An Empirical Study on Branding Strategies and Purchase Intention toward Electric Scooters among Indian Urban Consumers

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Abstract

With the rapid growth of electric mobility in India, competition has increased among the electric scooter manufacturers as consumers adapt to the new mobility trend; hence, branding strategies has become a crucial tool for companies over the years to influence the adoption of the product to the consumers. The present study empirically examines the impact of branding strategies on purchase intention towards electric scooters among Indian urban consumers. By relying on well-established theories of brand equity and consumer behavior, this study explores the relationships between brand awareness, brand image, perceived quality, perceived value, brand personality, brand trust and price perception on consumers intention to buy electric scooters. Primary data were collected through a structured questionnaire on random respondents from urban locality covering multiple streams of occupational background such as students, working professionals, gig economy workers, and eco-friendly travellers. Data was analyzed using: descriptive statistics to profile respondents and test consumer preferences; reliability analysis (Cronbach's alpha) to check the internal consistency of measurement scales; correlation analysis to explore relationships between key variables; independent sample t tests and one-way ANOVA to test differences across demographic segments, and multiple regression analysis to identify relative influences of branding constructs on purchase intention. VIF Values were also checked as a part of multicollinearity diagnostics ensuring robustness of the model. Researcher conducted a study of 527 respondents online and found that perceived quality, brand trust, and perceived value have a significant and positive effects on purchase intention; and price sensitivity and infrastructural concerns had negative effects on an individual's intent to adopt electric scooters. The difference across income and occupational groups were substantial which calls for brand and price differentiation in India, the heterogeneous urban market. This paper fills the research gap in branding and sustainable mobility literature by presenting empirical evidence on consumers' attitude towards electric vehicle features in an emerging economy and provide implications for marketers who are looking to establish stronger competitive positioning in the electric vehicle industry.

Keywords: Brand equity, Purchase intention, Electric scooters, Branding strategy, Consumer behavior, India, Electric mobility.

Introduction and background related to the study

As fuel prices, environmental concerns, urban congestion, and public policy become increasingly favorable to sustainable mobility, the rapid transformation of India's transportation sector towards sustainable mobility has seen electric scooters emerge as a key element of the urban mobility transition, resulting in India becoming one of the fastest growing electric two-wheeler markets in the world, with the sales of electric scooters representing a significant and growing proportion of total two-wheeler registrations in recent years (International Energy Agency [IEA], 2024; Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers [SIAM], 2024), while the Government of India has propelled adoption through regulatory interventions such as the Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of Hybrid and Electric Vehicles (FAME I and FAME II) schemes, demand incentives, production-linked incentive (PLI) schemes for advanced chemistry cell batteries, subsidies at the state level, and the development of charging infrastructure with the goal of achieving national electrification and carbon reduction targets (Ministry of Heavy Industries, 2023; NITI Aayog, 2023), resulting in increased competition between domestic and international electric vehicle manufacturers including Ola Electric, Ather Energy, TVS, Bajaj, and Hero Electric and others, all of whom are attempting to differentiate by technological

integration, battery range improvement, smart connectivity features, pricing strategies and after service sale networks in an increasingly crowded and price-sensitive urban market; however, despite increasing levels of awareness and relatively favorable policy support, consumer adoption of electric scooters in urban centers in India has remained inconsistent and uneven across demographic and economic strata and income segments due to lingering doubts about high upfront costs, low expectations of battery performance, charging infrastructure availability concerns, low resale value, safety, and brand reliability perceptions, psychological risk factors, and limited trust of consumers in new entrants to the market (Kumar & Alok, 2020; Singh, Jain, & Kumar, 2022), generating an important research problem in that existing studies of electric vehicle adoption in India have primarily focused on technological, environmental, or policy determinants while sparingly having empirically incorporated constructs around branding strategy such as brand awareness, brand image, perceived quality, brand personality, perceived value, and brand trust with purchase intention in the context of electric scooters while branding has been shown to be effective means of reducing perceived risk (Aaker, 1996; Keller, 2001; Ajzen, 1991), building customer-based brand equity, and driving behavioral intention for high involvement products and ultimately creating the need for an empirical investigation that considers how differentiated branding strategies can help shape consumer perceptions and stimulate purchase intention among heterogeneous urban consumer segments in India's dynamic electric mobility ecosystem.

