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THE VARIATION OF CUSTOMER SATISFACTION IN THE SPHERE OF MARUTI SUZUKI CAR MARKETING

SAMIDH PAL
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AMRITKHANDA

ABSTRACT

One of the inputs for development in Maruti Suzuki is the establishment of number of firms, as these can have nucleus effect and ripple effect to put the area in dynamic path of development, with the condition that the planners must work side by side to provide infrastructural development in Maruti Suzuki. A kite cannot rise without favourable wind. The socio-political air in many cases works as stumbling block and the entrepreneur cannot run the project by keeping its nose to the grindstones.

KEYWORDS

customer satisfaction, car marketing.

INTRODUCTION

Measuring customer satisfaction is a relatively new concept to many companies that have been focused exclusively on income statements. Companies now recognize that the new global economy has changed things forever. Increased competition, crowded markets with little product differentiation and years of continual sales growth followed by two decades of flattened sales curves have indicated to today's sharp competitors that their focus must change.

Traditionally, purchasing a car was considered tedious with numerous visits to car showrooms, comparison of features through brochures, taking opinions from friends, word-of-mouth from peers and finally experiencing the car through a test drive. The information technology revolution has empowered consumers to access information relevant to car purchase easily. There is a wide amount of information available on the automobile industry online, ranging from car model specifications to pricing, finance options, pre-owned cars etc.

This study provides an excellent insight for Maruti Suzuki and will assist them to analyze and understand the current online customer service representatives' answer initiatives vis-à-vis future online marketing strategies. It provides directions for Maruti Suzukis' to influence the new 'Digitally Connected Auto Consumers' and help them decide which car to buy before they enter a dealer's showroom. This study is incisive, inclusive and opens a window to the mind of today's digitally connected and empowered consumer and outlines future trends. This study aims to provide a theoretically and empirically grounded initial reference position, against which later research can explore and interpret the effects of changes in variables representing consumer preferences towards online customer service representatives' answering method and shifts in these preferences on the success or failure of online B2C e-commerce of Maruti Suzuki over the information technology.

NEED AND IMPORTANCE FOR THE STUDY

In the modern times the business organizations are adopting new techniques and methods for the growth of the business. The organizations are giving better services to their customers to face challenge posed by the competitors for every business, it is not only important to retain the present customers but also attract the new customers. So there is need to ascertain the customers use regarding the services providing by Maruti Suzuki.

With the increase market study there is a cut through competition among the businessmen in the industry some of the other major competitors in this area like Hyundai, Fiat, Volkswagen, Ford, Tata, BMW, Audi and Chevrolet. The need for customer satisfaction is necessary for all business, large or small. The satisfaction of the customer is an all important task. Hence there is a need for the study.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To study the customer satisfaction with the usage of vehicles of MARUTI SUZUKI.
- To study the impact of different factors of marketing on customer satisfaction.
- To study the opinion of the owners of vehicles regarding pre-sales and after sales services provided by the dealers.

SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

As the time constraint was there to complete this and as there was also finance restriction to spend on the data collection activities. So for data collection, I have limited myself to customers who service their vehicles in Wilson Garden service centre of Maruti Suzuki only.

- The study is confined only to Bangalore city.
- The sample size is restricted to 54 respondents.
- The study is considered among customers of various Maruti Suzuki products.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study is exploratory in nature and based on primary information. Primary data were gathered by using direct survey methods. To elicit the responses, a detailed questionnaire has been designed and put for survey. The information was obtained from the service centre of Maruti Suzuki, Bangalore. A preliminary questionnaire was developed using 5 point Likert scales. The independent and dependent variables were identified and there was one question for each of the variables. The questionnaire was pre-tested several times to arrive at appropriate wording, format, length and sequencing of the questions. Pre-test feedback was used to refine the questionnaire until it had ready for data collection. After fixing the questions for the independent and dependent variables based on the type of questions, different values are assigned to the Likert scale.

