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## ANALYSIS OF CUSTOMER PREFERENCE TOWARDS MARKETING ATTRIBUTES OF HATCHBACK CAR IN HARYANA

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### ***Abstract***

India is a developing country with a largest world economy. Instability in the Indian economy has an immediate impact on automobile industry since a car is recognized as a lifestyle product. Though the automobile sector cannot be immune to the consequences of economic slowdown and recession, the Industry must become more integrated with India's growth and development. The present study is an attempt to analysis the customer preference towards attributes of hatchback car in Haryana. The present study used exploratory cum descriptive research design. A sample of 536 respondents was used for collecting the response through well structured questionnaire with help of likert scale. The sample selected for this study includes the respondents of Haryana State. Secondary data was also collected from different previous research studies, including several journals, articles, books, etc. Data analysed with the help of statistical techniques like ANOVA and t-test. A computerized package PASW 18.0 version used. The study revealed that there is no significant difference of customers preference towards price, place, promotion and post purchase related marketing attributes of the hatchback car. Therefore, the study also suggested that manufacturers should also focus on the trustworthiness factor, safety and comfort of customer, inventive design, privacy and facility, credibility of car and its brand, gracious of product, deluxe, handling conduct and compatible' are factors that affect car purchase decisions and brand choice.

**Keyword:** price, hatchback car, brand, deluxe, factor and comfort *etc.*

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

The Automobile industry in India is a significant driver of macroeconomic growth high participation in global chain and technological development. The auto field contributes to about 14-15 per cent of India's GDP (GOI, 2020). Today, the automobile industry is the fastest growing and most profitable enterprise. Sales of hatchback automobiles have increased due to an increase in people's disposable income and easy finance accessibility in the market. As competitiveness increases, new competitors join the market with new innovations in order to attract potential buyers (Gupta, Syed & Chaturvedi, 2017). Today, the consumers have a number of brands and variants of cars from which they can select a particular brand with the hope of drawing more satisfaction from the choice. But



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before making final choice, they have to consider a number of factors. An identification and thorough analysis of various factors influencing the consumers, decision towards the purchase of particular brand of car which guide the manufacturers to develop and deliver the right product at the right time. The manufacturers or sellers must fully understand the factors, which influence the consumers choice towards a particular brand of car (*Rajasekar & Rameshkumar, 2015*).

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

**Gupta (2013)** revealed that the fuel efficiency, price and powerful engine, reference group are important factor to influence the customers for purchase decision. **Ahmed, Zaman, and Irfan (2013)** found that safety was the top consideration attribute followed by quality, value performance, design, technology and environment. **Gautam (2014)** studied about the factors of attraction during the purchase decision of Indian consumers and study conducted on 250 customers in northern state of India. It observed that safety, looks, shape, features and interior image and presales and post sales policies have compelled the customer to select and buy the car. **Girdhar, Ghalawat, and Kavitha (2015)** examined about the consumer behavior regarding various attributes of a car and found that consumer more influenced by product strategies, technology know-how, and level of satisfaction, workshop features and lastly service orientation. **Doshi and Parmar (2016)** identified the factor which influencing consumers brand preference for hatchback cars in Saurashtra Gujarat region. The study resulted that majority of customers' preference is towards Maruti Suzuki brand in hatchback models. The study also found that consumers purchase decision considered safety, performance, aesthetic and value which are the factors affecting consumer's brand preference for hatchback cars. **Gupta, Syed and Chaturvedi (2017)** investigated the different parameter and effect of reference group that influence the consumer buying behavior of 197 car owners within the city of Delhi/NCR. The study revealed the strong influence of attributes like price, fuel efficiency on the buying decision of the consumer and importance of reference group. **Dhanabalan, et. al. (2018)** studied the attributes which mostly affecting the purchase decision of the automobile consumer. The study conducted on 547 customers in Tamilnadu. The study found that the customer perceived value was positively influenced by brand, price, quality, design, utility and technical consideration. **Roy and Loomba (2019)** studied the attitudes of consumer behavior towards premium car segments in Madhya Pradesh and found the category of personal preference on comfort factors, dominant factors were a comfort in driving, value for money and interior design, which topped the requirement list. Premium car segment-wise analysis also brought out these specific comfort requirements across all brands.

