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OBJECTIVES

HYPOTHESES

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

FINDINGS

RECOMMENDATIONS/SUGGESTIONS

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CONSUMER MARKET PURCHASE DECISION: A STUDY ON DURABLE GOODS IN JAFFNA DISTRICT

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ABSTRACT

Consumers decision-making process was based on their evaluations of the multiple attributes associated with the product and also the consumers. The paper addressed two research objectives. The first objective was to develop the most influencing attributes of consumer decision for durable goods and the second was to conduct a process-tracing and naming key factor components affected consumers' judgment processes. The convenient sampling technique was used in the sample selection. Responses were collected from 250 customers from Jaffna city. The study was based on primary data gathered using a questionnaire containing 20 literature based measures the contributing to consumer purchase decision. This paper presents a Factor Analysis approach to the problem of extracting the influences on consumer market purchase decision for the durable goods. Results indicated that product attributes, personal factor, psychological factor, price and distribution were the factors that have influenced the consumer decision. Therefore, it can be concluded that considering above attributes that have influenced on consumer market purchase decision for the analysis creates successive marketing and long term sustainability for the productive organization.

KEYWORDS

Consumer Market, Durable Goods, Product attributes and Purchase decision.

INTRODUCTION

Today's businesses need fresh thinking about how to operate and compete in the new economy. Successful companies take an outside- inside view of their business. The aim of the marketing is to meet and satisfy target customers' needs and wants. The field of consumer behavior studies how individual, group and organizations select, buy, use, and dispose of goods, services, ideas, or experiences to satisfy their need and desires. Understanding of consumer behavior and knowing customers is never simple. Companies compete successfully in today's market place by a commitment to creating and delivering superior value to target customers. Successful companies know how to adapt to a continuously changing marketplace. Company cannot serve all customers in a broad market. Customers are too numerous and diverse in their buying requirements.

No company can win if its product and offerings resembles every other product and offering. Companies must pursue meaningful and relevant positioning and differentiation. Each company and offering must represent a distinctive big idea in the mind of the target market and each company must dream up new features, services and guarantees, special rewards for loyal users and new convenience and enjoyments. Marketing is seen as the whole business from the point of view of its final result, that is, from the customer's point of view (Assael, H 1992). The consumer is king in age of consumerism. While, durables goods are expected to last longer than three years. So, it is a product of high involvement for consumers. This characteristics of the consumer's behaviour for durable goods, makes it a more suitable and appropriate behaviour to study.

CONSUMER DURABLES IN THE COMPETITIVE MARKET

The demand for consumer durable has been rising with the increase in disposable income coupled with more and more consumers falling under the double income families. Availability of newer variants of a product is high in market. Consumers are spoilt for choice when it comes to choosing products. Newer variants of a product will help a company in getting the attention of consumers who look for innovation in products. The consumer durables industry is highly price sensitive, making price the determining factor in increasing volumes, at least for lower range consumers. For middle and upper range consumers, it is the brand name, technology and product features that are important. Availability of credit and the structure of the loan determine the affordability of the product. Sale of a particular product is determined by the cost of credit as much as the flexibility of the scheme.

This industry consists of durable goods used for domestic purposes such as televisions, computers, washing machines, refrigerators, microwave ovens, mobile phones, automobiles etc. The growth in the consumer durables sector has been driven primarily by factors such as the boom in the automobile industry, real estate & housing industry, higher disposable income, emergence of the retail industry in a big way coupled with rising affluence levels of a considerable section of the population. The shift in consumer preferences has also been triggered by the availability of foreign branded automobiles in Sri Lanka owing to higher import duties introduced by the government. The consumer durables industry can be broadly classified as consumer electronics and consumer appliances.

THE JAFFNA SCENARIO

Last few years after the end of local war have witnessed of growing demands for different durable products. Infrastructure development and new business entrants create more mobility of durable goods now to Jaffna District. There is a noticeable shift in the consumer's preference in favor of higher end, technologically superior branded products, the demand being fueled by increasing consumer awareness and preference for new models. This shift is also because of the increase in manufacture of branded products and narrowing down of price between branded and non-branded goods. Competition has forced the companies to offer efficient after sales service and support and this, in turn, has swayed customer preference for branded products. Post war there has been inundation of goods transcend the borders and the customer has a wider choice; breaking the shackles of the consumers regarding limitations of choices. Increase in demand of Jaffna people is a result of increase in income of the people and increase in discretionary income too. A rise in discretionary income results usually in an increased spending by consumer on those items that raise their living standards. Moreover, a trend for Jaffna people to utilize their income for more comforts and facilities is also developing. Intense competition among the marketers of consumer durables and the increasing awareness of Jaffna consumers about their own needs, is making a major difference in marketing of consumer durables.

