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A STUDY ON CONSUMER PERCEPTION OF THE PURCHASE DECISION TOWARDS TWO WHEELERS - WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO RAYALASEEMA REGION IN ANDHRA PRADESH

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ABSTRACT

In an era of increasing global competition, "consumer perception" remains a research topic of strong interest for both academic and market researchers alike. The focus of this research is to study the consumers' awareness, preferences and purchase decision of two wheelers in Rayalaseema region cities like Tirupati, Anantapur, Kadapa and Karnool. Also, the study aims to examine the influence of regions on consumer's perception on their preference, attitude, decision making and satisfaction. A survey was conducted and 400 completed questionnaires were used in data analysis; 100 in each four cities. The finding reveals that the perception of consumers towards the two wheeler purchase decision differ widely. The researcher finds that "region" effect is an in substantial factor in two wheeler users' evaluation. Other factors such as promotional schemes, Performance, utilitarian benefits, personal factors and value added benefits were perceived by consumers in four cities as more important than regions. Thus the overall findings of the study provide implications for marketers and manufacturers of two wheelers.

KEYWORDS

consumer perception, purchase decision, demographics, region, satisfaction, performance.

INTRODUCTION

A decision is the selection of an action from two or more alternative choices. Constantly consumers make decision regarding the choice, purchase, use of products and services. They face a lot of dilemma at the time of taking a purchase decision. Thus it is a process by which the consumers identify their needs, collect information, evaluate alternatives and make purchase decision. These decisions are useful to both marketers and policy makers. This study throws light on the perception of consumers towards the purchase decision of two wheelers in India. Today, the two wheelers industry plays a significant role in the Indian economy. India is the second largest two wheeler market in the world, fourth largest commercial vehicle market in the world, the 11th largest passenger car market in the world and is expected to become the 7th largest by 2016. (Source: Society of India Automobile Manufacture, SIAM). The two wheeler market in India comprises of 3 types of vehicles namely motorcycles, scooters and mopeds. Foreign collaboration has been playing a major role in the growth of Indian Two Wheeler Market. (Venela.G. 2009).

Women play a significant role in the domestic and socio-economic life in the society. In India over the years, both female and male roles have been changing. Now a day's women are playing different role of chief purchasing officer and controlling 85% of buying decisions. Certainly in male dominated societies many goods and services are actually decided and purchased by women. This is due to increasing literacy, independent income and role in the family. Significantly, the two wheeler has become a valuable support for them to increase their income, besides personal transportation. Realising this latent demand, the two Wheeler companies are competing hard with each other to cater the needs of women consumers. Many special promotional schemes are used by the manufacturers to reach the women consumers in both large cities and rural areas. Evidently, there is a decline of almost 8% in two wheeler sales during 2011-12. The motorcycle segment declined by 12%. At the same time, the scooter segment grew by 11% in the year 2011 – 12. The industry sold more gearless scooters. (Business standard, 2013). It was observed that more than 6% of all two wheeler buyers in the country are women. So many companies are targeting women to boost their two wheeler sales. Now-a-days they are coming up with latest technology models, new designs, new features, cutting edge technology etc. Hence it is necessary to study the perception of women consumers regarding the purchase of two wheelers. This study helps the two wheeler companies to chalk out their strategies to enlarge their market share and enhance the level of awareness among women consumers.