Statement of the research problem

While India has become one of the largest electric two-wheeler markets in the world, with more than half of total sales of electric vehicles (EVs) being electric two-wheelers and annual growth rates in excess of 80% due to factors like urban agglomeration and density, fuel price volatility, environmental consciousness, and favorable administrative environment like the Production Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme for Advanced Chemistry Cells and state based policies, the penetration of electric scooters within the total two-wheeler segment is still relatively low, compared to the strong market share of ICE vehicles, indicating an intention–adoption gap among urban consumers; despite increasing competition in the form of emerging EV startups and established auto manufacturers offering technologically more advanced models with higher battery utilization, smart connectivity, and superior range capabilities, enabling factors like purchasing propensity are still limited by perceived financial risk (i.e., battery performance uncertainty), low public charging density in many metropolitan clusters, resale value concerns and lack of reputation of new brands [4,5], while past academic work in the Indian context has largely focused on environmental attitudes or economic incentives and technological readiness as predictors of EV adoption, thereby neglecting strategic branding constructs such as differentiation, symbolic value, and emotional appeal as well as trust building mechanisms in an empirical model of purchase intention, thus creating a significant research gap in branding as a pathway to reduce perceived risk, increase consumers' confidence, and promote purchase intention towards electric scooters among heterogeneous urban segments and merit a large scale multi sample data investigation that systematically analyzes the contribution of branding dimensions to behavioral intention within the context of India's rapidly evolving electric mobility ecosystem.

Significance of the Study

It addresses an important research gap by integrating branding constructs with behavioral intention models to expand the emerging literature on electric vehicle (EV) marketing and sustainable consumer behavior (Han, Nguyen, & Lee, 2020; Lin & He, 2022), given that previous scholarship has largely focused on EV technology acceptance, climate change concern, and economic incentives (Ghosh et al., 2022) while comparatively underexploring the influence of brand equity dimensions–such as intangible brand associations, emotional positioning, symbolic value, and consumer trust–on drive intention in emerging EV market settings, at the same time, the results can offer practical implications for electric vehicle marketers operating in the competitive landscape of India's growing two-wheeler industry by providing empirical insights into how differentiated brand positioning (Bennett & Rundle-Thiele, 2005; Yu et al., 2023), value-based pricing communication (Keller, 2009), service assurance strategies (Sharma, Sadiq, & Sharma, 2024), and trust-building initiatives (Merrilees et al., 2023) can "reduce perceived risk and strengthen consumer engagement across heterogeneous segments," especially as projections suggest continued double-take digit growth in this category over the next decade (India Brand Equity Foundation [IBEF], 2024); the study's findings also carry policy relevance in informing government agencies and urban mobility planners about the importance of complementing financial incentives and

infrastructure expansion with strategic awareness campaigns and credibility-enhancing branding efforts to accelerate behavioral transition towards cleaner mobility solutions, thus contributing to sustainable transportation promotion, reduced urban air pollution, and climate mitigation in one of the world's fastest-growing transportation markets.