RESEARCH PROBLEM

In the context of the above scenario, it is interesting to study how the human beings i.e. Jaffna consumers, satisfy their different basic and non-basic needs. The major categories in the market are car, mobile phone and home appliances as, refrigerator, washing machines and furniture. The rising income levels, double-income families and increasing consumer awareness are the main growth drivers of this industry. In addition to them the young nature of population and easy finance options are also fuelling the market and its dynamics. This research is an attempt to reflect the changes in the consumer buying behavior of durables in the Sri Lankan Market especially in home appliances buying in Jaffna city. Buying behavior need to understand why consumers make the purchases that they make? What are the factors influence consumer purchases?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Buying Behavior is the decision processes and acts of people involved in buying and using products. Consumer Buying Behavior refers to the buying behavior of the ultimate consumer. A firm needs to analyze buying behavior for Buyers reactions to a firms marketing strategy has a great impact on the firm's success.

Scholars indicated consumer behaviors as decision-making and behaviors involved in purchasing or using. The marketing concept stresses that a firm should create a Marketing Mix (MM) that satisfies (gives utility to) customers, therefore need to analyze the what, where, when and how consumers buy.

Marketers can better predict how consumers will respond to marketing strategies and defined consumer behaviors as follows; consumer behaviors are every activity, opinion and influence involved in the purchase and labor process. Another person thought consumer behaviors are the decision-making and behaviors when people buy and use products or services. They also pointed out that consumer buying behaviors are based on individuals satisfying their needs, seeking products, services or ideas and that includes behaviors like purchasing, using, evaluating and disposing. Kotler (2000) studied how individuals, groups and organizations purchase, use and dispose of products, services, ideas to satisfy their needs as his viewpoint on consumer behaviors.

Consumer decision making process by which consumers identify their needs, collect information, evaluate alternatives, and make the purchase decision. These actions are determined by psychological and economical factors, and are influenced by environmental factors such as cultural, group, and social values. In mapping out the buying process that consumers use, researchers have identified several categories of motivation that determine how consumers attach weight to or rate the importance of -product features: Personal: This includes the demographic factors that are correlated with purchase behavior. Psychological: Personality, attitudes, lifestyle, and motivations are a few of the factors included. Social: These influences include friends, family, opinion leaders, role models, and similar factors. Everyone involved in creating advertising and other marketing material knows that consumers are not as interested in a product's features as they are in the benefits they can receive. And it's no surprise to marketers that the way consumers feel about a product heavily influences the likelihood of their making a purchase.

Three scholars, Engel, Kollat and Blackwell from Ohio State University proposed the E-K-B model in 1968, which considered consumer behaviors a continuous process instead of intermittent individual actions. The model is centered on decision-making and comprised of combining the intertwined effects of internal and external factors. E-K-B model is the more comprehensive, intact and systematic model in current consumer behavior models. The model structure comprises 5 parts: 1) information input; 2) information process; 3) decision-making process; 4) variables that affect the decision-making; 5) extraneous interference. Amongst them, the decision-making process is the core of the E-K-B model. It includes: 1) need recognition; 2) search for information; 3) alternatives and evaluation; 4) purchase; 5) post purchase evaluation.

Later on, Eastman J.K et al., (1999) further presented internal and external factors, such as individual differences and environmental influences, affecting decision-making at every stage, to wit: 1). environmental influence: including culture, social status, personal influence, family, scenario and so on; 2) personal differences: consumers' sources of information, knowledge, attitudes towards the product, motive, personality, value system and lifestyle, etc which means the decision will be different depending on personal characteristics.