INDIAN SCENARIO

Transport systems and city character are interlinked. Also land use characteristics of a city can determine the type of transport systems it needs. Two wheelers have a special place on the Indian roads. They are extremely popular and versatile not only as passenger carriers but also as goods carriers. Indians prefer motorcycles because of their small manageable size, low maintenance and pricing, and easy loan payments. The Indian two wheeler industry has come a long way. It was started in the year 1948, when bajaj auto started importing and selling Vespa scooters in India. (Anujkumar Kanjoia,2011). Since then customer preferences have changed. The younger generations of India are crazy about two wheelers. Now, a bird's view on Indian scenario on two wheeler industry in Rayalaseema region cities is given below:

CITIES

TIRUPATI

Tirupati is one of the big city in Rayalaseema region. According to the records of the Tirupati Regional Transport Office, the total number of vehicles registered alone stood at 2,43,680 by January 2, 2014 in both Tirupati Urban and Rural mandals, revealing that the number of vehicles is almost equal to the city population. Of all the 2,43,680, the number of two-wheelers stood at 1,96,165 followed by auto rickshaws 12,829, which is being observed as the major concern for traffic in the town. But, as the population of Tirupati has not reached near 5 lakhs, no curbs will be enacted on registration of autos, Tirupati RTO MSSB Prasad told Express. On the number of vehicle registrations, he said that the RTA office in Tirupati is making registrations of at least 100 vehicles on any given day.

ANANTHAPUR

Anantapur city is governed by Municipal Corporation which comes under Rayalaseema Region. The Anantapur city is located in Andhra Pradesh state of India. As per provisional reports of Census India, population of Anantapur in 2014 is 291,004; of which male and female are 145,777 and 145,227 respectively. Although Anantapur city has population of 291,004; its city population is 370,613 of which 186,568 are males and 184,045 are females. Anantapur's vehicular population has been increasing at a steady pace for almost a decade now. It appears that about 70% of families in Anantapur own a motorized vehicle. This is because the buying capacity of Anantapur also is also increasing every year. Thus, a large number of people have started buying vehicles, though the petrol prices have gone up in the past few years.

KADAPA

Kadapa city is governed by Municipal Corporation which comes under Rayalaseema Region. The Kadapa city is located in Andhra Pradesh state of India. As per provisional reports of Census India, population of Kadapa in 2014 is 383,054; of which male and female are 192,357 and 190,697 respectively. Although Kadapa city has population of 383,054; its city population is 384,893 of which 193,314 are males and 191,579 are females. In the Indian cities, there is a steady increase in the number of registered vehicles. The 2014 data showed an increase of 44% over a period of seven years. The market share of the two wheeler industry including mopeds and motorcycles is 6%.

KARNOOL

Kurnool city is governed by Municipal Corporation which comes under Rayalaseema Region. The Kurnool city is located in Andhra Pradesh state of India. As per provisional reports of Census India, population of Kurnool in 2014 is 470,214; of which male and female are 223,747 and 226,467 respectively. Although Kurnool city has population of 470,214; its city population is 524,327 of which 261,607 are males and 262,720 are females. the vehicle population rose by 1.5 lakh of which two wheelers account for 1.06 lakh. It can be said that people's need to save time, inadequate public transport system and easy loan facilities are the reason for increase in the two wheeler population. Thus the two wheeler manufacturers in India are, at present doing good business, especially in the past few years. Significantly, two wheeler models in India also get popular when they are in good price range and have other attractive features.

Why are Two Wheelers so Popular in India?

The growing middle class population, prosperous rural India and the paucity of reliable public transport system is leading to a large number of two wheelers added to the roads every day. Indian roads in most cities, villages and towns are narrow. Two-wheelers allow people to navigate such roads easily. Fuel-efficiency is a huge advantage. With the cost of petrol increasing steadily, two-wheeler makes the daily travel both affordable and convenient. Easy availability of auto finances at attractive schemes has made a two-wheeler a must in most urban and rural homes.

