BRAND PREFERENCE TOWARDS SCOOTERS AMONG WOMEN CONSUMERS IN COIMBATORE CITY

Dr (Mrs.) Padmasani, Assistant Professor

School of Commerce, Bharathiar University

Coimbatore – 46.

Ms. Remya. V, Ph.D (FT) Scholar

School of Commerce, Bharathiar University

Coimbatore – 46.

Ms. M. Ishwarya, M.Phil (PT) Scholar

School of Commerce, Bharathiar University

Coimbatore – 46.

ABSTRACT

The roles of women in the society have changed tremendously in this 21st century. Apart from managing the household they have spared time to work for their families which have changed their perspective towards things. Most of the marketers know that the needs of women are different and it has become necessary for them to have a deep understanding of how and why they are different. The purpose of this study is to ascertain the key factors influencing the women respondents brand preference in selection of their scooter. The result of Exploratory Factor Analysis revealed five factors namely Comfort, Efficiency, Affordability, Familiarity and Quality of Service as the determinants of preference.

Keywords: Brand preference, Exploratory Factor Analysis, ANOVA, Marketing Strategies.

Introduction

Women are leading in every field of study as the literacy rate and working rate have increased since Independence. It was very difficult for them to move from one place to another, to make their mobility easier the marketers thought of introducing less weight and gearless scooters. Now-a-days, there are number of models available in the markets and in order to sustain in the present market it has become essential for the marketers to know the pattern of consumer brand preferences. Brand preference is nothing a measure of brand loyalty in which consumers will choose a particular brand in presence of competing brands. A brand saves consumer's time in choosing their products. Hence, the analysis of brand preference is an important area for the marketers to develop the marketing strategies for their brands. Therefore, to shed light in this context the following study was undertaken.

Review of Literature

Anandh (2014) in his study identified the factors affecting consumer's brand preference of small cars in Chennai. The majority of consumers prefer Maruthi Suzuki brand of small car. His results shows that Value, Comfortness, Efficiency and Need are positively influencing the consumers brand preference and overall satisfaction about small cars and he suggested that marketers should satisfy consumer by selling low-priced, fuel-efficient small cars to see large volumes of sales.

Prasanna Mohan et al (2013) in their study identified the factors influencing customers' brand preferences of the economy segment SUV's and MUV's. They found that the preference are influenced by product reliability, monetary factor, trendy appeal, frequency of non-price promotions offered, trustworthiness and customer feeling or association towards brand.

Kannusamy (2010) made an attempt to study Brand preference of two wheelers, problems and satisfaction level of consumers and identified that consumers prefer their favourable brand in two wheeler on the basis of price, quality, advertisement, style, color and resale value.

Venela (2009) has attempted to analyse various factors affecting the purchasing decision in India rural market .He concluded that most of the rural consumers are influenced by quality, features and brand image of two wheelers.

Chidambaram et.al (2004) studied factors which influence the brand preference of the customers while they take decision to buy passenger cars. Within this framework the study reveals that customers give more importance to fuel efficiency than other factors. They believe that the brand name tells them something about quality, utility, technology and the like. They prefer to purchase the passenger cars which offer high fuel efficiency, good quality, technology, durability and reasonable price.

Jatinder Chhabra (2003) had done a research on the factors affecting the purchase behavior of motorcycle and the results revealed that the motorcycle market in India is increasing and Hero Honda had been mainly selling on the economy platform. Hero Honda introduced a number of models, with high fuel efficiency. For the person who was looking for a light blend of power, style and economy the right brand was Bajaj.

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Statement of the Problem

In 21st century, women is economically empowered as the proportion of working women is increasing, which has shown a dramatic effect on purchasing patterns of any product. Therefore every manufacturer has to know about the psychology of the consumers especially women and their brand preference towards the vehicle as the competition is intense. To suit the varied requirements of diverse users, manufactures produce different models of vehicles and the product (i.e. scooter) has gone for a complete revamp and the geared scooters have almost been phased out. Due to these changes in the scooter segment, it has become imperative to have a fresh perspective of urban female consumers and the key factors to prefer the various brands. In order to design marketing program to suit this segment this study is undertaken.

