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A STUDY ON PRE-PURCHASE BEHAVIOR OF PROSPECTIVE CUSTOMERS WITH RESPECT TO ENTRY LEVEL CARS OF AHMEDABAD CITY

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ABSTRACT

The present study is carried to find pre-purchase behavior of prospective customers with respect to entry level cars of Ahmadabad city. Study of the customer's behavior is the most important factor for marketing of any goods and services. The customer's behavior suggests how individuals, groups and organization select, buy, use and dispose the goods & services. It also provides clues for improving their products and services, setting price, devising channels, etc. In this research, we took 116 samples from Ahmadabad city and qualifying people who want to buy a car in future or do not have a car yet intend to buy. The current research contributes to the marketers how to understand the psyche of the consumer.

KEYWORDS

Pre-purchase behavior, Psyche.

INTRODUCTION

The present study is to know the pre-purchase behavior of prospective customers regarding entry level segment cars. To find the customer's behavior suggests how individuals, groups and organization select, buy, use and dispose the goods & services. It is very difficult to know the behavior of the person because it deals with the psychology of the person. Though human mindset changes at every second, it is probably the most important thing for the company to understand. In this research, we took 116 samples from Ahmadabad city and qualifying people who want to buy a car in future or do not have a car yet. We tried to analyze the behavior of the customers. We tried to get answers to important questions like what are the factors important when considering purchase of car, what opinion do they have at present in their mind, from where do they obtain information about the cars. Through depth analysis we found that affordability, fuel efficiency and maintenance costs still remain the major factors that customers would consider at the time of purchase of the car. The population, standard of living, competition, transportation and urbanization has made the researcher analyze the pre-purchase behavior of entry level cars in the city.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

According to NEW CAR BUYER BEHAVIOUR, RESEARCH SURVEY REPORT, SIMON ELIAS - CARDIFF BUSINESS SCHOOL APRIL 2002, the study concluded that Brochures (1st ranked), dealer sales staff (2nd), car magazines (3rd) and friends/relatives (4th) were the most common sources of new car information sources used. The internet was used by just under one fifth and particular by those aged 25 to 35 years. The most common day for making an order was Saturday, and the most common day for collecting the new car was Friday. On average, new car buyers contacted or visited their dealer 3.5 times when purchasing their car. Younger car buyers are much more impatient than older buyers and more predisposed to changing their behavior to ensure they are 'instantly gratified'. Overall, the research suggests that order to delivery time matters to new car buyers, that consumers expectations are high in terms of a short lead time, and that there is a latent 3DayCar potential to be exploited.

According to by MS.A.JOSEPHINE STELLA & DR.K.RAJESWARI (2012), as per their study they suggested that, Consumers in this region are influence more by various fact or such as culture, family, reference group, age and life style, personality and self-concept, motivation, perception, learning, beliefs and attitudes. Majority of respondents are very much satisfied with its performance, quality dealer network and after sales service. Maruti is found to be leading players in the study area and dominates the market. Various models like Maruti 800, Alto and Wagon Rare favorites in this region. There is significant relationship between income and brand name of car. There is significant relationship between the occupation and usage of car.

According to KANWAL GURLEEN & DR. SUKHMANI (FEBRUARY 2011), they suggested that the study has been conducted to empirically investigate the buying behavior of consumers towards various brands of cars. Maruti Swift was found to be most preferred brand. There was a close competition for second place between Tata Indica Vista, Maruti Swift Desire, Volkswagon Polo and Ford Ikon. This shows the close competition in this segment. The owners who were extremely satisfied were not willing to change their cars. Results of Multi dimensional scaling showed that brand name, fuel efficiency and price are the more influencing and primary determinant for car purchase. Outlook and After Sales service were considered to be important but were determined as secondary determinants. Capacity, Dealer Networks and warranty terms were found to be less influencing factors.

IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

The study is very important for automobile marketers to know, how customer will behave while purchasing an entry level cars.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

After doing rigorous literature review, it is found that there are many studies which have been done on rising incomes, better financing for vehicles and improved roads are the combined drivers for the strong growth of the automobile sector in India. This is very important for the companies to understand the actual behavior of the consumer at the time of buying the entry level car.