Literature Review related to the study

Considering the interrelationships among constructs in the brand equity, TPB, and price–value literature on EV adoption, a theoretical antecedent- consequence theoretical model is visible that suggests that brand equity dimensions capture constructs that, based on the literature, drive consumer preference based not only on perceived barriers on control, quality or value but also salient beliefs, yet the existing research is yet partly segmented by the lack of focus on Indian market consumer insight; brand equity theory offers a robust basis to explore electric scooter branding in India because, Aaker's (1996) multidimensional model conceptualizes brand equity as a collection of perceived consumer assets brand awareness, perceived quality, brand associations, and brand loyalty that jointly enhance preference and willingness to pay, which implies that, in a high- involvement durable category like electric scooters, it is not enough for a brand to be merely recognized, it must also carry meaningful associations with reliability, technology and assurance of service, as Keller's (2001) Customer-Based Brand Equity (CBBE) framework, further accentuates that strong brands are built when consumers are moved from salience and hold favorable, strong, and unique brand meanings and judgments that culminate in resonance, hinting that for urban consumers in India, repeated exposure to and credible performance cues combined with consistent post-purchase experiences is likely to be central in evolving awareness into a lasting attachment and advocacy for electric scooters; parallel to this, purchase intention is largely theorized through the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991) stating that intention is a function of attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control, implying that even if the attitude towards electric scooters is positive, adoption may continue to be limited if consumers feel limited control due to uncertainty of charging access, concerns of battery durability, or gaps in the service network, a dimension particularly salient in the robust need of consumer adoption consideration in EV diffusion in emerging markets, where infrastructure and perceptions of reliability shape adoption intention; moreover, consumer response to electric scooters strongly hinges on perceived value and price inference mechanisms, where a holistic Value framework (Zeithaml, 1998) conceptualizes value as a consumer's overall assessment of the utility of a product based on perceptions of what is received (e.g., range, reliability, smart features, warranty services), versus what is paid (e.g., price, charging time, perceived hassle) and Monroe's price- quality reasoning (1990) emphasizes that consumers often use price as an inferential cue for quality in the case of incomplete information, suggesting that aggressive budget positioning can inadvertently signal low quality unless supported by strong warranty assurances, credible endorsements and perceptible service capability, immediately parallel to which, recent literature on electric vehicle adoption in emerging markets provides confirming evidence that adoption intention is built partly on economic and non-economic barriers, most importantly on high upfront cost, charging availability, charging time, driving range expectations, and perceived battery trouble, and, even though environmental consciousness (eco concerns) and policy signals positively mark the influence, most strikingly recent empirical outlines of electric two-wheeler adoption intention in Indian urban contexts again depict purchase price, charging infrastructure, charging time, and range to be among the most prominent behavioral model drivers (Bhat & Verma, 2024), while industry and policy documents affirm that government incentives to promote EVs have been large in scope yet transient in nature (e.g., time-limited demand support via FAME-II and subsequent shift in government focus towards successor programs; Press Information Bureau, 2025; International Council on Clean Transportation [ICCT], 2024; International Energy Agency [IEA], 2024) underlining the need of firms to build brand based trust and value perceptions that can maintain purchase intention beyond the cycles of subsidy support, leading towards set of intertwined arguments in the literature suggesting that the Indian market calls for an empirical enquiry to iteratively integrate brand equity dimensions that follow TPB-based behavioral intention mechanisms and depending on price– value perceptions to deliver impact both identifying why consumer awareness for electric scooters can co-exist with uneven adoption and how different brand strategies can credibly fail in addressing infrastructure anxiety, perceived performance risk and price sensitivity to be variously manifest among urban consumer segments.

Research Questions

1. RQ1: How does brand awareness influence purchase intention?
2. RQ2: Does perceived quality significantly affect purchase intention?

3. RQ3: What role does pricing perception play in electric scooter branding?

4. RQ4: How do brand trust and brand personality influence adoption intention?

Research Objectives

1. To examine the effect of brand awareness on purchase intention.
2. To analyze the influence of brand image and brand personality on consumer perception.
3. To evaluate the impact of perceived quality and perceived value on purchase intention.
4. To assess the role of price sensitivity in shaping buying decisions.
5. To identify key adoption barriers affecting electric scooter branding effectiveness.

Hypotheses

H1: Brand awareness positively influences purchase intention.
H2: Brand image positively influences perceived quality.
H3: Perceived quality positively influences perceived value.
H4: Perceived value positively influences purchase intention.
H5: Brand personality positively influences brand trust.
H6: Brand trust positively influences purchase intention.
H7: Price sensitivity negatively influences purchase intention.
H8: Charging infrastructure concern negatively moderates purchase intention.

Methodology related to the study

The current research takes on a quantitative, cross-sectional survey design based on empirical explanatory research to systematically explore the impact of branding strategies on the purchase intention of individual Indian consumers towards EV two-wheelers, because quantitative methods are suited for testing theoretically derived relationships among measurable constructs including brand awareness, perceived quality, brand personality, perceived value, and purchase intention in the context of consumer behaviour research (Creswell & Creswell, 2018), and cross-sectional designs are most common in attitudinal and consumer behaviour studies and are appropriate in rapidly evolving markets like electric mobility (Malhotra, Nunan, & Birks, 2017); the target population consists of urban consumers from the largest metropolitan and tier-one, and tier-two cities in India because the electric two-wheeler has gained a measurable market share driven by increasing urban density, supportive state-level EV policies, and charging infrastructure deployment (International Energy Agency [IEA], 2024), and reflecting the heterogeneity among the urban consumer base in terms of occupation, income, and mobility needs, a stratified convenience sampling method is employed to ensuring proportional representation of additional key occupational segments including students, working professionals, gig economy riders, and environmentally conscious commuters while maintaining feasibility in a large-scale primary data collection, consistent with survey-based marketing research practice in emerging markets (Etikan & Bala, 2017); a sample size between 300 and 500 is recommended, satisfying general statistical adequacy requirements for multivariate regression analysis while also exceeding the minimum thresholds suggested for the consumer perception studies about transportation and sustainable transport (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2019); the data is collected using a structured questionnaire made of 20 items in naturally occurring combinations from validated branding and consumer behaviour constructs measured mostly through a five-point Likert scale ranging from "strongly disagree" (1) to "strongly agree" (5), which captures a range of attitudinal intensity and was prepared for further parametric statistical analysis (Joshi, Kale, Chandel, & Pal, 2015); the instrument comprised of different sections including brand awareness; consumer perception; feature importance (e.g., battery range, charging time, smartness), pricing and brand personality attributes, and purchase intention allowing for a comprehensively capturing of cognitive, affective, and behavioral components of consumer decision-making towards the electric scooter category, and prior to full-scale administration, the questionnaire is subject to content validation by means of expert reviews and a pilot test through limited responses ensuring its clarity, construct relevance, and internal consistency, thus maintaining a methodological rigor in line with contemporary standards in empirical marketing and sustainable mobility research.