The buying behaviour of customer can be studied by knowing their perception about the cars in the market. Basically it is the need of the time to find out what customer expects and what is being

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offered to them. When a customer is satisfied with the product or service, he recommends that product and service to another prospective customer.

### 3. OBJECTIVE AND METHODOLOGY

The objective of the study is to analyse the customer preference towards marketing attributes of hatchback cars. The present study was used exploratory cum descriptive design. Hypothesis of the study: The demographic profile wise customers' preference does not differ significantly towards marketing attributes of hatchback cars. Convenience sampling has been used. A sample of 536 respondents used for collecting the response through well structured questionnaire with help of likert scale. The sample selected for this study includes the respondents of Haryana. Secondary data collected from different previous research studies, including several journals, articles, books, etc. Data analysed through ANOVA and t-test. A computerized package PASW (18.0 version) used.

### 4. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

This section covers the demographic profile of sample, analysis of customer preference towards marketing attributes which influence making the purchase decision of car are as follows: price related attributes criterion, place/availability related attributes, promotion related attributes, and post purchase related attributes. The analysis also covers the gender-wise, age-wise, qualification-wise, occupation-wise, marital status-wise and income-wise analysis of the marketing attributes which influence making the purchase decision.

Table 1 depicts the demographic profile of the sample; in which 81.5 percent are male and only 18.5 percent are female. Likewise, 56.7 percent belong to the 35-45 yr. age group and only 10.1 percent from more than 45 yr. age group. Whereas, 71.1 percent are graduate and only 4.5 percent are diploma holder. 65.1 percent are employees or in service, whereas 6.2 percent respondents are retired employees or serviceman. 72.8 percent are married only 27.2 percent are unmarried. Out of total, 93.5 percent are having the income less than 7 lakh and 6.5 percent having the 7-15 lakh income.

Table 2 showed the price related attributes criterion, in which the gender wise results of the t-test shows that there is no significant difference between the male and female preference of customers towards initial price of the car/cost to buy ( $p=0.556$ ), and cost of spare parts etc. ( $p=0.258$ ) as price related attributes of marketing which influence making the purchase decision. Therefore, null hypothesis is accepted. Age-wise results of the ANOVA depicted that there is no significant difference among the age-wise customers preference towards initial price of the car/cost to buy ( $p=0.517$ ), cost of spare parts etc. ( $p=0.115$ ), and price negotiation with customer offering discounts ( $p=0.534$ ) as price related attributes of marketing which influence making the purchase decision.



Therefore, null hypothesis is accepted. Qualification-wise results of ANOVA showed that there is no significant difference among qualification-wise customers preference towards initial price of the car/cost to buy ( $p=0.382$ ), and cost of spare parts etc. ( $p=0.809$ ) as price related marketing attributes for purchase decision of customers. Therefore, null hypothesis is accepted. Occupation-wise ANOVA resulted that there is a significant difference among occupation-wise customer preference towards initial price of the car/cost to buy ( $p=0.012$ ) and price negotiation with customer offering discounts ( $p=0.000$ ) as price related marketing attributes. Therefore, null hypothesis is rejected. Marital Status-wise results of the t-test showed that there is no significant difference between marital status-wise customers preference towards initial price of the car/cost to buy ( $p=0.208$ ) and price negotiation with customer offering discounts ( $p=0.346$ ) as price related attributes of marketing which influence making the purchase decision. Therefore, null hypothesis is accepted. Income-wise ANOVA results depicted that there is no significant difference among the income-wise preference of customers towards initial price of the car/cost to buy ( $p=0.329$ ), cost of spare parts etc. ( $p=0.478$ ) and price negotiation with customer offering discounts ( $p=0.543$ ) as price related attributes of marketing. Therefore, null hypothesis is accepted.