Objective of the Study

The following are the objective of the present study

1. To profile the women respondents of Coimbatore city

2. To identify the key factors influencing the women respondents in choosing their brand of scooter.

Hypothesis

$H0_1$: There is no significant difference between select demographic variables and preferred factors.

Research Methodology

The present study was an empirical one purely based on primary data. Moreover, various published and unpublished materials were used to frame this work. The primary data was collected using questionnaire. A sample of 235 women respondents who used various brands of scooters were selected on a random basis from Coimbatore city. The questionnaire used a Five Point Likert Scale ranging from Strongly Agree (1) to Strongly Disagree (5) to identify the key factors. In the present study the data were analysed using statistical package SPSS Version 18.0 and the tools applied were percentage analysis, analysis of variance (ANOVA) and exploratory factor analysis.

Results and Discussion

It can be inferred from Table 1 that 44.7 per cent of the women respondents are of the age group 18 – 25 years of which 73.2 per cent are married and 25.1 per cent are doing business and 34.9 per cent had post graduation qualification 77.6 per cent are from nuclear family having monthly income between 20001 – 30000.

Table: 1 Demographic Profile of the Women Respondents

Age (Years)		
18-25	105	44.7
26-35	94	40.0
36-45	27	11.5
Above 45	9	3.8
Marital Status		
Married	172	73.2
Unmarried	63	26.8
Occupational Status		
Student	51	21.7
Govt.Employee	38	16.2
Business	59	25.1
House Wife	32	13.6
Pvt.Employee	55	23.4
Educational Qualification		
No Formal Education	9	3.8
HSC	25	10.7
UG	47	20
PG	82	34.9
Professional	72	30.6

Family Type		
Nuclear	180	76.6
Joint	55	23.4
Family Monthly Income		
Less than RS.10,000	15	6.4
RS.10,001-20,000	51	21.7
20,001-30,000	112	47.7
30,001-40,000	37	15.7
Above 40,000	20	8.5

Source: Primary Data

Brand Preference Dimensions

To identify the influencing factors of brand preference, factor analysis was performed. Before going for factor analysis, reliability test should be done to ensure the internal consistency of the scale which means if anyone else goes further with this analysis the same result would be made. Hence Cronbach's Alpha, the most common reliability test was applied which gave a value 0.7 greater than standard value 0.6 stated by (Cronbach, 1951; Nunnally, 1996). The next step is to see the samples are adequate and appropriate enough to proceed with factor analysis, for this Kaiser- Meyer-Oklin test and Bartlett's test of Sphericity was undertaken. It is clear from Table: 2 the test result of Kaiser- Meyer-Oklin was 0.63. According to Kaiser (1974) the values greater than 0.5 are acceptable and Bartlett's test of Sphericity was significant at five per cent which ensured that the data is appropriate to perform factor analysis.

Table: 2 Factor Analysis-KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.632
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	679.037
	Df	190
	Sig.	0.000

Source: Computed Data

After completing the steps Factor Analysis was carried out to obtain the influencing factor, for this purpose Principal Component Analysis was used. From Table 3, it could be inferred that five independent factors were extracted from18 attributes, which accounted a total variance of 54.37 per cent. Each of the five factors contributes 17.36 per cent, 12.29 per cent, 8.96 per cent, 8.38 per cent and 7.38 per cent respectively to total variance.

Table: 3 Factor Analysis-Component Matrix for Extracted Value

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	3.126	17.366	17.366	3.126	17.366	17.366	2.314	12.854	12.854
2	2.212	12.291	29.657	2.212	12.291	29.657	1.955	10.860	23.714
3	1.613	8.960	38.616	1.613	8.960	38.616	1.951	10.840	34.554
4	1.508	8.380	46.996	1.508	8.380	46.996	1.868	10.380	44.934
5	1.329	7.381	54.377	1.329	7.381	54.377	1.700	9.443	54.377
6	1.185	6.584	60.962						
7	.968	5.378	66.340						
8	.899	4.994	71.334						
9	.808	4.486	75.820						
10	.757	4.206	80.026						
11	.660	3.666	83.692						
12	.590	3.280	86.971						
13	.574	3.188	90.159						
14	.422	2.344	92.504						
15	.387	2.148	94.652						
16	.375	2.086	96.738						
17	.326	1.814	98.551						
18	.261	1.449	100.000						

Source: Computed Data

From Table 4 it can be depicted that which attributes had higher factor loading in explaining the factors. Factor 1 accounted 17.36 per cent of total variance which included five variables Design, Internal Space, Less Weight, Seating Comfort and Riding Comfort with factor loading ranging from 0.75 to 0.50. Therefore this factor was named as **Comfort**.