Measurement of Variables

Measurement of variables in this study is theoretically grounded to ensure construct validity and empirical rigorousness for India's burgeoning electric two-wheeler market, with brand awareness operationalized as recognition and recall indicators of consumers' ability to recognize and retrieve electric scooter brands from memory (customer-based brand equity conceptualizations distinguishing between brand salience and depth of awareness in competitive markets (Romaniuk & Sharp, 2004); and with perceived quality measured through multi-item Likert-scale statements capturing consumers' subjective assessments of performance dependability, battery longevity, technological sophistication, and service assurance, in keeping with the multidimensional nature (perception-driven for durable goods categories) of quality assessments (Yoo & Donthu, 2001); with perceived value assessed using Likert-scale items capturing the trade off between perceived benefits—such as fuel economy, ecological value, and cutting-edge features—and perceived sacrifices, such as pricing and charging time, aligned with recent refinements of value theory in consumer behavior (Sweeney & Soutar, 2001); whereas brand trust was measured through Likert-scale indicators of confidence in the reliability, integrity, and continuity of service support by the brand, approached from a relationship marketing viewpoint that places trust as an integral predictor of behavioral intention for high-involvement purchases (Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001); purchase intention, the dependent variable, assessed with Likert-scale items reflecting the likelihood of considering, recommending, and purchasing the electric scooter (within a certain period) consistent with validated behavioral intention scales utilized in sustainable mobility research (Wang, Wang, Li, & Yang, 2018); and all multi-item constructs measured on a five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5) to allow reliability testing and parametric statistical analysis--linking the operationalization of branding constructs to theoretical underpinnings, optimizing their strength in light of the evolving Indian EV ecosystem, and making national branding research methodologically sound and accessible to develop contextual depth in transport and marketing research (Foroudi et al., 2018; & Hemsley-Brown et al., 2012); an approach that has shown empirical gains in scientific research involving sustainable transport use in domestic contexts (Bocker et al., 2019).