Two-wheelers Purchase Trend:

- Growing working population
- Increased access to credit and lower interest loans
- Increased consumer embrace of financial products
- Upward migration of household income levels
- Fast paced urbanization to rise from 28% to 40% by 2020

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A review of previous research has revealed that a large number of studies have analysed some or other aspect of the consumer decision making behaviour. In order to satisfy the customers the manufactures should pay attention to quality, price, quantity etc. (Kannusamy, 2010). In the purchase of automobile products, celebrity endorsement has an impact (S A Dogra, 2011). Also, petrol prices and mass transport system have an impact on demand for two wheelers (S. Senthilkumar, A. Mahadevan, 2010). suggested that factors like driving comfort, fuel economy and hospitability influence the consumers in buying cars (Christy Dayamani 2011). Examined the factors determining purchase and post-purchase behavior of two wheeler users. His findings revealed that friends and neighbors' form the most important source which is followed by one's own experience, family members, news papers and observation *Nishar Ahamed N. (1997)*. Women play a major role in the purchasing decision and give highest preference to product quality (S. Saravanan, 2010).

OBJECTIVES

1. To study the consumers 'perception, awareness, preferences and purchase decision of two wheelers in selection cities.
2. To analyze the influence of the demographic variables on the factors of purchase decision of two wheelers

ROLE OF DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

The demography refers to the vital and measurable statistics of a population. The demographic variables are the personal characteristics such as age, gender, marital status, educational qualification, occupation, type of family, number of members and annual income. (J. B. Singh, 2011). They are the most popular bases for distinguishing customer groups. Generally, women consumer wants, preferences and usage rates are highly associated with demographic variables. It is evident from the research conducted by Sarguna mary (2009) that the product purchase decision making among women urban married working women depend on the decision of family members. Also the study of Kamalveni et.al (2008) revealed that the brand loyalty is significantly associated with the age of consumers rather than with their income. Moreover, education links not only to thinking costs but also to product quality, exploration and search costs. (Kusum. L. Ailawadi, & et,al, 2001). Hence it is necessary to study the influence of demographic variables on the factors of purchase decision of women two wheelers.

INFORMATION SEARCH

To measure the perception of consumers towards the purchase decision of two wheelers, it is necessary to find out the possible options they have. They search for more information's in order to avoid the risk of making wrong choice. The consumer first conducts an internal search. In case the internal search for information is found to be insufficient, the consumer goes in for external search. It involves information collection from personal and non- personal or commercial sources. The sources of information are remarkably diverse. It comprises of both internal source and external source. The internal source comes from the past experiences. Whereas, the external source includes friends, colleagues, peer groups, family, internet websites, magazines and media etc.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study, "Consumer perception of the purchase decisions towards motor cycles in India- a case study with reference to Rayalaseema region in Andhra Pradesh. The data collected through the questionnaire were scrutinized and SPSS package was used for analysis. For this research study, the secondary data were collected from business journals, internet, magazines and news articles. The secondary data helped to structure the review of literature.

Questionnaire design: To conduct the study the primary data were collected through personal interview with structured questionnaire. To measure the perception of two wheeler users, Likert's 5 point scale is used.

Data collection: The researcher used convenience sampling method for collecting the data from the respondents. The data was collected from the respondents who had two wheelers.

The questionnaires were served and the details were tabulated. Table 1 presents the summary of the questionnaires served and received.

TABLE 1: SUMMARY OF QUESTIONNAIRES COLLECTED

Circles	Circulated	Reviewed	Rejectd	Used
Tirupati	100	95	14	81
Anantapur	100	80	18	62
Kadapa	100	78	13	65
Karnool	100	64	12	52
	400	317	57	260

Source: Primary data

From the Table: 1, it can be observed that researcher have distributed 400 questionnaires. The respondents were selected from four cities of India, where 100 are from Tirupati, 100 from Anantapur, 100 from Kadapa and the remaining from 100 Karnool. The questionnaires were sent through mail also. Among the 400 questionnaires distributed, it can be observed that only 260 questionnaires were received. Off the 260 questionnaires, 57 questionnaires were rejected for various reasons. The remaining 260, consisting of 81 from Tirupati, 62 from Anantapur, 65 from Kadapa and the remaining 52 were used for analysis.

