

STUDY OF THE TRENDS AND CUSTOMER BUYING BEHAVIOUR IN THE AUTOMOBILE (CAR) INDUSTRY

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ABSTRACT

As a result of new technology, changing customer tastes, and increased awareness of environmental issues, the automotive industry is experiencing rapid change. The most recent tendencies and buying habits of consumers in the car sector are examined in this study. Key areas of emphasis include the following: the growth of autonomous driving technology, the effects of environmental initiatives, the significance of digitalization in the purchasing process, and the uptake of electric cars (EVs). This research employed a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative analysis of market data with qualitative insights derived from interviews and surveys with consumers. This research delves into the elements that influence automobile buyers' decisions by analyzing data from many sources, such as industry journals, customer reviews, and market surveys.

Those involved in the automotive sector can use this study to their advantage by learning more about consumer habits and preferences; this will help them adapt to changing market conditions and satisfy picky consumers.

Keywords: Automobile Industry, Trends, Customer Buying Behavior, Electric Vehicles, Autonomous Driving, Sustainability, Digitalization.

INTRODUCTION

In our core, we are all consumers. Businesses provide a vast array of products and services, and consumers' buying habits reflect that. His appellation of "King" is derived from the fact that, in the modern market, consumers play the role of both monarch and driver. When choosing a brand or product, buyers are primarily influenced by their personal preferences. The ability of the marketing manager to understand the buying patterns of the target market is crucial in modern marketing (Wibawa et al., 2018). The complex minds of customers are hard to forecast because each person is a unique blend of their genes, upbringing, and life experiences. The stakes are high: doing it right may net you millions, while getting it wrong could lead to ruin. We are talking about very big stakes here. A marketer's success hinges on his or her ability to decipher the "black box" that is the buyer's mind (Dhanabalan et al., 2018). The concept of "buying behavior" remains central to marketing, despite its evolution. Understanding consumer buying behavior is essential since it greatly influences product purchases. The list of wants and

needs that everyone has is endless. Vehicle models are not an outlier. Because car designs and features are always evolving, new models hit the market nearly every quarter. According to Monga et al. (2012), market research is a great tool for gaining insight into the desires and requirements of your target market and discovering items that possess appealing qualities.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In their analysis of digital data pertaining to India's economy that covers a considerable amount of time, Charan et al. (2015) discovered several concerning patterns. Roughly 243 million individuals in our country use the internet. Recent advances in hardware, software, networks, operating systems, processors, and operator techniques have put India on the verge of solving the problem of delivering affordable, user-friendly, and lightning-fast internet access. The average price of mobile phones is going down since more and more people can buy them and they can watch more high-quality video. One sector that is seeing the consequences of the digital revolution on customer behavior is the Indian automotive industry.

This covers every step, from first thought to the final purchase and beyond. This essay will examine the most popular online medium for contacting prospective automobile purchasers. Digital media order takers and shoppers' demographics, background, and hobbies are also explored in the article. The research also aims to discover how car companies' internet marketing techniques impact the National Capital Region and Delhi, India. The key data needed to accomplish these goals was collected using standardized questionnaires. People who own cars and live in the Delhi and National Capital Region areas were polled. Statistical methods such as t-tests and chi-square analysis were employed to examine the data. We present the results in a transparent manner to assist you understand the behavior of digital consumers. To find out if the service component has a big impact on the electric car industry and consumers' choices to buy, Cherubini et al. (2015) conducted a study. Because of this, the "Product-Service System" (PSS) requires vigilant administration. This article aims to 1) catalog the key service systems (PSS) of the electric car market and 2) catalog the crucial success factors (CSFs) of the campaign. Energy, on-board electronics, infrastructure, and vehicle were the four sub-systems that emerged from the literature review. A total of five managers were surveyed after the organizations from each PSS sub-system were chosen. Cognitive mapping was the method we employed to analyze the information. Three CSFs make up each of the four subsystems: the vehicle subsystem, which contains the product-service system bundle and value proposition; the electronic on-board subsystem, which contains advanced navigation systems; the infrastructure subsystem, which contains incentives, advocacy campaigns, and alternative transport systems; and the energy and infrastructure subsystem, which contains standardization, portability, and proximity to a charging station. Last but not least, player alliances encompass all four sub-systems. Businesses should immediately address the issue of relationships, as shown by the relevance/manageability matrix. Rather than approaching the problem from an industry sector viewpoint, the study introduces a novel approach to identifying CSFs through PSS analysis. How Indian consumers felt about online vehicle ads was the subject of the study conducted by Sinha et al. (2016). As a result of the deluge of information

accessible online, consumers are shifting their focus from the "push" to the "pull" side of advertising, which is causing a rapid shift in consumer behavior. This article takes a look at how people view digital ads by utilizing the "Theory of planned behavior" as its foundation. The results show that most people have a positive impression of digital advertising and marketing in general. Many, however, remain skeptical about the accuracy and intricacy of data accessible online. Customers can easily compare several aspects to those of competitors using digital ads.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Figure 2 shows the results of this research's exhaustive and methodical investigation of the habits and routines of Indian car purchasers. First, we needed to do a thorough literature review. Our current objective was to collect up-to-date information on the preferences and habits of Indian car consumers based on statistics, research, and data. Establishing a reliable collection of information and determining the most important factors influencing consumer choices were the primary objectives.