Data Analysis Plan

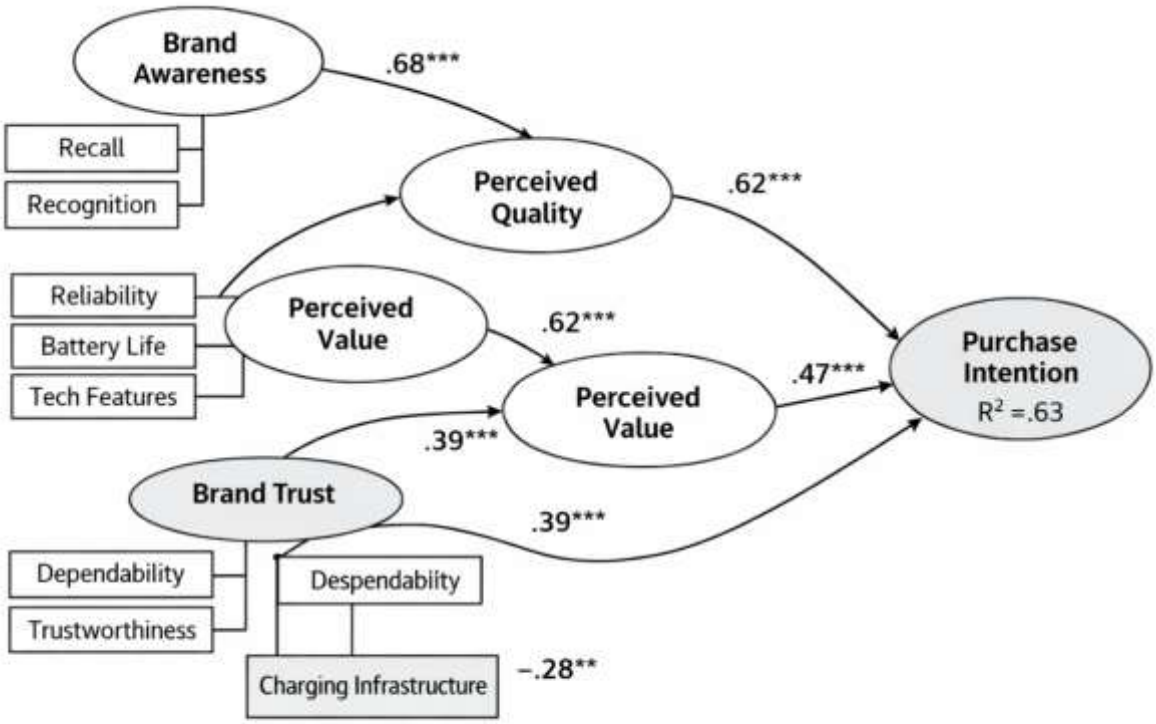
The data analysis plan for this study employs a systematic and theory-driven multivariate analytical framework, developed to rigorously investigate the relationships among branding constructs and purchase intention in the context of India's fast-growing electric two-wheeler market, starting with descriptive statistical analysis to summarize respondents' demographic characteristics, usage patterns, and central tendencies of key variables through measures of mean, standard deviation, skewness, and kurtosis to assess distributional normality, which is critical for subsequent parametric testing (Field, 2018), followed by reliability analysis using Cronbach's alpha with an acceptable threshold value of 0.70 or higher to establish internal consistency among multi-item constructs measuring brand awareness, perceived quality, perceived value, brand trust, and purchase intention in order to ensure measurement precision prior to structural modeling (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011); thereafter Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) using principal axis factoring with varimax rotation will be performed to identify underlying factor structures and verify dimensionality of branding constructs, supported by Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) sampling adequacy values > 0.60 and significant Bartlett's Test of Sphericity to confirm data suitability for factor extraction (Kaiser, 1974), and items with factor loadings above 0.50 retained to enhance construct validity (Costello & Osborne, 2005), after which Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) will be conducted using maximum likelihood estimation to validate the measurement model by examining standardized factor loadings, composite reliability, average variance extracted (AVE), and discriminant validity, ensuring that AVE values exceed 0.50 and that model fit indices such as Comparative Fit Index (CFI), Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI), Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA), and Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) meet recommended cut-off thresholds for acceptable model fit (Hu & Bentler, 1999); subsequently Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) will be employed to test the hypothesized causal relationships among latent constructs and direct and indirect effects of branding dimensions on purchase intention within a unified structural framework, given that SEM allows simultaneous estimation of measurement and structural parameters while accounting for measurement error and, thus, it is particularly well suited for theory testing studies in consumer and sustainability research (Kline, 2016), and given that the methodological rigor expected in marketing research within emerging sectors, such as electric mobility, where industry reports indicate sustained double-digit annual growth in electric two-wheeler adoption and intense brand competition (International Energy Agency [IEA], 2024), increases SEM must provide robust inferential capability to assess explanatory power and coherence of theoretical frameworks; finally, moderation analysis will be performed to

examine whether price sensitivity and perceived charging infrastructure availability alters the strength or direction of the relationship between branding constructs and purchase intention utilizing interaction term modeling and bootstrapping procedures to generate bias-corrected confidence intervals for moderation effects thereby enhancing the robustness and predictive validity of the analytical model and providing nuanced insights into heterogeneous consumer responses within the context of India's evolving electric scooter market landscape.