Table 3 depicts the place/availability related marketing attributes, in which gender-wise results of the t-test shows that there is no significant difference between the male and female customers preference towards dealer's location ( $p=0.152$ ), waiting time post booking ( $p=0.151$ ), and facilities available with the dealer ( $p=0.177$ ) as place/availability related attributes of marketing which influence the purchase decision. Therefore, null hypothesis is accepted. Age-wise results of the ANOVA show that there is no significant difference among the age-wise customers preference towards dealer's location ( $p=0.382$ ), superior service ( $p=0.434$ ), waiting time post booking ( $p=0.250$ ) and facilities available with the dealer ( $p=0.880$ ) as place/availability related marketing attributes for purchase decision of hatchback car. Therefore, null hypothesis is accepted. Qualification-wise ANOVA results showed that there is no significant difference among qualification-wise customers preference towards dealer's location ( $p=0.368$ ), waiting time post booking ( $p=0.078$ ) and facilities available with the dealer ( $p=0.538$ ) as place/availability related marketing attributes. Therefore, null hypothesis is accepted. Occupation-wise ANOVA resulted that there is no significant difference among occupation-wise customer preference towards place/availability related marketing attributes *i.e.*, superior service ( $p=0.444$ ) and facilities available with the dealer ( $p=0.295$ ). Therefore, null hypothesis is accepted. Marital Status-wise results of the t-test showed that there is no significant difference between marital status-wise customers preference towards dealer's location ( $p=0.322$ ), superior service ( $p=0.473$ ) and facilities available with the dealer ( $p=0.737$ ) as place/availability related attributes of marketing which influence the hatchback car purchase decision. Therefore, null hypothesis is accepted. Income-wise



ANOVA results showed that there is no significant difference among the income-wise preference of customers towards dealer's location ( $p=0.905$ ), waiting time post booking ( $p=0.061$ ) and facilities available with the dealer ( $p=0.358$ ) as place/availability related attributes of marketing. Therefore, null hypothesis is accepted.

Table 4 shows the promotion related marketing attributes, in which gender-wise results of the t-test shows that there is no significant difference between the male and female customers preference towards cash rebates ( $p=0.296$ ), low financing rates ( $p=0.286$ ), festive season offer ( $p=0.100$ ), campaigns/exchange melas/car shows ( $p=0.112$ ) and advertising image ( $p=0.409$ ) as promotion related marketing attributes which influence the car purchase decision. Therefore, null hypothesis is accepted. Age-wise results of the ANOVA showed that there is no significant difference among the age-wise customers preference towards cash rebates ( $p=0.349$ ), low financing rates ( $p=0.473$ ), schemes and discounts ( $p=0.155$ ), festive season offer ( $p=0.568$ ), campaigns/exchange melas/car shows ( $p=0.430$ ), test ride ( $p=0.271$ ) and advertising image ( $p=0.989$ ) as promotion related attributes of marketing which influence the purchase decision. Therefore, null hypothesis is accepted. Qualification-wise ANOVA results depicted that there is no significant difference among qualification-wise customers preference towards cash rebates ( $p=0.352$ ), low financing rates ( $p=0.097$ ), campaigns/exchange melas/car shows ( $p=0.933$ ), test ride ( $p=0.242$ ) and advertising image ( $p=0.380$ ) as promotion related marketing attributes to purchase decision. Therefore, null hypothesis is accepted. Occupation-wise ANOVA resulted that there is a significant difference among occupation-wise customers preference towards cash rebates ( $p=0.134$ ), low financing rates ( $p=0.229$ ), schemes and discounts ( $p=0.431$ ), festive season offer ( $p=0.325$ ), campaigns/exchange melas/car shows ( $p=0.542$ ), test ride ( $p=0.128$ ) and advertising image ( $p=0.070$ ) as promotion related marketing attributes. Therefore, null hypothesis is accepted. Marital Status-wise results of the t-test showed that there is no significant difference between marital status-wise customers preference towards cash rebates ( $p=0.562$ ), low financing rates ( $p=0.486$ ), schemes and discounts ( $p=0.170$ ), festive season offer ( $p=0.751$ ), campaigns/exchange melas/car shows ( $p=0.788$ ), test ride ( $p=0.107$ ), and advertising image ( $p=0.469$ ) as promotion related marketing attributes which influence the purchase decision. Therefore, null hypothesis is accepted. Income-wise ANOVA results showed that there is no significant difference among the income-wise preference of customers towards cash rebates ( $p=0.351$ ), low financing rates ( $p=0.875$ ), schemes and discounts ( $p=0.681$ ), festive season offer ( $p=0.491$ ), campaigns/exchange melas/car shows ( $p=0.161$ ), test ride ( $p=0.684$ ) and advertising image ( $p=0.762$ ) as promotion related attributes of marketing which influence the purchase decision of hatchback car. Therefore, null hypothesis is accepted.