OBJECTIVES

Objective of the study is to study the consumer purchase decisions about durable goods. Here we have to study how Jaffna consumer is behaving, how they behaved in past and what are the future estimates about

The objectives were

1. To develop the influencing Factors of consumer decision for durable goods and
2. To conduct a process-tracing and naming key factor components affected consumers' judgment processes

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The methodological aspects related to the research conducted in the present studies are given hereunder:

DATA COLLECTION AND METHOD OF ANALYSIS

The convenient sampling technique was used in the sample selection. Responses were collected from 250 customers from Jaffna city. The study was based on primary data gathered using a questionnaire containing 20 literature based measures the contributing to consumer purchase decision. In order to increase the reliability of questionnaire, each construct was operationalized on a five-point Likert scale (1 strong agree and 5 for strong disagree). This paper presents a Factor Analysis approach to the problem of extracting the influences on consumer market purchase Decision for the durable goods. To further analysis the reliability of the data, sample adequacy tests by Kaiser-Meyer_olkin (KMO), Bartlett Test of sphericity and correlation matrix were conducted.

DATA ANALYSIS

The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy tests were constructed for checking out the sample adequacy of the data. The value of KMO came out to be 0.796 (table 1) indicating that the factor analysis test can be proceeded correctly and the sample used is adequate the minimum acceptable value of KMO as supported by Othman and owen(0.5).

TABLE 1: KMO AND BARTLETT'S TEST		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy		.796
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	4961.357
	df	190
	Sig.	.000

Source: Author constructed

In order to test the multidimensionality of the variables, Bartlett Test of Sphericity and correlation were conducted. The results of the Bartlett Test of sphericity turned out to be highly significant of 0.000 (Table 1) which indicate that the factor analysis processes were correct and suitable for testing multidimensionality. The correlation matrix also depicted high correlation among the variables certifying the suitability of application of factor analysis technique on the data (Appendix 1). Thus, it was derived from the statistical tests that the proposed items and dimensions of instruments were sound enough to measure the consumer purchase decision toward durable products. Principle factor analysis identified a few higher level dimensions characterizing consumer purchase decisions towards durables. Correlation among the variables is more than 0.5 correlations in Appendix 1.

TABLE 2: TOTAL VARIANCE EXPLAINED				
Component	Initial Eigen values			
	Total	Cumulative Variance %	Revised Cumulative	Variance %
1	5.410	27.049	31.465	
2	4.230	48.197	55.150	
3	2.830	62.347	71.615	
4	1.331	69.000	78.669	
5	1.102	74.508	84.733	
6	.988	79.451	89.222	
7	.868	83.791	92.055	
8	.755	87.563	94.136	
9	.694	91.034	95.830	
10	.475	93.407	96.854	
11	.351	95.162	97.719	
12	.279	96.559	98.365	
13	.169	97.404	98.964	
14	.140	98.102	99.329	
15	.109	98.645	99.648	
16	.096	99.126	99.895	
17	.062	99.435	100.000	
18	.053	99.702	-	
19	.042	99.912	-	
20	.018	100.000	-	
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.				

From the table 2 output, there were 5 Eigen values greater than 1.0. The latent root criterion for number of factors to derive would indicate that there were 5 components to be extracted for these variables. Cumulative proportion of variance criteria can be met with 5 components to satisfy the criterion of explaining 74.5% or more of the total variance.

EVALUATING COMMUNALITIES

TABLE 3: EXTRACTIONS AND REVISED COMMUNALITIES		
Variables	Extraction	Revised Extraction
Beliefs and Values	.822	.821
Durability	.870	.877
Features	.877	.889
Value for money	.747	.854
Education	.907	.917
Advertising	.790	.790
Discount	.766	.849
Style	.865	.854
Income	.903	.920
Job	.875	.907
Attitude	.888	.903
Availability	.514	.715
Perception	.938	.946
Product support services	.245	-
Reliability	.624	.630
Promotion	.385	-
Serviceability	.372	-
Brand	.856	.841
Family members	.723	.754
Motivation	.935	.938
Source: Author constructed		

Researcher was used the Principle Component Analysis as Extraction method. The factor solution should explain at least half of each original variable's variance, so the communality values should be 0.50 or higher. In the table 3 variables as Product support services, promotion and availability are below than 0.5. In table 3 revised communalities satisfy for all variables.