VALIDITY OF THE DATA

The purpose of this research is to test the association of the independent variables like personal factors, product characteristics, promotional schemes and satisfaction indicators regarding the purchase decision of two wheelers by women consumers in India. Marketers and consumer researchers, over the period of 50 years, have tried to grasp the concept of consumer decision making. To assure the validity of our research, the selected theories and questionnaire were extracted from other scholars. Some research findings are discussed here: The personal characteristics reveals that two wheeler consumers are influenced by popular models. (Abdul Karim.B.2012). The two wheeler have gone a complete revamp and this consist of gearless products. The weight, height, easy handling is given due importance by women. (Ranjit Mundu,2011). But most of the rural consumers are influenced by quality, features and brand image of two wheelers. (G. V. Venala 2009). The “promotional schemes” indicates that advertising value is closely related with women’s attitude towards visual media advertisements. (T. Ravikumara-2012). The fourth factor is satisfaction indicators. Consumers prefer to buy favorable brand in two wheelers on the basis of price, quality, advertisement, style, color, resale value etc., (Kannaswamy, 2010). Generally, the two wheeler consumers are highly influenced by the fuel economy and better road grip (Abdul Kalam, 2012). However, petrol prices and mass transport system have an impact on demand for two wheelers (Senthilkumar, 2010). This is particularly important, when the consumers are facing the problem of high fuel rate and high cost of spare parts (S. Kannaswamy, 2010).

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONDENTS IN METRO CITIES

It has been recognized that the perception of consumers of two wheelers, particularly, their search and evaluation behaviour may vary according to individual characteristics. The age, education, occupation, and the income level are the important factors in influencing the consumers search, evaluation and decision to buy a two wheeler. The table 2 reveals the demographic characteristics of samples in Rayalaseema region cities.

TABLE 2: DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RESPONDENTS IN RAYALASEEMA REGION (Tirupati, Kdapa, Anantapur and Karnool)

Profile of the consumers	Category	Valid%
Age	Less than 30 years	25.54
Education	UG & PG	24.06
Occupation	Private service	27.07
Income level	1-3 lakhs	22.93

Source: computed data

Table: 2, indicates that the 25.54% of the respondents belong to the age group of less than 30 years. A majority (24.06%) were graduates and PG. Most (23.36%) of the respondents belong to the family income group of Rs 1 – Rs 3 lakhs. It was observed that a major portion (27.07%)of the respondents belonged to private service. Thus the study reveals that demographics play a role in the perception of women consumers towards the purchase decision of two wheelers in metros.

INFLUENCE OF REGION OF CONSUMERS ON THEIR PREFERENCE, ATTITUDE, DECISION MAKING AND SATISFACTION

The present study identified different variables that could possibly influence the consumers’ perception of the purchase decision of two wheelers. Cluster analysis is the task of assigning set of objects into groups, so that the objects in the same cluster are similar. In this research, the researcher considered four regions of cities namely, Tirupati, Anantapur, Kadapa and Karnool. The significant difference among consumers in these four regions is identified through one-way ANOVA. The principal component method identified several factors of preference, attitude, decision making and satisfaction. The influence of independent variable on dependant factors is shortly estimated through the one-way analysis of variance which is given in table :3

TABLE 3: ANOVA

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Product performance	Between Groups	6.498	3	3.460	2.774	.000
	Within Groups	125.842	256	1.247		
	Total	132.340	259			
Promotional schemes	Between Groups	4.342	3	3.134	2.938	.000
	Within Groups	128.158	256	1.066		
	Total	132.500	259			
Utilitarian benefits	Between Groups	2.997	3	1.280	.929	.565
	Within Groups	112.796	256	1.378		
	Total	115.793	259			
Personal factors	Between Groups	3.498	3	3.460	2.774	.000
	Within Groups	105.842	256	1.247		
	Total	109.340	259			
Product characteristics’	Between Groups	6.342	3	3.134	2.938	.000
	Within Groups	132.158	256	1.066		
	Total	138.500	259			
Quality information	Between Groups	2.997	3	1.280	.929	.565
	Within Groups	105.796	256	1.378		
	Total	108.793	259			
Product aspects	Between Groups	3.498	3	3.460	2.774	.000
	Within Groups	135.842	256	1.247		
	Total	139.340	259			
Value added Benefits	Between Groups	0.342	3	3.134	2.938	.000
	Within Groups	135.158	256	1.066		
	Total	136.500	259			