Table 5 presented the post purchase related marketing attributes, in which gender-wise results of the t-test showed that there is no significant difference between the male and female customers preference towards after-sale services ( $p=0.714$ ), availability of the service network ( $p=0.527$ ), cost of maintenance ( $p=0.182$ ), likely cost of repairs and maintenance ( $p=0.900$ ), warranty schemes ( $p=0.867$ ), hospitality of the service station ( $p=0.138$ ), and facilities available with the service station ( $p=0.685$ ) as post purchase related marketing attributes. Therefore, null hypothesis is accepted. Age-wise results of the ANOVA demonstrated that there is no significant difference among the age-wise customers preference towards after-sale services ( $p=0.735$ ), availability of the service network ( $p=0.909$ ), likely cost of repairs and maintenance ( $p=0.173$ ) and hospitality of the service station ( $p=0.466$ ) as post purchase related marketing attributes which influence the car purchase decision. Therefore, null hypothesis is accepted. Qualification-wise ANOVA results shows that there is no significant difference among qualification-wise customers preference towards availability of the service network ( $p=0.192$ ), cost of maintenance ( $p=0.738$ ), likely cost of repairs and maintenance ( $p=0.722$ ), and hospitality of the service station ( $p=0.210$ ) as post purchase related attributes of marketing. Therefore, null hypothesis is accepted. Occupation-wise ANOVA resulted that there is a significant difference among occupation-wise customer preference towards likely cost of repairs and maintenance ( $p=0.094$ ), warranty schemes ( $p=0.069$ ) and facilities available with the service station ( $p=0.391$ ) as post purchase related attributes of marketing. Therefore, null hypothesis is accepted. Marital Status-wise results of the t-test showed that there is no significant difference between marital status-wise customers preference towards after-sale services ( $p=0.462$ ), availability of the service network ( $p=0.393$ ), cost of maintenance ( $p=0.237$ ), likely cost of repairs and maintenance ( $p=0.072$ ) and hospitality of the service station ( $p=0.509$ ) as post purchase related marketing attributes which influence the purchase decision. Therefore, null hypothesis is accepted. Income-wise results of ANOVA depicted that there is no significant difference among the income-wise preference of customers towards after-sale services ( $p=0.111$ ), availability of the service network ( $p=0.430$ ), cost of maintenance ( $p=0.324$ ), likely cost of repairs and maintenance ( $p=0.734$ ), warranty schemes ( $p=0.574$ ), hospitality of the service station ( $p=0.413$ ) and facilities available with the service station ( $p=0.233$ ) as post purchase related marketing attributes which influence the hatchback car purchase decision. Therefore, null hypothesis is accepted.

## 5. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS OF THE STUDY

The study revealed that there is no significant difference among customers preference towards initial price of the car/cost to buy, cost of spare parts and price negotiation with customer offering discounts



*i.e.*, price related marketing attributes; dealer's location, superior service, waiting time post booking, facilities available with the dealer *i.e.*, place related attributes; promotion related marketing attributes *i.e.*, cash rebates, low financing rates, schemes and discounts, festive season offer, campaigns/exchange melas/car shows (Auto-Expo etc.), test ride and advertising image. The study also found that customers preference do not differ significantly towards post purchase related marketing attributes *i.e.*, after-sale services, availability of the service network, cost of maintenance, likely cost of repairs and maintenance, warranty schemes, hospitality of the service station and facilities available with the service station. Hence, the study also suggested that manufacturers should also focus on the trustworthiness factor, safety and comfort of customer, inventive design, privacy and facility, credibility of car and its brand, gracious of product, deluxe, handling conduct and compatibility are factors that affecting car purchase decisions. For the growth of the economy, the government should step forward, decrease taxes and reform the tariff structure for green vehicles, which have less pollution, higher fuel efficiency, and are safer to drive. The government should ensure that better quality automobiles are available on the road but also that ELV (End of Life) standards should be followed.