After deletion of three variables in the process analysis, remaining items were factor analyzed as shown in table 2. These factor explained 84.733 of revised total variance, which is very much acceptable for the Principle Component Varimax Rotated Factor Loading procedure.

IDENTIFYING COMPLEX STRUCTURE

Identified 5 components were explained by the 17 factors. But after the Principle Component Varimax Rotated Factor Loading procedure, there is difference in the factor component values; it is explicated in the table 4.

TABLE 4: ROTATED COMPONENT MATRIX

	Component				
	1	2	3	4	5
Beliefs and Values	-.822	-.327	.145	.039	.128
Durability	.917	.002	-.085	.169	-.018
Features	.933	-.019	.026	.127	.030
Value for money	.140	-.245	.011	.869	-.134
Education	.094	.931	.029	-.124	.157
Advertising	.866	.014	-.072	.180	-.050
Discount	.314	-.083	.062	.854	.103
Style	.910	.033	-.014	.092	.128
Income	.071	.946	.035	-.085	.112
Job	.046	.948	.003	-.054	.064
Attitude	-.075	.000	.943	.039	-.083
Availability	.151	.036	-.072	.002	.828
Perception	-.073	.020	.969	.018	-.015
Reliability	.136	-.417	.081	.046	-.655
Brand	.906	.036	-.010	.075	.119
Family members	.056	.859	-.013	-.107	.019
Motivation	-.039	.013	.966	.012	-.055

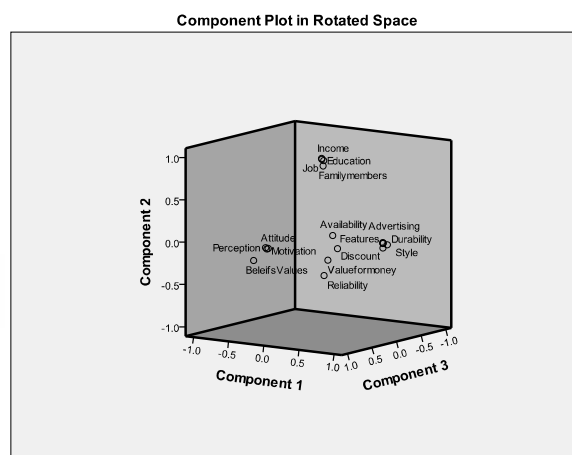
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

RELABELING TO THE COMPONENTS

These five factors and the variables loading on these factors have been shown with the scree plot in figure1 and summarized in Table 5.

FIGURE 1: SCREE PLOT IN ROTATE



Above figure explains the 5 components which were created by the 17 factors of the product.

These five factors have been defined hereunder:

FACTOR 1: PRODUCT ATTRIBUTES

The first product factor as product attributes with an eigen value of 5.349 was explained 31.465% of the variance. This includes six statements namely durability, features, advertising, brand, style and reliability. These types of groups often influence as product characteristics which impact in the customer purchase decisions on durable goods.

TABLE 5: SUMMARY OF FACTORS

Factor	Factor Name	Loading	Statements
F1	Product attributes	.917	Durability
		.933	Features
		.866	Advertising
		.906	Brand
		.910	Style
		.136	Reliability
F2	Personal characteristics	.931	Education
		.946	Income
		.948	Job
		.859	Family members
F3	Psychological factors	.943	Beliefs and Attitude
		.969	Perception
		.966	Motivation
		.145	Learning
F4	price	0.869	Value for money
		.854	Discount
F5	Distribution	.828	Availability

Source: Author constructed

FACTOR 2: PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS

Another factor named as Personal characteristics of customers. It consists of education, income, job and family members, which were the basic aspect of the purchase decisions. The second factor of Personal characteristics explained with the eigen value of 4.027 and 23.685 % of variance. Therefore this factor explained that better product attributes along with personal characteristics were very important features for product factor.

FACTOR 3: PSYCHOLOGICAL FACTOR

The third factor as psychological factors with an eigen value of 2.799 was explained 16.465% of the variance. This four statements namely attitude, perception, motivation and beliefs and values were loaded significantly on this factor. These types of factors often influence a person's behavior and attitude about many different durable products purchase decisions.

FACTOR 4: PRICE

The another product factor accounted by the 7.054% of total variance with eigen value of 1.199 two variable as value for money and discount were found to be significantly loading on this factors and this factor was named as price factor.