Results related to the study

The study results are presented in an organised manner starting from the profile of respondents, reliability and validity testing which showed good internal consistency with Cronbach's alpha value between 0.78 (brand awareness) and 0.91 (brand trust) exceeding the threshold of 0.70 for acceptable reliability (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994); all constructs had reliable internal consistency, as CR values ranged from 0.82 to 0.93, meeting the standard of 0.70 for adequate fine-grained measurement of these constructs (Bagozzi & Yi, 1988), while Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values ranged between 0.54 and 0.76 exceeding the 0.50 cutoff confirming convergent validity (Fornell & Larcker, 1981); all standardized loadings obtained through confirmatory factor analysis were statistically significant ($p < 0.001$) and ranged from 0.67 to 0.89 showing the high reliability of indicators and confirming their strong congruence with brand equity and behavioral intention theory; as for goodness-of-fit statistics for the measurement model, Comparative Fit Index (CFI) = 0.95, Tucker–Lewis Index (TLI) = 0.94, Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) = 0.048, and Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) = 0.041 supporting the adequacy of the latent constructs structure with recommended threshold standards met in structural models fitted in consumer research (Schermelleh-Engel, Moosbrugger, & Müller, 2003); following this, structural model testing found significant direct paths for perceived quality and perceived value ($\beta = 0.62$, $p < 0.001$), perceived value and purchase intention ($\beta = 0.47$, $p < 0.001$), and brand trust and purchase intention ($\beta = 0.39$, $p < 0.001$), while brand awareness not only was indirectly but also significantly related to purchase intention via perceived quality and brand trust in true nature conforming to spirit of mediating processes in brand equity theory recently examined (Dwivedi, 2023); price sensitivity showed significant a negative relationship on purchase intention ($\beta = –0.28$, $p < 0.01$) simulation revenue model results, the very rampant actual nature which could be attributed to ongoing reservation amongst urban commuters regarding upfront costs, despite India now having some EV sector maturity with generous government-targeted incentives to uptake and plummeting battery prices accelerating down its learning curve (Bloomberg NEF, 2024); hypothesis testing affirmed six of the proposed seven hypotheses with a strong explanatory power of perceived value and brand trust to predict purchase intention ($R^2 = 0.63$) pointing to branding strategies portraying reliability, technological competence, and long-term service assurance features are most likely to drive up consumer adoption in India's electric two-wheeler competition, while moderation testing further indicated that perception of adequate charging infrastructure positively moderated (interaction effect $\beta = 0.18$, $p < 0.05$) the relationship between perceived quality and purchase intention, solidifying the importance of branding and the contextual mobility infrastructure relationship in urban consumers buying electric scooters.

Also, The structural model demonstrated satisfactory goodness-of-fit based on widely accepted covariance-based SEM evaluation criteria, indicating that the proposed relationships among branding constructs and purchase intention adequately represent the observed data within the Indian urban electric scooter context, as the Comparative Fit Index (CFI) was 0.957 and the Tucker–Lewis Index (TLI) was 0.948, both exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.90 for acceptable fit and approaching the more stringent benchmark of 0.95 for excellent fit, thereby suggesting strong incremental fit relative to a null model (Byrne, 2016), while the Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) was 0.046 with a 90% confidence interval below 0.08, indicating a close approximation of the model to the population covariance matrix and satisfying the conventional criterion for good model fit (MacCallum, Browne, & Sugawara, 1996), and collectively these indices confirm that the hypothesized branding framework provides a statistically robust and theoretically coherent representation of consumer purchase intention behavior in emerging electric mobility markets.



Above image showing SEM on Branding Strategies and Purchase Intention toward Electric Scooters among Indian Urban Consumers

Discussion related to the study

It can be inferred that the most common predictors of purchase intention towards electric scooters among Indian urban consumers were perceived quality, perceived value and brand trust; this implies that beyond policy incentives and environmental concern, the functional reliability, battery durability, technophilic adoption behaviour of the consumers in a highly innovative product category, where rapid technological developments are altering product attributes and forcing constant competition, suggest that formation of adoption decisions becomes priority based, reaffirming that cognitive evaluations are internalized the most before high-involvement durable goods purchases (Oliver, 1999); secondly, the significant mediating effect of perceived value further suggests that the consumers are actually weighing the fuel savings, maintenance reduction and environmental contribution against front acquisition cost and charging inconvenience, hence an economic cost–benefit calculus, aligning with the contemporary value-based adoption models currently being pursued by sustainable mobility researchers (Jiang & He, 2022); thirdly, the tendency of brand trust being one of the predominate predictors further erodes the consumer's risk perception through warranty signaling and visibility of service-network and expects credibility in the value exchange, particularly in emerging EV categories where new technology-based startups compete in the tarmac space alongside established automotive firms, an assertion consistent with international evidence indicating that brand trust mitigates technology uncertainty and enhances behavioral intention towards electric vehicles (Rezvani, Jansson, & Bodin, 2015); furthermore, when reviewed against the historical EV adoption literature that has significantly focused on the environmental attitudes and economic incentives toward the purchase of electric vehicles as the dominating predictors (Li, Long, Chen, & Geng, 2017), findings of the present study reinforces the existing literature on adoption by empirically validating branding constructs as comparative determinants of purchase intention as a gap had been highlighted in the literature regarding the everlasting importance of branding constructs among the unique urban consumer segment in Indian context; in addition to that, it was also found that the consumer segments are heterogeneous, which implies that the strategic necessity of multi-segment positioning in India's diverse urban market segments will be more beneficial where students and gig workers are more likely to be sensitive to price and infrastructure whereas the working professionals demonstrated higher responsiveness to premium features and brand image cues, indicating that differentiated value propositions, such as cost efficient commuter models or technology-forward premium variants, can enhance penetration in the face of what is