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**Table 1: Demographic profile of the Sample**

| Gender                  | No. of respondents | Percent      |
|-------------------------|--------------------|--------------|
| Male                    | 437                | 81.5         |
| Female                  | 99                 | 18.5         |
| <b>Age (in years)</b>   |                    |              |
| Less than 35 yr.        | 178                | 33.2         |
| 35-45 yr.               | 304                | 56.7         |
| More than 45 yr         | 54                 | 10.1         |
| <b>Qualification</b>    |                    |              |
| Diploma                 | 24                 | 4.5          |
| Graduate                | 381                | 71.1         |
| Post graduate and other | 131                | 24.4         |
| <b>Occupation</b>       |                    |              |
| Employees/Service       | 349                | 65.1         |
| Self Employees          | 154                | 28.7         |
| Retired                 | 33                 | 6.2          |
| <b>Marital Status</b>   |                    |              |
| Unmarried               | 146                | 27.2         |
| Married                 | 390                | 72.8         |
| <b>Income (in ₹)</b>    |                    |              |
| Less than 7 lakh        | 501                | 93.5         |
| 7-15 Lakh               | 35                 | 6.5          |
| <b>Total</b>            | <b>536</b>         | <b>100.0</b> |

Source: Survey.

**Table 2: Inferential Statistics of Price related attributes**

| Sr. No. | Price related attributes                           | Gender |        | Age   |       | Qualification |        | Occupation |        | Marital Status |        | Income |       |
|---------|--|--------|--------|-------|-------|---------------|--------|------------|--------|----------------|--------|--------|-------|
|         |  | t      | sign   | F     | sign  | F             | sign   | F          | sign   | t              | sign   | F      | Sign  |
| 1       | Initial price of the car/ Cost to buy              | 0.590  | 0.556  | 0.661 | 0.517 | 0.963         | 0.382  | 4.436      | 0.012* | 1.264          | 0.208  | 0.955  | 0.329 |
| 2       | Cost of spare parts etc.                           | 1.136  | 0.258  | 2.168 | 0.115 | 0.212         | 0.809  | 2.213      | 0.110  | 2.593          | 0.010* | 0.504  | 0.478 |
| 3       | Price negotiation with customer offering discounts | 2.440  | 0.015* | 0.627 | 0.534 | 3.582         | 0.028* | 8.102      | 0.000* | 0.944          | 0.346  | 0.371  | 0.543 |

Source: Survey, Note: \* Significant at 5 percent level of significance.

**Table 3: Inferential Statistics of Place/availability related attributes**

| Sr. No. | Place/availability related attributes | Gender |        | Age   |       | Qualification |        | Occupation |        | Marital Status |        | Income |        |
|---------|---------------------------------------|--------|--------|-------|-------|---------------|--------|------------|--------|----------------|--------|--------|--------|
|         |                                       | t      | sign   | F     | sign  | F             | sign   | F          | sign   | T              | sign   | F      | Sign   |
| 1       | Dealer's location                     | 1.440  | 0.152  | 0.965 | 0.382 | 1.000         | 0.368  | 4.627      | 0.010* | 0.992          | 0.322  | 0.014  | 0.905  |
| 2       | Superior service                      | 3.892  | 0.000* | 0.835 | 0.434 | 4.175         | 0.016* | 0.814      | 0.444  | 0.718          | 0.473  | 3.997  | 0.046* |
| 3       | Waiting time post booking             | 1.443  | 0.151  | 1.389 | 0.250 | 2.557         | 0.078  | 5.875      | 0.003* | 2.907          | 0.004* | 3.526  | 0.061  |
| 4       | Facilities available with the dealer  | 1.358  | 0.177  | 0.128 | 0.880 | 0.538         | 0.584  | 1.223      | 0.295  | 0.336          | 0.737  | 0.846  | 0.358  |

Source: Survey, Note: \* Significant at 5 percent level of significance.

