A STUDY ON CONSUMER BUYING BEHAVIOUR TOWARDS BRANDED CARS IN TIRUNELVELI DISTRICT

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Introduction
Due to the tremendous advances made in the field of automobile sector, transportation especially cars have sunk the world we live in, into small place. Transportation made people closer and world as global village. Once holding a car is luxury one, but now it become one of the daily necessities. People accept the importance of automobiles especially passenger cars as easy mode of transport. Currently owning a branded car gives an image for the buyer. While choosing cars, the buyer is more conscious in selecting branded cars which matches his life style.

Car market is widely spread world over. There are number of branded cars available in the market. Hence the consumers are given wide choice to choose. If the need is in more intense, the buyer enters a state of active information search and he tries to collect more information about the cars, its key attributes, qualities of brands etc.,

Statement of the Problem
"A Study of Consumer buying behaviour towards branded car in Tirunelveli district" is taken as a research area. In a developing economy like India, consumers have practically complete freedom to choice in the selection of products. As consumer is a complex entity, studying consumer behaviour are gaining importance today. That those who studies the buying behaviour promptly and he manufactures most nearly conform to the wants of the consumers will be favoured by the consumer and have an edge over their competitors. This made the researcher to undertake a study on consumer buying behaviour of various branded cars.

Review of Literature
Tonmay C. Sharadha Shivani (2006) in his study shows that pricing plays role in determining brand equity for multiple car buyers through perceived quality. The factors that singly influence brand equity and pricing relationship are sturdiness of the car and status conferred to the society. The other factors influence the relationship of pricing and brand equity are image, mileage, maintenance cost, involved with a brand.

Andal (2007) in her empirical work comment that car owners give more importance to low maintenance expense and good mileage of car. Owner of all cars were satisfied with the mileage. However the level of satisfaction was not up to the mark on the features of the car. Widely preferred car was one- brand manufacturer Maruti-Udyog Ltd. Show room was an important place, which was visited by the car buyer for more than once. Car manufacturer may give importance to the features like cost of vehicle, prestige value, available spares and so on. Show room may be established in an attractive manner.

Objectives
1. To ascertain the demographic profile of the consumer towards cars in Tirunelveli district.
2. To analyze the association between the consumer buying preference of various brands of car and their age.
3. To examine the association between the consumer buying preference of various brands of car and their current occupation.

Scope of the study
Consumer is most important person in the economy. He tries to achieve a better standard of living by acquisition of goods and services. Consumer needs can be ever growing. The buying process is composed of a number of stages and is influenced by one's psychological framework comprising the individual's personality, motivations, perception and attitudes. For daily items, consumer takes immediate buying decision. While their investment is huge in value like cars, the consumer thinks much more before taking decision. Therefore, there is a significant scope to examine the consumers buying behaviour towards various brands of cars. Marketer must have knowledge of buying behaviour to set his marketing strategies accordingly.

Methodology
As the study is descriptive research, non-probability technique is used. In which snow ball method is used to collect data. A survey was conducted, as Tirunelveli district has 15 Taluks. 400 interview schedules were prepared and out of this only 385 interview schedules were filled up and collected.

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Analysis and Interpretation of Data
The result of the analysis of the collected data is presented below:

Table 1,Demographic Profile of Sample Respondents

Demographic of the Respondents		Distribution of the Respondents	
		Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	354	91.9
	Female	31	8.1
	Total	385	100
Age	30 and below	14	3.6
	31 – 40	130	33.8
	41 – 50	232	60.3
	51 – 60	7	1.8
	Above 60	2	0.5
	Total	385	100
Size of the Family	Small (1 – 2 members)	11	2.9
	Medium (3 – 4 members)	317	82.3
	Large (5 – 6 members)	16	4.2
	Very Large (Above 6 members)	41	10.6
	Total	385	100.0
Current Occupation	Government Employee	106	27.5
	Private Employee	54	14.0
	Entrepreneur	190	49.4
	Professional	35	9.1
	Total	385	100.0
Monthly Income	20,000 and Below	21	5.5
	20,001– 30,000	57	14.8
	30,001– 40,000	90	23.4
	40,001– 50,000	74	19.2
	Above 50,000	143	37.1
	Total	385	100.0
Presently having the brand of Car	Chevrolet	29	7.5
	Ford	26	6.8
	Honda	28	7.3
	Hyundai	75	19.5
	Mahindra	8	2.1
	Maruti Suzuki	120	31.2
	Renault	10	2.6
	Tata	14	3.6
	Toyota	56	14.5
	Volkswagen	13	3.4
	Others	6	1.6
	Total	385	100.0

Source: Primary Data

Table 2,Age and Various Brands of Car Preference

Various Brand of Car	Pearson Chi-Square ^{2}	N	df	*p*-value	Cramer's *V*
Chevrolet	25.02	385	8	.002**	.18
Ford	20.39	385	4	.000**	.23
Honda	102.99	385	8	.000**	.37
Hyundai	182.99	385	8	.000**	.50
Mahindra	79.31	385	12	.000**	.26
Maruti Suzuki	62.03	385	8	.000**	.30

Renault	251.40	385	12	.000**	.52
Tata	223.48	385	16	.000**	.38
Toyota	177.41	385	8	.000**	.48
Volkswagen	85.19	385	12	.000**	.27

**Significant at .05 level of confidence

Table 3,Current Occupation and Various Brands of Car Preference

Various Brand of Car	Pearson Chi-Square ^{2}	N	df	*p*-value	Cramer's *V*
Chevrolet	123.27	385	6	.000**	.40
Ford	31.84	385	3	.000**	.29
Honda	129.31	385	6	.000**	.41
Hyundai	221.28	385	6	.000**	.54
Mahindra	161.39	385	9	.000**	.37
Maruti Suzuki	77.19	385	6	.000**	.32
Renault	365.02	385	9	.000**	.56
Tata	543.97	385	12	.000**	.69
Toyota	250.31	385	6	.000**	.57
Volkswagen	106.11	385	9	.000**	.30

**Significant at .05 level of confidence

Findings
From table1, it has been inferred that out of 385 sample respondents, a maximum of 120 respondents are presently having a Maruti Suzuki car followed by 75 respondents are presently having a Hyundai car and 56 respondents are presently having Toyota car, 29 respondents are presently having Chevrolet car, 28 respondents are presently having Honda car, 26 respondents are presently having Ford car, 14 respondents are presently having a Tata car, 13 respondents are presently having Volkswagen car, 10 respondents are presently having Renault car, 8 respondents are presently having Mahindra car, 6 respondents are presently having other brand of car. It is confirmed that most of the respondents are presently having a Maruti Suzuki car.

From table 2, it is confirmed that the age of the consumers can become a significant demographic factor in influencing their buying preference of various brands of cars .

From table 3, it is confirmed that the current occupation of the consumers can become a significant demographic factor in influencing their buying preference of various brands of cars.

Suggestions
From the findings the researcher suggests that the pricing play an important role. The pricing determines the buying behaviour of consumer. The other influencing factors are mileage, maintenance cost involved with a brand. The researcher also finds that age and the current occupation also influence in the buying behaviour of consumers. ie., the marketer can focus more on these factors when doing promotional activities like advertisement.

Conclusion
The study of consumer behaviour certainly is an off-shoot of marketing. The study of consumer behaviour is the first step in refined marketing. As the consumers vary in their consumption pattern based on geographic location, age, literacy level, occupation, and income level etc., their buying pattern also differs. This study focus that the study of consumer behaviour is essential for making marketing plans. The more diverse the market, the more is the need for consumer behaviour studies. This study concludes that the study of consumer behaviour is the engines that propel ideas, gives a foretaste of the market and lead to innovations.

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