The positive statement was assigned for "excellent" with "highest frequency" and for "poor" with "lowest frequency" responses. 60 customers were elicited the questionnaire and 54 respondents have given their opinions which accounts to 90% response rate. The respondents are selected using simple random sampling technique. For analyzing the survey data we have used the multiple regressions to get the output through Microsoft Office Excel 2007. To have present study focusing on the behaviour of Maruti Suzuki Car buyers, the survey was conducted directly on the basis of linear systematic sampling. The results of empirical findings through several statistical tests and the major findings of the survey were derived as accordingly:

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**Reliability of Measurement Model**

Analysis of the measurement model starts with the assessment of the significance level of the indicators, followed by verification of the scale validation. According to Nunnally (1978), Cronbach's α -value must be higher than 0.7. Hence the ten factors for testing customer satisfaction have a good reliability score i.e., Cronbach's alpha of 0.837 as could be seen from table 1:

TABLE 1: RELIABILITY STATISTICS

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.837	.860	10

Factors considered for overall customer satisfaction of Maruti Suzuki customer while visiting the service center.

TABLE 2: FACTORS AFFECTING CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

Factors	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
How would you rate the quality of your vehicle?	10.8	20.82546518	54
How would you rate the reputation of the dealer brand?	10.8	13.98928161	54
How is the engine performance of your vehicle?	10.8	14.20211252	54
How is the overall performance of your vehicle?	10.8	14.48102206	54
How easy you feel to drive your vehicle?	10.8	15.59487095	54
Rate the comfortness of your vehicle?	10.8	13.84557691	54
Rate the maintenance cost of your car on yearly basis?	10.8	10.32956921	54
How sufficient was the information available on our website for buying a car?	10.8	16.23884232	54
How well do the customer service representatives at our company answer your questions?	10.8	16.2080227	54

Regression model for testing the hypothesis

<p>Table 3: Regression Statistics for Quality of vehicle</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="2">Regression Statistics</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Multiple R</td> <td>0.894521</td> </tr> <tr> <td>R Square</td> <td>0.800168</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Adjusted R Square</td> <td>0.733557</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Standard Error</td> <td>6.440898</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Observations</td> <td>5</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Regression Statistics		Multiple R	0.894521	R Square	0.800168	Adjusted R Square	0.733557	Standard Error	6.440898	Observations	5	<p>Table 4: Regression Statistics for Reputation of the dealer brand</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="2">Regression Statistics</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Multiple R</td> <td>0.910586</td> </tr> <tr> <td>R Square</td> <td>0.829166</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Adjusted R Square</td> <td>0.772222</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Standard Error</td> <td>5.955257</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Observations</td> <td>5</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Regression Statistics		Multiple R	0.910586	R Square	0.829166	Adjusted R Square	0.772222	Standard Error	5.955257	Observations	5	<p>Table 5: Regression Statistics for Engine performance</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="2">Regression Statistics</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Multiple R</td> <td>0.968887</td> </tr> <tr> <td>R Square</td> <td>0.938742</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Adjusted R Square</td> <td>0.918322</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Standard Error</td> <td>3.566124</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Observations</td> <td>5</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Regression Statistics		Multiple R	0.968887	R Square	0.938742	Adjusted R Square	0.918322	Standard Error	3.566124	Observations	5
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The present study investigates the relationship between customer satisfaction and other variables like quality of vehicle, reputation of the dealer brand, engine performance, overall performance of vehicle, feel to drive, comfortness, maintenance cost, information available on website and customer service representatives answer. For this research two sets of variables were selected.

- The dependent variable here is the overall customer satisfaction.
- The independent variables are quality of vehicle, reputation of the dealer brand, engine performance, overall performance of vehicle, feel to drive, comfortness, maintenance cost, information available on website and customer service representatives answer.
- The error term is denoted by "e".