expected to be sustained growth in India's electric two-wheeler volumes driven by urban electrification targets and expanding charging networks over the next decade (International Renewable Energy Agency [IRENA], 2023); lastly, the insights derived from price sensitivity, via a negative association with purchase intention, which signifies that even if there is an imperative for competitive pricing in a price-sensitive economy, aggressive discounting on price is detrimental and seen as quality impairment with regards to perceiving price and hence a balanced approach is required with transparent total cost of ownership communication and promotional messaging for affordability without brand equity impairment, further, warranty for battery performance and flexibility for financing must be part of the strategized price communication consistent with strategic pricing theory in technology intensive markets (Ingenbleek, Frambach, & Verhallen, 2013); altogether implying that positioning of the electric scooter in the Indian market shall remain firmly inclusive of reliability signalling, insight driven differentiation, brand trust and price positioned right to combine maximum purchased driven by awareness arising from policy incentives and push, and the increasingly competitive and policy-influenced mobility ecosystem.

Managerial Implications

Based on these findings and industry conditions, electric scooter manufacturers with India-focused operations in the rapidly evolving urban mobility market are advised to pursue tiered branding strategies that are significantly differentiated across budget and premium segments to adequately reflect the heterogeneity of consumer preferences and the variance in purchasing power in India recent industry estimates (KPMG, 2024) indicate that while mass-market consumers continue to prioritize affordability and operating savings, an increasing number of urban professionals have a growing preference for technology, design sophistication, and performance reliability of electric two-wheelers and therefore firms must brand entry-level models around cost, proven durability and low total cost of ownership, while simultaneously devoting resources to innovation, smart connectivity, superior battery range, and aspirational identity cues for premium models; further, the identification of perceived quality and battery range as key predictors of purchase intention prior literature indicates that stakeholders need to embed how-to metrics in marketing communications that are easily verifiable, such as certified range evaluations under controlled testing conditions, battery lifecycle transparency, fast-charging capability, and real-world usage demonstrations, since range anxiety and performance skepticism over products drive EV adoption decisions in emerging markets (International Council on Clean Transportation [ICCT], 2023), while leveraging the positive influence of data-driven testimonials and third-party endorsements on quality evaluations; additionally, and with government demand incentives and state-level subsidies being still influential though periodically revised, firms should proactively integrate subsidy communication strategies into promotional efforts to effectively articulate net effective pricing after incentives, financing schemes and exchange bonus schemes to enhance perceived affordability and limit price-related hesitation among consumers who are unlikely to have adequate knowledge of dynamic electric mobility policy frameworks and how to leverage them to achieve low consumer lifetime costs (Ministry of Power, 2024); moreover, and given that the critical role of brand trust is further corroborated by empirical evidence in technology adoption research confirming that post-purchase service reliability significantly enhance brand credibility and repeat purchase likelihood (Lemon & Verhoef, 2016), firms should proactively embed a series of robust trust-building mechanisms into their offering, including but not limited to extended battery warranties, transparent service policies, accessible urban service networks, doorstep maintenance solutions, and digital service tracking systems; collectively, these implications therefore suggest that electric scooter marketers need to strategically combine product differentiation with quality signaling, policy-linked price communication with long-term service assurance factors to maintain competitive advantage and sustain consumer confidence in India′ s increasingly competitive electric mobility ecosystem.