FACTOR 5: DISTRIBUTION

The last product factor is Distribution which consists of one variable as availability. This factor is accounted for the 1.031 eigen value and 6.064 of variance.

FINDINGS

The study found that there are 20 important variables which affect the consumer durables purchase decisions they are Durability, Reliability, Features, Value for money, Education, availability, Discount, Style, Income, Job, Attitude, Beliefs and Values, Advertising, Perception, Product support services, Promotion, Availability, Brand, Family members, and Motivation. According to the responses given from the customer only 17 variables mainly affect the consumer purchase decision but all these variables can't affect in the same range and three variables are eliminated from analysis as Product support services, promotion and serviceability. This research further revealed that these 17 variables were categorized as five components. According to the consumer decision maker's role is mainly affected by five factors as product attributes, consumer personal characteristics, consumer psychological characteristics, price and Distribution. "Product attributes" ranked first as the factor affecting in the purchase of durables by the respondents. While, "Consumer personal characteristics" ranked second, "consumer psychological characteristics" ranked third, "price" obtains the fourth rank, distribution ranked fifth.

It can be interpreted from the above analysis that the above five factors emerged the consumer choice in present times and also the buyouts in future. The modern day productive organizations lay more emphasis on the customer delights. Customers prefer differentiated, high durable, serviceability and identified branded, so the high quality durable products got more important weight by the Jaffna city. However, the selection is not only the product factor but also the customer characteristics of personal factor as income, education, job, and family members. Almost equal weight age is given to psychological factors, it consists of beliefs and values, perception, motivation and learning. Another factor of customers purchase decision was price, it emphasis the value for money and any discounts. Finally the availability is important factor in the purchase decisions. Even though people wish the product quality and attributes but they also care about product prices. Hence they wish to buy more products only which is more power full brand name and reasonable price. Moreover, Advertising is also given due weight age because it creates more awareness about quality, prices and any promotions with the product.

Another more emphasized factor is personal factor of customer, customer are desire to spend on durables, but the prices of durables are always high, they must have ability to pay. Ability pay depends on income or wealthy level these are correlated with the education and job. Durable goods selection mostly depend on the size of the family members, large or small capacity products are directly influence on the price of the products. Further psychological factor is main root of the purchase decisions, learning gathered from the product use experience, education and knowledge derived from awareness as advertising. So there is interrelationships exists among all 17 variables which are categorized under the five factors.

As it happens car and basic durables like grinder, mobile phone, furniture, Washing machine, furniture and Refrigerator becomes requirement than luxury in Jaffna. Water Purifier, Vacuum Cleaner and Air conditioner consumers of all classes are mostly untapped.

MARKETING IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSION

Sri Lanka has been acknowledged as one of the most promising and fastest growing economy of the world. After post war, consumer behavior and patterns has rapidly changed in Jaffna. Thus, a society which has been traditionally known as "collective" in nature is showing increased evidence of individualism. With increased penetration of electronic media, affordable home entertainment systems, cinema, and the internet, consumers are opening up to the great outside world. Many foreign brands are dominating particularly in consumer durable category. Both rural and urban consumers have rated foreign products very high as compared to domestic products. Jaffna consumers were found more impressed than their urban counterparts with foreign products in terms of essential and maintenance services, technical advancement, prestige, durability, quality/performance, and wide choice of size and model. Many things that were considered as luxuries till about ten years ago have become necessities for most people today" and in case of vehicles and household goods consumption in Jaffna city. Now a day's car and other vehicle consumption are very high in Jaffna. Consumer behavior was at the core of all decisions that had to do with the product. Over time, the consumer's concerns began to be integrated into all decisions relating to new products, Many products and brands that dominated consumer franchise for many years and others that were successfully launched, have declined or disappeared now after many years. The reasons have been varied: changing economic situation; new consumer contexts, behaviors and preferences; competing products offering better value choices to the consumer; The Sri Lankan consumer durables industry has witnessed a considerable change in the past couple of years. The market for consumer durables is becoming more competitive now a day. Therefore, the producer of durable products should understand consumer interest much to find higher sale of their products. Customers have the choice of both domestically produced and imported goods, with similar features. Changing lifestyle, higher disposable income coupled with greater affordability, easy finance options and a surge in advertising has been instrumental in bringing about a sea change in the consumer behavior pattern. The study concludes that the consumer durables choices of Jaffna will highly depend on the adaptability of all the above mentioned factors.