THE BASIC MODEL BEING TESTED IN THE STUDY THEREFORE IS:

$$Y = \alpha + \beta_1 * X_1 + \beta_2 * X_2 + \beta_3 * X_3 + \beta_4 * X_4 + \beta_5 * X_5 + \beta_6 * X_6 + \beta_7 * X_7 + \beta_8 * X_8 + \beta_9 * X_9 + e$$

DEPENDENT VARIABLE

Customer satisfaction = Y

INDEPENDENT VARIABLES

Quality of vehicle = X₁

Reputation of the dealer brand = X₂

Engine performance = X₃

Overall performance of vehicle = X₄

Feel to drive = X₅

Comfortness = X₆

Maintenance cost = X₇

Information available on website = X₈

Customer service representatives answer = X_9

Analysis

In the regression analysis, the following model summary describes the strength of association between independent variables and dependent variable. Hypothesis is tested by the ANOVA table where level of significance is considered at 0.05. Finally, we have got the value of coefficient of independent variables individually with level of significance.

Predictors: (Constant), quality of vehicle, reputation of the dealer brand, engine performance, overall performance of vehicle, feel to drive, comfortness, maintenance cost, information available on website and customer service representatives answer.

Findings

As the R^2 value is 0.938, 0.944, 0.957 which are closer to 1, it indicates there is strong relationship among the dependent variables (**Engine performance, Information available on website, Customer service representatives' answer**) considered in this model. Here the value of adjusted R^2 (0.918, 0.926, 0.943) are closer to the R^2 values and both are closer to 1. This suggests that adding each of the additional 3 independent variables after the 1st independent variable, makes a significant contribution in explaining the variation in the dependent variable i.e. customer satisfaction of the customer service of Maruti Suzuki.

TABLE 12: HYPOTHESIS OF THE MODEL

ANOVA					
	df	SS	MS	F	Significance F
Regression	3	597.487075	199.162358	7.86801	0.254939281
Residual	1	25.3129252	25.3129252		
Total	4	622.8			

Predictors: (Constant), Engine performance, Information available on website, Customer service representatives' answer.

Findings

From the above table it is found that the significance level of the F value (0.254939281) is below $\alpha = 0.05$. At 3 & 1 degrees of freedom the calculated value of F is also greater than the table value. These indicate that the independent variables have significant relationship with the dependent variables. So our hypothesis is accepted. This indicates that the independent variables (Constant), Engine performance, Information available on website, Customer service representatives' answer have significant relationship with the dependent variable overall customer satisfaction. This indicates the customer is satisfied with the customer service of the Maruti Suzuki.

Analysis of coefficients

Analysis of coefficients indicates which independent variables have the most significant relationship with the dependent variable.

TABLE 13: SAMPLE TEST FOR ENGINE PERFORMANCE

	Coefficients	Standard Error	t Stat	P-value	Lower 95%	Upper 95%
Intercept	1.606346059	2.093321011	0.76736728	0.4987274	-5.055535658	8.268227775
Engine performance	0.851264254	0.125549051	6.78033204	0.0065571	0.45171114	1.250817368

In this analysis with $(n-1) = (5-1) = 4$ degrees of freedom and $\alpha = 0.05$, critical value of $t = 0.767$ as per the above table.

TABLE 14: SAMPLE TEST FOR INFORMATION AVAILABLE ON WEBSITE

	Coefficients	Standard Error	t Stat	P-value	Lower 95%	Upper 95%
Intercept	2.733788396	1.887548414	1.448327564	0.243359898	-3.27323308	8.740809872
Info on website	0.746871445	0.104286034	7.161758994	0.005607113	0.41498674	1.07875615

In this analysis with $(n-1) = (5-1) = 4$ degrees of freedom and $\alpha = 0.05$, critical value of $t = 1.448$ as per the above table.