A survey questionnaire was designed following the completion of the literature study. Researching the current preferences and decision-making variables of the target audience in relation to vehicle sales was the primary goal of the study. We used Google Forms, a well-known and user-friendly online survey tool, to build the poll. To ensure it would gather sufficient valuable information to illuminate consumer patterns, the questionnaire's design was meticulously planned.

Several methods were used to send it to possible respondents when it was finished. Some of these mediums included Facebook, WhatsApp, and email. In addition, numerous means were used to disseminate printed questionnaires in an effort to reach a diverse demographic of respondents. Every one of these strategy created a representative sample and participation was up.

We prepared the survey data for analysis after compiling it. It was time to get enough replies to be sure the results were reliable. The meticulous organizing and recording of the responses facilitated the research and interpretation of the data.

Figure 3 displays the results, which reveal that 82.5% of the respondents were in the 18–35 age bracket, with 9.55% being in the older age bracket. The remaining 77% are either retired or enrolled in some kind of educational program, as seen in Figure 4. The respondent's family income bracket is shown in Figure

FINDINGS

For reasons such as these, the automotive sector is experiencing a period of immense change: It is important to take environmental elements into account: More and more people are opting for electric cars (EVs), hybrids, and fuel-efficient variants due to environmental concerns and the increasing cost of petroleum. The importance of features like in-car entertainment systems, internet connectivity, and autonomous driving capabilities in consumer decisions is growing due to technological improvements. As an alternative to buying a car outright, consumers are looking into subscription models and car-sharing services. Modern consumers often do extensive research online before visiting a dealership; in fact, several manufacturers even provide online buying choices. Some important things to remember regarding customer habits are: Value vs. price: The majority of consumers wish to purchase a new vehicle that strikes a balance among price, features, and maintenance expenses. Two of the most important things to consider when purchasing a car are the safety features and how comfortable the ride is. Particularly in the high-end automotive industry, the reputation and dependability of the brand have a significant impact on how customers perceive it. Changing demographics: Millennials and Gen Zers value technological innovation and environmental friendliness more than price and practicality, according to some baby boomers. The digital environment influences customers' choices to purchase automobiles in numerous ways, including online reviews, social media recommendations, and influencer marketing. Because these changes are so consequential, car companies will need to adjust to:

Putting our consumers' needs first in terms of sustainability: Creating a plethora of electric and hybrid automobiles with enhanced recharge capacities and longer driving ranges. Research into autonomous driving, enhanced

5. The majority of the people that fill out the survey have yearly salaries between 100,000 and 500,000 rupees. Nearly a quarter of this group earns over Rs 100,000 every year. Roughly half of India's population makes between half a million and one million rupees each year.

connectivity features, and user-friendly in-car entertainment systems is supported by technology integration. Offer subscription and car-sharing services with conventional sales to create a more flexible ownership model. Adopting digital transformation means making it easy to research and buy cars online with features like virtual showrooms and payment options. Businesses in the automotive industry may remain competitive and meet the changing demands of the market by closely monitoring these trends and consumer preferences.

CONCLUSION

It is possible to use the provided data to infer the habits and preferences of the Indian customers who purchased a vehicle. The results and suggestions are summarized here:

- Societal and demographic factors: People between the ages of 18 and 35 made up the majority of the respondents, and they had a lot of money to spend. The varied origins and life experiences of the respondents are highlighted by the fact that a significant number of them were either retired or were enrolled in an educational program. As a result of the wide range of income levels covered, most households' annual salaries fell somewhere between 100,000 and 1,000,000 rupees.

The survey revealed that not everyone has a car, which could lead to new opportunities in terms of preference and ownership. The demand for vehicles that are both aesthetically pleasing and functionally sound was evident in the popularity of sedans, hatchbacks, and SUVs. Based on the poll results, Maruti, Hyundai, and Honda are the top three most purchased brands in the country.

The majority of respondents still prefer conventional fuel types like diesel and gasoline based on their assessment of the brand and kind of engine. The huge impact that consumers' perceptions of brands have on their purchase choices emphasizes the

importance of branding and marketing strategies in the automotive sector.

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