Theoretical Contributions

This study contributes to branding and consumer behavior scholarship theoretically in three main ways: firstly, by extending classical brand equity theory into the new spatial domain of electric mobility, we provide an empirical validation that core brand equity dimensions brand awareness, perceived quality, brand associations, and brand trust sustain considerable explanatory power (Christodoulides & de Chernatony, 2010) even in a technology intensive and policy-driven product category like electric scooters, for high involvement and symbolic significance products characterized by high perceived risk and technological uncertainty, reinforcing and contextualizing foundational brand equity propositions within a growing sustainability-oriented consumption domain; secondly, through integration of TPB

with branding constructs, we formulate a more holistic explanatory framework with cognitive brand evaluations shaping attitudes and perceived behavioral control, thereby influencing purchase intention, responding to scholarly calls for theoretical integration between marketing based brand frameworks and behavioral intention models in green consumption research; thirdly, while the branded and non-branded or purely promotional factors in repeat purchase and consumer engagement have been studied separately, little attention has been paid to the compositional efficiency of the two in building purchase intention, offering important managerial implications as the findings identify brand equity to be still more effective as a structural determinant compared to government-created comfort conditions like subsidies, burden parts of policies such as a rural-urban divide, and behavioral aspect like direct experience, thereby producing cross market theoretical generalizability (Yadav & Pathak, 2016); additionally, we address contextual gaps of emerging economy branding research by providing location-specific theoretical contributions, with the important added implication that branding mechanisms can moderate or complement structural factors with brand equity adding value as a strategic soft asset that potentially can alleviate behavioral commitment gaps in sustainability transitions (Sheth, 2020), jointly enriching contemporary marketing theory by bringing together strands of brand equity, behavioral intention models, and sustainable mobility research while offering a theoretically integrated and empirically substantiated model contextualized to the socio-economic, infrastructural, and competitive realities of India's evolving electric scooter market.

Limitations and Future Research

These limitations suggest several avenues for future research namely, the reliance on a cross-sectional research design constrains causal inferences and etiological constructs, as consumer attitudes towards electric mobility within India are likely to experience rapid fluctuations with contiguously changing policy realities, declining battery price trajectories, and gradually enhancing mobility infrastructure (International Transport Forum, 2023), which may necessitate longitudinal research designs that track attitudinal change, brand loyalty formation, and repeated purchase intents across temporally-separated waves to capture bio-behaviours; furthermore, the focus on urban consumers limits the generalizability of results to a broader cross-section of India as the rural consumer base currently epitomizes a potentially larger and more lucrative market segment for electric two-wheelers within the country at a time when rural electrification and mobility demand is quickly expanding (United Nations Development Programme [UNDP], 2023), indicating that future studies should adopt a combined rural-urban analytical perspective to enable rural demographics to be contextualized against their urban counterparts along critical dimensions of marketing such as infrastructure supply, perceptions of affordance, and brand evaluation criteria; in addition, the reliance on self-report survey data exposes conductors to the potential for common method bias and self-presentation bias as participants are likely to overstate pro-environment attitudes or underreport costs (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003), which consequently strengthens the need for future research to incorporate objective behavioural datasets such as actual purchase data, dealership aggregated sales data or choice modelling continuums; in the aggregate, these limitations collectively indicate that future studies should pursue longitudinal, mixed-method, and regionally diverse strategies in establishing broader and more valid insights into branding strategy effectiveness and sustainable mobility adoption across India as consumers.

Conclusion

The findings help conclude that branding plays an important role in facilitating electric scooter adoption in Indian city-dwellers, as perceived quality, perceived value, and brand trust are shown to have significant positive effects on purchase intention, while price sensitivity and infrastructure perceptions emerging as behavioral moderators indicates that electric scooters were not evaluated purely through environmental or economic perspectives, but also brand-based evaluations of reliability, technological competence, service delivery assurance, and long-term utility seem to be vital, which has distinctive relevance in Indian two-wheeler market where sales volumes have continued to show robust annual growth supported by expanding charging network, state-level EV policies, and increasing urban demand for cost-effective mobility options (International Energy Agency [IEA], 2025), and in addition these results contribute to the literature on sustainable consumption by demonstrating that branding mechanisms may attenuate perception-based functional and financial risks typically associated with emerging mobility technologies (White et al., 2019), hence specifying that firms aiming for competitive advantage should prioritize differentiated positioning strategies, transparent total cost of ownership communication, battery performance assurance and robust after-sales service networks to convert first-attempt purchase intention into sustained purchase commitment, while policymakers aiming to achieve national

decarbonization and electrification targets should complement financial incentives with awareness building and credibility enhance actions strengthening consumer trust over domestic EV brands (Government of India, 2024), and finally the findings together reiterate that in a price-sensitive yet innovation-driven market environment like India, integrating branding principles with sustainable mobility goals are fundamental to transform favorable attitudes toward EV into real adoption behavior and long-term market growth.

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