

A Study on Customer Preference and Satisfaction towards Sedan Cars with Special Reference to Honda Cars

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Abstract : This study has been undertaken to determine the customer preference and satisfaction of sedan cars. Customer preference consists of all human behavior that goes in making purchase decision. However, customer preference relates to an individual while consumption behavior refers to aggregate of individuals. Many early theories concerning customer behaviors were based on economic theory, on the notion that individuals act rationally to maximize the benefits in the purchase of goods and services. Later research discovered that customers are just as likely to purchase impulsively, and to be influenced not only by family and friends, by advertisers and role models, but also by mood, situation, and emotion. All of these factors combine to form a comprehensive model of customer behavior that reflects both the cognitive and emotional aspects of customer decision-making. Customers vary tremendously in their age, income, education level, mobility pattern and tastes and preferences. It was seen that the economic and mental forces govern customer's purchase decision. Mental forces like fear, prize, fashion, procession, romance, variety etc., create desire and wants in the minds of customer. However, the rapid changes taking place in the external environment has also had a bearing on the customer preferences and in complex manner in which the customer behaves.

Index terms: Customer Preference, satisfaction, decision making

INTRODUCTION

Customer preference can be defined as "psychological, social and physical behavior of all potential customers as they become aware to evaluate, purchase, consume and tell others about products and services". Customers vary tremendously in their age, income, education level, mobility pattern and tastes and preferences. It was seen that the economic and mental forces govern customer's purchase decision. Mental forces like fear, prize, fashion, procession, romance, variety etc., create desire and wants in the minds of customer. Customer satisfaction is a term frequently used in marketing. It is a measure of how products and services supplied by a company meet or surpass customer expectation. Customer satisfaction is defined as "the number of customers, or percentage of total customers, whose reported experience with a firm, its products, or its services exceeds specified satisfaction goals. "Within organizations, customer satisfaction ratings can have powerful effects. They focus employees on the importance of fulfilling customers' expectations. Furthermore, when these ratings dip, they warn of problems that can affect sales and profitability. These metrics quantify an important dynamic. When a brand has loyal customers, it gains positive word-of-mouth marketing, which is both free and highly effective." Therefore, it is essential for businesses to effectively manage customer satisfaction. To be able to do this, firms need reliable and representative measures of satisfaction.

Why customer satisfaction is important

Don't underestimate the value of customer satisfaction. It's becoming an important area of competition. A high level of satisfaction can deliver many benefits, including:

- **Loyalty:** a highly satisfied customer is a loyal customer.
- **Repeat purchase:** a highly satisfied customer buys more products.
- **Referrals:** a highly satisfied customer tells their family and friends about the product or service
- **Retention:** a highly satisfied customer is less likely to switch brands.
- **Reduced costs:** a highly satisfied customer costs less to serve than a new customer.
- **Premium prices:** a highly satisfied customer is willing to pay more for the product or service.
- **Quality service and customer satisfaction:** Quality of service is becoming the decisive factor in corporate survival. This is specifically applicable to the service industry. Good service tailored to customer need is particularly important for high technology product.

NEED AND SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This study helps in obtaining sufficient background information where absolutely nothing is known about the product. It helps in increasing the Customer awareness and it helps in the concept identification and exploration of the Honda car. It is used to identify relevant or salient behavior patterns, beliefs and opinions etc

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

Acquiring and maintaining a good market share of the product by a particular company is a prelude to build and maintain the brand image and brand awareness. Brand image determines the success of a company in the long run. To meet the challenges ahead, vehicle manufactures will have to strive to cut costs further, improve productivity, enhance market orientation and successfully create a high level of consumer loyalty. The ultimate success of a car manufacturer depends on one important factor i.e. improving customer base. The firm needs to find the factors influencing the customers' preferences and their satisfaction level about Honda cars in sedan segment .

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To study the level of awareness, preferences and opinion about Honda cars.
- To find out the factors influencing the customers to prefer Honda cars in sedan segment.
- To determine the effectiveness of advertisements and sales promotion
- To examine the customers' satisfaction towards Honda Cars (Sedan)

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Aravindkharana(2017, IJRMS,VOL7) on his article "Consumer Preference of cars in Lucknow District" detailed that the analysis of marketing, a consumer behaviour and consumer preference of car is carried out in Lucknow As a result, focusing on an industry where brands, product knowledge and service have been important determinants in the preference towards cars. **Arjun rampal (2017)** on his study "Consumer preference of International branded cars over Indian cars" aimed at determining consumer preference of international brands instead if national or local brands. Consumer evaluates products based on information cues, which are intrinsic and extrinsic. If a consumer is satisfied with a product, he will buy it again, become loyal and over time develop a relationship with the brand. There are various factors which influence consumer purchase decision. The price of a brand plays a fundamental role in the consumer's choice of brand. If a brand is priced too high then a consumer will avoid it. The price of international cars is an indication of the quality of the brand as well. **Prof. Pallawi B. Sangode (2011)** this research paper is based on the findings of comparative study of service quality of Maruti Suzuki and Hyundai Showrooms in Nagpur. Service quality is a fundamental aspect of service provision, and this is especially the case with motor vehicles, where substantial profits are generated in the servicing of vehicles. the study was conducted using a convenience sample of forty respondents who were owners of Maruti and Hyundai cars. **Dr. Ramesh Sardar (2012)** on his article "Brand Preference of Passenger Car in Aurangabad District" detailed that the analysis of marketing, a consumer behaviour and brand preference of passenger car is carried out in Aurangabad district of Maharashtra state. As a result, focusing on an industry where brands, marketing knowledge and distribution networks have been important determinants in the growth and survival of firms. The study reveals that which may be useful for general public as even the manufacturers and dealers can understand the dimensions reflecting brand preference of passenger cars and impact of all these factors on customer satisfaction. **Manmohan N & Dr. Ganapathi R, (May 2015)** in their research paper, "Customer preferences and attitudes towards Maruti cars in Pollachi taluk" highlighted that the customer preferences, attitude and satisfaction regarding Maruti cars. The authors stated that Maruti 800, Omni, Zen and WagonR are popular models of Maruti Suzuki. The authors suggested that Maruti Suzuki should concentrate and enhance their services like timely delivery, after sales service, handling customer enquiries etc. They also suggested that the company should launch its car with some added features with competitive prices.