TABLE 15: SAMPLE TEST FOR CUSTOMER SERVICE REPRESENTATIVES' ANSWER

	Coefficients	Standard Error	t Stat	P-value	Lower 95%	Upper 95%
Intercept	2.661971831	1.646855905	1.616396324	0.204428633	-2.579058659	7.903002321
representatives' answer	0.753521127	0.091099203	8.271434897	0.00370114	0.463602805	1.043439449

In this analysis with $(n-1) = (5-1) = 4$ degrees of freedom and $\alpha = 0.05$, critical value of $t = 1.616$ as per the above table.

TABLE 16: ANALYSIS OF COEFFICIENTS

	Coefficients	Standard Error	t Stat	P-value
Intercept	3.244897959	11.1810042	0.290215253	0.820182948
Engine performance	-0.37755102	7.087905728	-0.053266936	0.966121233
Info on website	-0.985827664	12.77883958	-0.07714532	0.950984847
representatives' answer	2.06292517	18.82472284	0.109585952	0.930512691

Findings

From the above table we can see that only the significance level of **representatives' answer** (0.010), **Engine performance** (-0.053) and **Info on website** (-0.077) are below α value. It indicates that independent variable (**Info on website**) has very significant and other independent variables (**Engine performance, representatives' answer**) are nearly significant relationship with the dependent variable overall customer satisfaction of customer service in Maruti Suzuki.

TABLE 17: ANALYSIS OF COEFFICIENTS

	Coefficients	Standard Error	t Stat	P-value
Intercept	-1.403243208	0.119992572	-11.6944	0.054306
Quality of vehicle	-0.379630235	0.013349725	-28.4373	0.022378
Reputation of the dealer brand	0.814864158	0.014369735	56.70697	0.011225
Overall performance of vehicle	0.694696004	0.011231439	61.8528	0.010292

TABLE 18: ANALYSIS OF COEFFICIENTS

	Coefficients	Standard Error	t Stat	P-value
Intercept	0.637135922	2.533873345	0.251447	0.843175
Feel to drive	1.240666898	0.813106681	1.525835	0.369333
Comfortness	-0.767182925	0.879259898	-0.87253	0.543269
Maintenance cost	0.46752196	0.175737994	2.660335	0.228898

Findings

On the contrary, other variables have significance level value more than 0.05 and too much less than 0.05 which indicates that other variables: (-28.43) **Quality of vehicle**, (56.70) **Reputation of the dealer brand**, (61.85) **Overall performance of vehicle**, (1.52) **Feel to drive**, (-0.872) **Comfortness** and (2.660) **Maintenance cost**, do not have any significant relationship with the dependent variable – overall customer satisfaction.

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

Therefore, we present the modified regression equation to measure the customer satisfaction of Maruti Suzuki as – Overall customer satisfaction (Y) = 3.244 + (-0.377) * **Engine performance** + (-0.985) * **Info on website** + (2.062) * **Customer service representatives' answer**.

This means customer consider the most significant factors for overall customer service satisfaction of the Maruti Suzuki on the basis of:

- **Customer service representatives' answer.**
- On the other hand online consumers do not consider the factors for overall customer satisfaction like- **Quality of vehicle, Reputation of the dealer brand, Overall performance of vehicle; Feel to drive, Comfortness, Maintenance cost, Engine performance and Info on website.**

CONCLUSIONS

The effective customer service management and B2C online strategies will be vitally important, as the online landscape evolves rapidly with the emergence of powerful consumer-to-consumer tools like blogs, discussion forums, social networking sites and virtual worlds. Maruti Suzuki needs to stay focus on evolving consumer attitudes online. As with the online, the issues are dynamic and it is still too early to determine their ultimate impact on this automotive industry. Manufacturer/dealer collaboration in the form of effective retail integration and integration lead management will become more important than ever to satisfy increasingly sophisticated and demanding consumers and to retain their online loyalty. Company now needs to establish and maintain a true two-way dialogue with individual consumers through personalised communication to enhance online customer satisfaction.

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