to identify the goods or services of one seller or group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of the competitors.

Brand name

-A brand name consists of words, letters and or numbers which may be vocalized and refers to products.

Brand mark

-A brand mark is that part of brand which appears in the form of a symbol or design or distinctive coloring or lettering. It is recognized by sight but is not expressed when a person pronounces the brand name. E.g. symbol of Maharaja of air India, the symbol of Tiger and Gopuram of the Cholan roadways corporation etc.

Trade mark

Trade mark has been defines as, -Any sign, mark, symbol, word or words which indicate the origin or ownership of a product as distinguished from its quality and which others have not the equal right to employ for the same purposes.

Consumer behaviour

Consumer behaviour can be defined as those acts individuals directly involved in obtaining using and disposing of economic goods and services including the decision process that proceed and determine these acts.

HISTORY OF INDIAN CAR INDUSTRY

The motor car originated in Europe in the latter half of the 19th century. The first car was driven on British soil in 1894.it had been Imported from the French car company called Panhard and Lavassor, which was a leading car company at that time. Panhard and Lavassor had commenced production in the early 1890s, after licensing gasoline engine technology form Gottlieb Daimler, the original inventor. The automobile era began in India in 1898when the Bombay cycle and motor agency imported four cars for display. India imported a large

number of vehicles, mainly motor cars, during First World War. There seems to have been no attempt made by any Indian organization to either manufacture or assemble automobiles for a fairly long time. The Indian automobile industry can be considered to have got off the ground when Ghanshyam Das Birla promoted Hindustan motors ltd., in 1942 at Port Okha in Gujarat as a small assembly plant for passenger cars. The first car was named Hindustan. Walchand Hirachand also started premier automobiles ltd., in 1942. The company rubbed shoulders with HML for kicking off the automobile revolution in India by assembling De Soto and Ply with Chrysler from the US. The year 1949 is considered a landmark year in the history of the automobile industry in India as the first partially manufactured car rolled out of HML's factory during that year. During the 1950s was relatively liberal. However, in 1959, India's foreign exchange reserves nearly ran out and automobile imports came to an end. The import licensees were asked to promise progressive import reduction before they were allowed to import technology. But the structure of the Indian automobile industry has altered dramatically since the 1960s as an explicit policy emerged during the latter half of the 1960s. In 1960s commercial vehicles accounted for more than 50% of the total four wheelers produced. Tata engineering and Locomotive Company (TELCO) was the pioneer in commercial vehicles in India. In 1954, it collaborated with Daimler Benz AG of Germany for the manufacture of commercial vehicles. The relative dominance of commercial vehicles production continued till 1985. In 1985, the production of cars increased by around 60% over the previous year, and from this point onwards, the dominance of commercial vehicles' production declined in relative terms. There was a time in India when the portly Ambassador was the country's most coveted and popular car. The Indian car buyer had to wait for months and at times even for years before he could lay his hands on an Ambassador or a Fiat 1100 which was usually handed over by nonchalant supercilious salesmen. It was the Maruti 800, a product of the Japanese car giant Suzuki collaborating with the Indian government which led to a veritable market. It became the small car which the Indian nuclear middle class families could aspire for. It was compact and economical. It could be easily maneuvered through Indian by lanes and 'gallis'. But now that too is history. India has become one of the world's fastest growing car markets with scores of models plying the city roads and highways, from the home grown Tata and Maruti vehicles to Toyotas and Mercedes Benzes. Indians have emerged as avid car enthusiasts flaunting their proved possessions as status symbols and speed machines. Foreign car companies have discovered the Indian consumer as well as the research and development potential among the Indian technical fraternity and are setting up manufacturing plants right and left across the country at lower costs. The growing desire for cars is also a sign that Indian roads are finally good enough for international cars to ply on. According to surveys, millions of more Indian families will buy motor cars within the next few years. The car market witnessed a 29% growth in 2004 followed by a lull in 2005 due to meteoric rise in fuel costs and more stringent anti-emission policies implemented by the Indian government. Increased auto- loan interest rates from the banks also added to the slowdown. But the demand has picked up once again. And now, we have the Tata Nano, which can be picked up at an all-time low on-road price of just Rs.1.4lakh. The Indian automobile market is projected to grow by 7% a year and economy is booming and the middleclass is getting easy finance schemes to upgrade to four-wheeler from two-wheeler. In post-liberalization India, backward linkages into the manufacturing of auto components have enabled many Indian vendors to foray into core manufacturing.

EVALUATION OF PASSENGER CAR

The invention of automobiles has been one of the greatest milestones that have been achieved by mankind. The Horseless carriage has been used since the late 1800s. But it looks –Hendry Ford to find a way to make cars affordable. Born as the son of an agriculturist in Michigan U.S.A, it was Hendry ford (1863-1947). He was a brilliant inventor, whose vision of mass production qualified him as a genius. In America the automobile age begin in 1908. When Hendry Ford unveiled his –car for great multitude –, the introduction of automobile has brought about a big change in the life of America. In 1925, when a few sociologists asked the resident of India and Chicago, how their life is changing, one respondent offered a simple answer. I can tell you what’s happening in just four letters--A.U.T.O. the Indian car market –Fiat was first company to launch a car. As the year progressed; Hindustan motors came up with their first model –land master in 1957.