Source: computed data

The principal component method identified several factors of preference, attitude, decision making and satisfaction. The total average scores of the factors are considered as dependent variable and region is considered as independent. The table: 3 indicates that the results were significant at 95% confidence interval for all.

TABLE 4: ONE-SAMPLE TEST

	Independent variable	Test Value = 4					
		T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
						Lower	Upper
Product Performance	1.00	-17.220	259	.000	-.990	-1.10	-.88
Promotional Schemes	4.00	-18.443	259	.000	-1.065	-1.18	-.95
Utilitarian benefits	1.00	-16.370	259	.000	-.918	-1.03	-.81
Personal Factors	4.00	-16.265	259	.000	-.953	-1.07	-.84
Product Characteristics	4.00	-16.983	259	.000	-.982	-1.10	-.87
Quality information	3.00	-17.551	259	.000	-.987	-1.10	-.88
Product Aspects	4.00	-19.279	259	.000	-1.100	-1.21	-.99
Value Added Benefits	3.00	-20.586	259	.000	-1.589	-1.17	-.89

RESEARCH FINDINGS

The researcher had investigated the extent of consumer perception of the purchase decision towards two wheelers in Rayalaseema region cities of India, viz, Tirupati, Anantapur, Kadapa and Karnool. To do so, she had employed ANOVAs technique to study the influence of region on consumers perception in their preference, attitude, decision making and satisfaction towards the purchase of two wheelers. Table 3 indicates that the results were significant at 95% confidence level for all variables. Accordingly, the perception of consumers of two wheelers in four regions differ widely with respect to variables like schemes, product performance, promotional schemes utilitarian benefits, personal characters, product characteristics, promotional schemes, product aspects and value added benefits. This leads to the mean wise comparison of four regions consumers of two wheelers. In Table: 4, the perception of consumers on decision making differ widely. The table shows the influence of region of consumer's perception on their preference, attitude, decision making and satisfaction towards the purchase decision of two wheelers. The results reveals that the perception of consumers of two wheelers at Karnool city are significantly differentiated with respect to variables like product performance and utilitarian benefits, then other cities. Whereas, the perception of consumers of two wheelers at Kadapa city was significantly different with respect to the variables, quality information and value added benefits. Personal factors, product characteristics, product aspects, promotional schemes were significant only to the two wheeler consumers at Anantapur city. The findings suggest that the perception of consumers was of paramount importance with respect to the variables as far as purchase decision of two wheelers was concerned.

CONCLUSION

The results discussed above shows the perception of consumers of two wheelers throughout Rayalaseema Region. Accordingly; it was found that regions have strong influence on the preference, attitude, decision making and satisfaction of consumer's perception towards two wheelers in Rayalaseema. The variables like product performance tend to influence the preference of consumers. Also, in terms of attitude, promotional schemes and utilitarian benefits play a significant role in the Rayalaseema consumers mind. When making a two wheeler purchase decision, the personal factors and product characteristics are important for consumers in Rayalaseema region. Also they show a positive attitude towards promotional schemes and utilitarian benefits derived from the two wheelers. Moreover, the satisfaction of consumers depends on product aspects and value added benefits provided by the two wheelers. It can be concluded that our analysis provides important insight on the two wheeler users. Their two-wheeler purchases are driven by different factors such as preference, attitude, decision making and satisfaction of consumers in Rayalaseema. Thus, the result of this study is emphasized and further supported the importance of perception of consumers as an important element of purchase decision.

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