**Table 4: Inferential Statistics of Promotion related attributes**

| Sr. No. | Promotion related attributes                        | Gender |        | Age   |       | Qualification |        | Occupation |       | Marital Status |       | Income |       |
|---------|---|--------|--------|-------|-------|---------------|--------|------------|-------|----------------|-------|--------|-------|
|         |   | t      | Sign   | F     | sign  | F             | sign   | F          | Sign  | T              | sign  | F      | Sign  |
| 1       | Cash rebates  | 1.049  | 0.296  | 1.056 | 0.349 | 1.046         | 0.352  | 2.021      | 0.134 | 0.580          | 0.562 | 0.873  | 0.351 |
| 2       | Low financing rates                                 | 1.070  | 0.286  | 0.750 | 0.473 | 2.342         | 0.097  | 1.478      | 0.229 | 0.697          | 0.486 | 0.025  | 0.875 |
| 3       | Schemes and discounts                               | 2.618  | 0.010* | 1.870 | 0.155 | 3.896         | 0.021* | 0.844      | 0.431 | 1.376          | 0.170 | 0.169  | 0.681 |
| 4       | Festive season offer                                | 1.652  | 0.100  | 0.566 | 0.568 | 3.274         | 0.039* | 1.126      | 0.325 | 0.317          | 0.751 | 0.474  | 0.491 |
| 5       | Campaigns/Exchange melas/Car shows (Auto-Expo etc.) | 1.593  | 0.112  | 0.845 | 0.430 | 0.070         | 0.933  | 0.612      | 0.542 | 0.269          | 0.788 | 1.967  | 0.161 |
| 6       | Test ride   | 2.164  | 0.031* | 1.309 | 0.271 | 1.423         | 0.242  | 2.062      | 0.128 | 1.619          | 0.107 | 0.166  | 0.684 |
| 7       | Advertising image                                   | 0.828  | 0.409  | 0.011 | 0.989 | 0.968         | 0.380  | 2.670      | 0.070 | 0.726          | 0.469 | 0.092  | 0.762 |

Source: Survey, Note: \*Significant at 5 percent level of significance.

**Table 5: Inferential Statistics of Post purchase related attributes**

| Sr. No. | Post purchase related attributes              | Gender |       | Age    |        | Qualification |        | Occupation |        | Marital Status |        | Income |       |
|---------|---|--------|-------|--------|--------|---------------|--------|------------|--------|----------------|--------|--------|-------|
|         |   | t      | sign  | F      | sign   | F             | sign   | F          | sign   | t              | sign   | F      | Sign  |
| 1       | After-sale services                           | 0.368  | 0.714 | 0.309  | 0.735  | 3.598         | 0.028* | 5.725      | 0.003* | 0.736          | 0.462  | 2.555  | 0.111 |
| 2       | Availability of the service network           | 0.634  | 0.527 | 0.096  | 0.909  | 1.656         | 0.192  | 5.530      | 0.004* | 0.856          | 0.393  | 0.623  | 0.430 |
| 3       | Cost of maintenance                           | 1.342  | 0.182 | 3.842  | 0.022* | 0.303         | 0.738  | 7.597      | 0.001* | 1.185          | 0.237  | 0.974  | 0.324 |
| 4       | Likely cost of repairs and maintenance        | 0.126  | 0.900 | 1.763  | 0.173  | 0.326         | 0.722  | 2.378      | 0.094  | 1.808          | 0.072  | 0.115  | 0.734 |
| 5       | Warranty schemes                              | 0.167  | 0.867 | 7.415  | 0.001* | 4.693         | 0.010* | 2.681      | 0.069  | 4.512          | 0.000* | 0.316  | 0.574 |
| 6       | Hospitality of the service station            | 1.491  | 0.138 | 0.764  | 0.466  | 1.565         | 0.210  | 13.291     | 0.000* | 0.660          | 0.509  | 0.670  | 0.413 |
| 7       | Facilities available with the service station | 0.406  | 0.685 | 11.047 | 0.000* | 5.202         | 0.006* | 0.940      | 0.391  | 4.768          | 0.000* | 1.427  | 0.233 |

**Source:** Survey, **Note:** \*Significant at 5 percent level of significance.