Factor 2 explained 12.29 per cent of total variance with factor loading ranging from 0.73 to 0.58 for Product Durability, Good Pickup and Best Mileage. Hence this factor was termed as **Efficiency**.

Factor 3 constituted 8.96 per cent of total variance with high factor loading ranging from 0.72 to 0.68 for Affordable Price, Style and Fabulous Look and Safety. Therefore this factor was named as **Affordability**.

Factor 4 consist of Trustworthiness, Brand Image and Wide Network revealing high factor loading from 0.74 to 0.61 explaining 8.38 per cent of total variance. Therefore this factor was named as **Familiarity.**

Factor 5 included Availability of Spare Parts, Resale Value and Good after Sales Service with high factor loading from 0.69 to 0.50 accounting 7.38 per cent of total variance. Hence this factor was named as **Quality of service**.

Table: 4 Factor Analysis-Rotated Component Matrix[a]

Factors	Component					%of Variation	Factor Name
	1	2	3	4	5		
Design	.757						
Internal space	.669					17.36	
Less Weight	.621						Comfort
Riding Comfort	.574						
Seating comfort	.504						
Product Durability		.735					
Good Pickup		.653				12.29	
Best Mileage		.582					Efficiency
Affordable Price			.725				
Style/Fabulous look			.700			8.96	
Safety			.685				Affordability
Trust worthiness				.747			
Brand Image				.625		8.38	
Wide Network				.611			Familiarity
Availability of spare parts					.699		
Resale value					.577	7.38	
Good after sales service					.509		Quality of service

Source: Computed Data

Influence of Demographic Variables on Brand Preference Dimensions

To assess the influence of Age, Occupational Status, Educational Qualification and Family Monthly Income on Brand Preference Dimensions Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used.

Table 5 depicts that age has a significant influence on Affordability; since the p-value is less than 0.05 the null hypothesis was rejected. Hence it can be concluded that there is a significant influence of age on Affordability Dimension which means women respondents of different age group look for affordability while their purchase.

Table: 5 Age and Brand Preference Dimensions

Brand Preference Dimensions		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Result
Comfort	Between Groups	47.063	3	15.688	1.496	0.216	Accepted
	Within Groups	2422.53	232	10.487			
	Total	2469.59	235				
Efficiency	Between Groups	0.741	3	0.247	0.095	0.963	Accepted
	Within Groups	599.021	232	2.593			
	Total	599.762	235				
Affordability	Between Groups	43.679	3	14.56	3.099	0.028*	Rejected
	Within Groups	1080.61	232	4.698			
	Total	1124.29	235				
Familiarity	Between Groups	32.486	3	10.829	2.362	0.072	Accepted
	Within Groups	1059.11	232	4.585			
	Total	1091.59	235				
Quality of service	Between Groups	18.999	3	6.333	1.971	0.119	Accepted
	Within Groups	742.082	232	3.212			
	Total	761.081	235				

Source: Computed Data; Note: * Significance at five per cent level

Table 6 shows that occupational status has a significant influence on Comfort, Efficiency, Affordability and familiarity. Since the p-value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis was rejected. Hence it can be concluded that there is a significant influence of Occupational status on Comfort, Efficiency, Affordability and Familiarity which means that women respondents prefer to choose scooters which would be comfort and efficient to use and is affordable to their budget and is familiar among their group.