EMERGING CAR INDUSTRY IN INDIA

Since the opening of the Indian economy, the automobile sector in India has been playing a vital role in the adoption of advance technology. Industrial majors in the automobile sector, which started operations in India immediately after liberalization, consolidated their positions. Today, India’s car market is the 12th largest in the world. Though India is lagging behind several developed and developing countries with much smaller populations, the trillion-dollar economy has immense potential to outgrow some of the others in the near future. The Indian car market has come a long way since the launch of Maruti 800 in December 1983. From stagnant sales of about 35000 cars a year between 1977 and 1982, the market size increased to about 150,000 in 1991. The rapid pace of growth continued there after, reaching a figure of 1,078,408 cars during the financial year 2006-2007, showing an impressive compounded annual growth rate of 22% post-liberalization. It is further expected to grow at 11% over the next decade, making it the third largest car market in Asia though this growth looks impressive, it would still have a long way to go when compared to the numbers in Japan and China. The total number of cars on the Indian roads is just around 8 million in china. At present, there are only 7 cars for every 1000persons in India. This is very low when compared to other emerging and developed markets. All these suggest that there is tremendous untapped potential for motor cars in India. With India poised to become the third largest economy by 2050, the growth of the car industry is unquestionable. The future growth in passenger car market will be driven by higher GDP growth, improved road infrastructure (such as the GOLDEN Quadrilateral, the North-South, East-West corridors and several express ways), improved urban infrastructure, etc., together with increased disposable income, easy finance, replacing of aging four-wheelers, graduation from two-wheelers to four - wheelers and the growing concept to pre-owned car in urban areas. The demand is expected to grow at 11% per annum for passenger cars and at 6% for multi utility vehicles over the next decade, making India one of the top five car markets in the world.

Chi – square test

For the calculation of the chi-square test the researcher considered the factors of company name on which, Maruti, Tata, Honda, Ford, Mahindra and Chevrolet and the level of brand preference on which, Low level, Medium level and High level.

	Calculated value	Tabled value
Chi-square	8.8720	18.307

Hence the Researcher **Accepted** the Hypothesis because the calculated value is **Less** than the table value.

Chi – square test

For the calculation of the chi-square test the researcher considered the age of the respondents on which below 25, 26-35, 36-45 and above 46. And the level of brand preference on which, Low level, Medium level and High level.

	Calculated value	Tabled value
Chi-square	0.2344	5.991

Hence the Researcher **Accepted** the Hypothesis because the calculated value is **Less** than the table value.

FINDINGS

In this survey out of 200 respondents 69% of the respondents are male and 31% of the respondents are female. The study reports that majority of the respondents are in the age group of 20-30. It is derived from the analysis that 31.5% of respondents are post graduate and 26.5% respondents are Undergraduate. It is evident from the study that 26% of respondents are business people and 23% of respondents are salaried people. This analysis denotes that Majority of the respondents (68.5%) are married people. The survey depicts that 61% of respondents belong to an individual family type. Most of respondents (39.5%) are having 3 to 4 members in their family. It is evident from the analysis that most of the consumers (40.5%) belong to the income level of Upto Rs.25000. Most of the respondents (44.5%) have owned Ordinary type of car. 54% of the respondents are influenced to buy the car through their family members. Most of the respondents own Maruti and Tata company car. It is found that Maruti 800 is the top brand preference of majority of the people. It is found that most of the respondents (32%) choose particular car for quality. Majority of the respondents (31.5%) purchase the car for the purpose quick and easy travel. 50.5% of the respondents are purchasing the car for credit basis. Many of the respondents (44.5%) are purchasing the car at festival season. Majority of the respondents (36%) are getting the finance from private sector bank. Many people owned the car engine capacity is 1000cc. 61% of the respondents replacing the car at time of necessary. Majority of the respondents (34.4%) attracted by the advertisement for the reason is that giving more important for car in daily life.

CONCLUSION

The globalization has increased competition in the passenger car industry. It is important for auto carmaker firms to have competitive advantage so that they can meet the consumer's expectations well and

command the position of leader in the business. The customer relationship management is the only tool for the survival in business. The firms should try hard to retain the customer for business growth. Customer relationship management is focused on creation and maintenance of long-term, mutually beneficial relationship with the customers. CRM is introduced to tailor the customer and to develop long term relationship. The biggest disadvantage of is customer relationship management is expensive, time consuming and complex proposition. This is an opportunity to rise above minor advantages and develop an actual relationship with the customers. Passenger car companies that are the most successful at delivery what are the most likely to be the leaders in future. CRM may or may not prove to be the answer to providing excellent customer care, but the philosophy of putting customers at the heart of the business is definitely a step in the right direction.

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