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APPENDIX

APPENDIX 1: CORRELATION MATRIX

Correlation	BV	Durability	Features	VFM	Education	Servicability	Discount	Style	Income	Job	Attitude	Advertising	Perception	PSS	Reliability	Promotion	Availability	Brand	Fm	Motivation
BeleifsValues	1.000	-.808	-.694	-.053	-.366	-.747	-.153	-.653	-.335	-.317	.178	-.121	.176	-.033	-.055	-.034	-.189	-.647	-.317	.151
Durability	-.808	1.000	.849	.290	.053	.909	.394	.747	.045	.037	-.131	.182	-.130	.145	.132	-.096	.163	.736	.030	-.114
Features	-.694	.849	1.000	.265	.058	.765	.382	.883	.055	.025	-.036	.114	-.053	.154	.082	-.119	.168	.875	.015	-.025
Valueformoney	-.053	.290	.265	1.000	-.334	.256	.649	.159	-.297	-.275	.048	-.032	.020	.202	.272	-.236	.012	.154	-.307	.024
Education	-.366	.053	.058	-.334	1.000	.061	-.140	.120	.922	.879	.011	.202	.038	-.159	-.437	.286	-.110	.124	.774	.010
Servicability	-.747	.909	.765	.256	.061	1.000	.410	.686	.034	.046	-.111	.137	-.120	.162	.130	-.084	.153	.678	.034	-.086
Discount	-.153	.394	.382	.649	-.140	.410	1.000	.411	-.132	-.120	.053	.068	.042	.155	.045	-.155	-.041	.385	-.123	.049
Style	-.653	.747	.883	.159	.120	.686	.411	1.000	.109	.078	-.106	.145	-.093	.091	-.003	-.163	.187	.981	.079	-.060
Income	-.335	.045	.055	-.297	.922	.034	-.132	.109	1.000	.935	.018	.156	.049	-.154	-.416	.282	-.119	.111	.737	.018
Job	-.317	.037	.025	-.275	.879	.046	-.120	.078	.935	1.000	-.005	.121	.025	-.137	-.392	.272	-.091	.083	.752	-.005
Attitude	.178	-.131	-.036	.048	.011	-.111	.053	-.106	.018	-.005	1.000	-.136	.880	-.112	.120	.025	-.055	-.101	-.039	.869
Advertiisng	-.121	.182	.114	-.032	.202	.137	.068	.145	.156	.121	-.136	1.000	-.089	-.017	-.253	-.004	-.088	.139	.092	-.117
Perception	.176	-.130	-.053	.020	.038	-.120	.042	-.093	.049	.025	.880	-.089	1.000	-.187	.068	.085	-.034	-.090	-.025	.932
PSS	-.033	.145	.154	.202	-.159	.162	.155	.091	-.154	-.137	-.112	-.017	-.187	1.000	.091	-.094	.100	.097	-.137	-.197
Reliability	-.055	.132	.082	.272	-.437	.130	.045	-.003	.416	-.392	.120	-.253	.068	.091	1.000	-.049	.055	.003	-.341	.095
Promotion	-.034	-.096	-.119	-.236	.286	-.084	-.155	-.163	.282	.272	.025	-.004	.085	-.094	-.049	1.000	-.106	-.176	.226	.056
Availability	-.189	.163	.168	.012	-.110	.153	-.041	.187	-.119	-.091	-.055	-.088	-.034	.100	.055	-.106	1.000	.194	-.100	-.047
Brand	-.647	.736	.875	.154	.124	.678	.385	.981	.111	.083	-.101	.139	-.090	.097	.003	-.176	.194	1.000	.086	-.054
Familymembers	-.317	.030	.015	-.307	.774	.034	-.123	.079	.737	.752	-.039	.092	-.025	-.137	-.341	.226	-.100	.086	1.000	.040
Motivation	.151	-.114	-.025	.024	.010	-.086	.049	-.060	.018	-.005	.869	-.117	.932	-.197	.095	.056	-.047	-.054	.040	1.000

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