Table: 6 Occupation Status and Brand Preference Dimensions

Brand Preference Dimensions		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Result
Comfort	Between Groups	107.746	4	26.936	2.623	.036*	Rejected
	Within Groups	2361.846	230	10.269			
	Total	2469.591	234				
Efficiency	Between Groups	31.835	4	7.959	3.223	.013**	Rejected
	Within Groups	567.927	230	2.469			
	Total	599.762	234				
Affordability	Between Groups	69.323	4	17.331	3.762	.006**	Rejected
	Within Groups	1054.968	229	4.607			
	Total	1124.291	233				
Familiarity	Between Groups	50.290	4	12.573	2.777	.028*	Rejected
	Within Groups	1041.301	230	4.527			
	Total	1091.591	234				
Quality of services	Between Groups	19.939	4	4.985	1.547	.189	Accepted
	Within Groups	741.142	230	3.222			
	Total	761.081	234				

Source: Computed Data

Note: ** Significance at one per cent level; * Significance at five per cent level

Table 7 reveals that educational qualification has a significant influence on Comfort, Efficiency, Affordability and Quality of service. Since the p-value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected. Hence it can be concluded that there is a significant influence of Educational Qualification on Comfort, Efficiency, Affordability and Quality of service. Therefore respondents with educational qualification prefer to choose scooters which provide high quality of services.

Table: 7 Educational Qualification and Brand Preference Dimensions

Brand Preference Dimensions		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Result
Comfort	Between Groups	144.605	5	28.921	2.849	.016*	Rejected
	Within Groups	2324.986	229	10.153			
	Total	2469.591	234				
Efficiency	Between Groups	61.158	5	12.232	5.201	.000**	Rejected
	Within Groups	538.603	229	2.352			
	Total	599.762	234				
Affordability	Between Groups	67.601	5	13.520	2.917	.014**	Rejected
	Within Groups	1056.690	228	4.635			
	Total	1124.291	233				
Familiarity	Between Groups	35.786	5	7.157	1.552	.175	Accepted
	Within Groups	1055.805	229	4.611			
	Total	1091.591	234				
Quality of service	Between Groups	57.901	5	11.580	3.771	.003**	Rejected
	Within Groups	703.180	229	3.071			
	Total	761.081	234				

Source: Computed Data

Note: ** Significance at one per cent level;* Significance at five per cent level

Table 8 reveals that family Monthly Income has a significant influence on Comfort, Efficiency, Affordability and Quality of service, since the p-value is less than 0.05 and hence the null hypothesis is rejected. Therefore it can be concluded that there is a significant influence of Family Monthly Income on Comfort, Efficiency, Affordability and Quality of services in preferring their scooter.

Table: 8 Family Monthly Incomes and Brand Preference Dimensions

Brand Preference Dimensions		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Result
Comfort	Between Groups	170.696	4	42.674	4.269	.002**	Rejected
	Within Groups	2298.895	230	9.995			
	Total	2469.591	234				
Efficiency	Between Groups	40.006	4	10.001	4.110	.003**	Rejected
	Within Groups	559.756	230	2.434			
	Total	599.762	234				

Affordability	Between Groups	52.201	4	13.050	2.788	.027*	Rejected
	Within Groups	1072.090	229	4.682			
	Total	1124.291	233				
Familiarity	Between Groups	18.082	4	4.520	.969	.426	Accepted
	Within Groups	1073.510	230	4.667			
	Total	1091.591	234				
Quality of service	Between Groups	35.807	4	8.952	2.839	.025*	Rejected
	Within Groups	725.274	230	3.153			
	Total	761.081	234				

Source: Computed Data

Note: ** Significance at one per cent level; * Significance at five per cent level

Conclusion

Initially women were given the responsibility of managing the household works. But as time passed, the responsibility of them increased from household management to supporting the bread –earner of their family. This change had drastic impact on their perception and attitude as their experience were different. This made the researcher to think of the present study of brand preference of women respondents in Coimbatore city and it is clear from the study that women respondents prefer to choose the brand of scooters which is Affordable for their budget, comfort and efficient to drive, which provides the best quality of services and which is familiar among their groups. Hence the marketers are advised to adopt a lower or reasonable pricing strategies based on different income segments and are also advised to stimulate sales by modifying the products characteristics through Quality Improvement, Feature Improvement and Style Improvement as many of the respondents prefer to choose scooters which have comfort and efficiency while driving. It can also be seen that familiarity is one of the factors affecting their choice of brand of scooters. Hence, marketers can go for advertisement and other promotional measures to grab the attention of such groups. As there is cut throat competition in the market only by considering all these factors the marketers can sustain in the near future.

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