AIM AND OBJECTIVE

The main of the study is to identify Pre-purchase behavior of prospective customers of prospective buyers with respect to entry-segment cars of Ahmadabad City. In this we tried to find the various reasons to purchase the car and also to find out which variant of the car the buyer will prefer and buyer's insight for the various brands of car.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research consists of 116 respondents from Ahmedabad city who are Car users & potential buyers and distributed the questionnaire through which we collected the Data.

FINDINGS**1. TO KNOW THE VARIOUS REASONS TO PURCHASE THE CAR**

When asked about the purpose for which they would buy car, 66 respondents indicated that they would use it personal uses. Only 16 of respondents said that they would use it for business purposes.

2. TO FIND OUT WHICH VARIANT OF THE CAR THE BUYER WILL PREFER

When asked about the kind of variant they would like to use, 30.5 % respondents that is 25 respondents said that they would prefer petrol car. 43.9 % of respondent's i.e.36 respondents would prefer diesel variants of the car.

3. TO FIND OUT THE BUYER'S INSIGHT FOR THE VARIOUS BRANDS OF CAR

In the preference of the brand, first preference to Maruti Suzuki and second preference was given to Hyundai brand. **Chevrolet, Nissan & Maruti** are jointly the third most preferred brand & Ford is the fourth most preferred brand. 74 % respondents associate low maintenance cost with Maruti brand and for safety is associated with Maruti brand, whereas 26 % of people associated safety with **Hyundai brand**. **Mileage** was associated with **Maruti brand** and Tata brand with 21% respondents choosing it. 21 % respondents associate pick up with Hyundai brand. 26 % respondents associate engine performance with Hyundai brand. 34 % of the respondents associate availability with Maruti brand. 72 % respondents associate resale value with the Maruti brand.

4. TO KNOW THE MAJOR SOURCE OF INFORMATION FOR THE CARS

When asked about the sources to collect information, 26 % respondents said that they would collect information from Advertisements. 29 % respondents said that they would collect information from dealers. 40 % respondents said that they would collect information from friends/ relatives. 16 % respondents said that they would collect information from Sales Person. 21 % respondents said that they would collect information from car shows.16 % respondents said that they would collect information from car magazines. 7 % respondents said that they had not yet collected information.

5. TO FIND OUT THE FACTORS CONSIDERED BY THE BUYERS AT THE TIME OF PURCHASING THE SMALL CAR

56% respondents believed that brand name, 48% respondents gave importance to price, and followed by 54% respondents who gave preference to fuel and 33% respondents to after sales. 9% respondents believed that a promotional scheme was extremely important, for 22% respondents delivery waiting time, 21% respondents believed that payment facility, 42% respondents believed that availability of service station was extremely unimportant. For ranking the attributes in order of preference when making a decision of buying a car respondent gave first rank to mileage, second to comfort, third rank to looks & style.

6. TO FIND OUT THE BUYER'S PERCEPTION TOWARDS ENTRY LEVEL CAR

26% respondents definitely agreed that purchasing car is one of the biggest decisions in life. 38 % respondents somewhat agreed to buying small car as their first car. 39% respondents somewhat disagreed that it is ideal to buy second-hand car as first car. 28% respondents somewhat disagreed for small car is as safe as large car. 33 % respondents definitely agreed to increasing traffic problems is one reason to buy small car, and regarding the perception related to entry level cars affect the status of a person, 35% respondents somewhat agreed. When asked whether People want to differentiate their car from their neighbor, 28% respondents somewhat agreed they were agreed on that small car means less maintenance cost, 27% respondents somewhat agreed.

CONCLUSIONS

Consumers are seeking very good overall performance cars. Consumers prefer small and mid-sized cars for better mileage, acceleration and better parking convenience. Again a good after sales service and low maintenance in a vehicle is like an icing on the cake. Safety is somewhat ignored as it is overshadowed by other aspects. One thing which is very clear from this project is that people need a car that has almost all the attributes they are looking for. Brand name matters but as the needs develop, consumers can forego that aspect. Entry Segment cars are still dominated by Maruti & Hyundai. People mostly purchase a car for family. Buyers get their required information from dealers, friends, shows and other sources. People want to have a better alternative fuel but presently it seems that they cannot find one in LPG & CNG. We can conclude that understanding this pre-purchase behavior is very much important for the company so due importance should be given to study these aspects.

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