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Research Methodology is a search of knowledge through objectives and systematic method of finding solutions to a problem. In this study, the researcher used descriptive research design. The descriptive studies are the ones that aim at describing accurately the characteristics of a group, community or people. In this study, the researcher adopted convenience sampling method where the population is based on easy availability. Convenience sampling is a specific type of non-probability sampling method that relies on data collection from population members who are conveniently available to participate in study. The sample size of the study is 120 respondents. In this study, the researcher used both primary and secondary data for data collection. Primary data are collected by conducting direct structured interview by using questionnaire. For secondary data, researcher uses different sources to collect the data's such as company publications, business journals, magazines, project reports, websites, etc. Tools used for the study are weighted average ranking method and correlation.

RESULTS

Table-1
Descriptive Statistic of customers' opinion about sedan in Honda cars

S.No	Table Heading	Particulars	Number of Respondents	Percentage
1	Sources of Awareness	Through Advertisement	79	66
		Friends and relatives	9	8
		TV/Internet	16	13
		Car mechanic	12	10
		Others	4	3
		Total	120	100
2	Mode of purchase	Cash purchase	35	29
		Credit purchase	85	71
		Total	120	100
3	Suitability	Use Within city	22	18
		Long trips	70	58
		Both	28	23
		Total	120	100
4	Reason to recommend the honda cars to others	Prestige	15	22
		Services	12	17
		Comfort	38	54
		Others	5	7
		Total	71	100
5	Level of Satisfaction	Highly Satisfied	20	17
		Satisfied	55	46
		Neutral	36	30
		Dissatisfied	7	6
		Highly dissatisfied	2	1
		Total	120	100

The study reveals that majority (66%) of the respondents say that they come to know about sedan in Honda cars through advertisement, (71%) of the respondents are purchased the car through credit and they said it is suitable for long trips and majority (59%) of the respondents say that they will recommend the Honda cars to others because of the comfort and they are satisfied(46%)

Correlation between Period of using Honda cars and respondents' satisfaction level about Honda cars dealer

Table-2

Correlation between Period of using Honda cars and respondents' satisfaction level about Honda cars dealer

Factors	Correlation	Age
Quick and efficiency of service	Pearson correlation	.549(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000

	N	120
Response dealing with customer	Pearson correlation	.358(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	120
Service given by the company	Pearson correlation	.426(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	120
Response at the time of delivery	Pearson correlation	.401(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	120
Service provided by sales people	Pearson correlation	.370(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	120

The study reveals that there is a significant relationship between period of using Honda car and respondents' satisfaction level of various factors in Honda cars. The coefficient is .549, .358, .426, .401, .370 which means Period of using Honda car and respondents' satisfaction about Honda cars dealer are positively correlated.

Weighted Average for Factors Influencing to Purchase Honda Cars

Table-3
Weighted Average for Factors Influencing to Purchase Honda Cars

Attributes	5	4	3	2	1	Total	Weighted score	Rank
Price	25	40	30	20	10	425	3.4	III
	125	160	90	40	10			
Availability of vehicle	50	25	10	20	20	440	3.52	II
	250	100	30	40	20			
Good customer service	75	25	10	10	5	530	4.24	I
	375	100	30	20	5			
Timely delivery	40	30	15	14	26	419	3.35	IV
	200	120	45	28	26			
Easy credit facility	30	20	40	25	10	410	3.28	V
	150	80	120	50	10			
Appearance	20	10	30	40	25	335	2.68	VII
	100	40	90	80	25			
Prestige	10	30	40	25	20	360	2.88	VIII
	50	120	120	50	20			
	45	12	14	30	24			VI

Comfort	225	48	42	60	24	399	3.19	
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In this study table -3 reveals that the respondents gives the first priority as the good customer service with the weighted average score of 4.24 and the second rank as comfort with the weighted average score of 4.

CONCLUSION

The company is interested in retaining existing customers while targeting non-customers; measuring customer satisfaction provides an indication of how successful the organization is at providing products and services to the market place. Based on the feedback from the customer the researcher came to the conclusion that the customer satisfaction was high for Honda service cars. The growth in the population of India and the increasing number of middle class consumers has attracted the attention of car manufacturers and marketers. The manufacturers and marketers who study the behaviour of consumers and furnish to their needs will be successful. It may be concluded that consumer behaviour has a greater role to play in the Honda era of economic activities for which a necessary survey and research should be conducted in an efficient manner.

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