Customer satisfaction a comparative analysis of cars with reference to Coimbatore region

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ABSTRACT :

The automobile industry in India has witnessed rapid growth, with increasing customer expectations and competitive market dynamics influencing buyer decisions. This study focuses on analyzing and comparing customer satisfaction levels among various car brands in the Coimbatore region. The primary objective is to identify key factors influencing customer satisfaction, such as performance, fuel efficiency, safety, after-sales service, pricing, brand value, and technological features. Primary data was collected through structured questionnaires from car owners in Coimbatore, while secondary data supported the contextual framework. The analysis reveals significant differences in satisfaction levels across brands, with after-sales service and vehicle reliability emerging as the most influential factors. The findings offer valuable insights to automobile manufacturers and dealers, helping them refine their customer engagement strategies and improve overall service delivery in regional markets like Coimbatore.

KEYWORDS: CUSTOMER SATISFACTION, CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR, AUTOMOBILE INDUSTRY, BRAND PREFERENCE, AND COIMBATORE REGION.

INTRODUCTION

Customer satisfaction is an important aspect of the automotive industry because it has a direct impact on brand reputation, customer loyalty, and market share. In an increasingly competitive market, car manufacturers and dealers must concentrate on understanding consumer preferences and expectations in order to improve their offerings. The purpose of this study is to compare customer satisfaction levels among various car brands in the Coimbatore area. It will compare various factors such as pricing, mileage, maintenance costs, safety features, and after-sales service to determine which brands have the best customer perception**.**

OBJECTIVES:

1. To analyse key factors influencing car buyers' satisfaction in Coimbatore.
2. To compare customer satisfaction among popular car brands (e.g., Maruti Suzuki, Hyundai, Tata, Honda, Toyota, etc.).
3. To assess the impact of price, fuel efficiency, and brand reputation on customer satisfaction.
4. To provide recommendations for car manufacturers and dealers to enhance customer experience.

RESEARCH AND METHODOLOGY

Research:

Research is a process of systematic inquiry that entails collection of data; documentation of critical information; and analysis and interpretation of that data / information, in accordance with suitable methodologies set by specific professional fields and academic disciplines.

Research Methodology:

Research methodology is a way to systematically solve the research problem. It deals with various steps that were generally adopted by studying the research problems. It is necessary for the researcher to know, not only the research methods / techniques but also the methodology.

Sampling Technique:

Convenience sampling technique was adopted in the selection of sample units. About 124 respondents in Coimbatore were chosen for the study. Collection

of Data: The study depends upon both primary and secondary data.

Primary Data:

Primary data is a type of data that is collected by researchers directly from main sources through interviews, surveys, experiments, etc. Primary data are usually collected from the source-where the data originally originates from and are regarded as the best kind of data in research.

Secondary Data:

Secondary data is the data that has already been collected through primary sources and made readily available for researchers to use for their own research. It is a type of data that has already been collected in the past. Sources of secondary data include books, personal sources, journals, newspapers, websites, government records etc. Secondary data are known to be readily available compared to that of primary data. It requires very little research and needs for manpower to use these sources.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Customer satisfaction is defined by Anderson, Nicholas, and Hengbert (2023) as the outcome of comparing prior expectations with actual product performance, reflecting the customer's emotional and cognitive response to a product. Arvind Mallik D.M and Aqib Javeed Khan (2022) highlighted the role of brand positioning and consumer behavior in influencing customer satisfaction, particularly in the competitive automobile market, with Hyundai as the focus.

DATA AND ANALYSIS

TABLE 1

AGE OF THE RESPONDENTS

Age	No. of. Respondents	Percentage
Below 25	20	17.7
25 – 35	50	44.2
36 – 45	39	34.5
46 – 55	3	2.7
Above 55	1	0.9
Total	**113**	**100**

(Source: Primary Data)

Interpretation:

The table illustrates the age distribution of the respondents in the study. The majority of respondents, 50 (44.2%), fall within the 25 – 35 years age group, indicating that most participants are adults. A smaller portion, 39 (34.5%), belongs to the 36–45 years age group, while 20 (17.7%) are below 25 years. 3 respondents (2.7%) are in the 46–55 years age bracket, and Only 1 respondent is above 55 years.

TABLE 2

GENDER OF THE RESPONDENTS

Gender	No. of. Respondents	Percentage
Male	90	79.6
Female	23	20.4
TOTAL	**113**	**100**

(Source: Primary Data)

Interpretation:

The table presents the gender distribution of the respondents in the study. Out of the total 113 respondents, 90 (79.6%) are Male, while 23 (20.4%) are Female. This indicates that the majority of the respondents are male. The data suggests that there is a male-dominant participation in this study or survey.

TABLE 3

OCCUPATION OF THE RESPONDENTS

Age	No. of. Respondents	Percentage
Student	30	26.5
Salaried Employee	22	19.5
Business	47	41.6
Self-Employed	10	8.8

Other	4	3.5
Total	**113**	**100**

(Source: Primary Data)

Interpretation:

The data reveals that most respondents (41.6%) are engaged in business, followed by students (26.5%) and salaried employees (19.5%). A smaller portion includes self-employed individuals (8.8%) and others (3.5%). This indicates a diverse occupational background, with business professionals forming the majority among the 113 participants surveyed.

FINDINGS

1. The Majority (79.6%) of the respondents were Male.
2. The Majority (41.6%) of the respondents are engaged in business.
3. The Majority (41.6%) of the respondents earn between ₹20,000–₹40,000. The Majority (91.2%) of the respondents own a car.
4. The Majority (23%) of the respondents own a Maruti Suzuki.

SUGGESTIONS

To enhance customer satisfaction and brand loyalty in the automobile industry, manufacturers should focus on affordability, fuel efficiency, maintenance costs, safety features, and after-sales service. Competitive pricing and flexible financing options can make vehicles more accessible, ensuring better value for money. Fuel efficiency remains a top priority, and improving mileage can attract cost- conscious consumers. Reducing maintenance costs through extended warranties, affordable service packages, and transparent pricing can enhance long-term ownership experiences.

Safety features such as airbags, ABS, and crash-test ratings should be prioritized across all models, including budget-friendly options, to meet growing consumer expectations. High-quality after-sales service is essential for customer retention, and improving service centre accessibility, problem resolution efficiency, and pricing transparency can build long-term trust. Leveraging digital solutions for service bookings and real-time updates can enhance the overall experience.

Considering demographic variations, manufacturers should tailor marketing strategies and product features to different consumer segments, such as younger buyers seeking technology and fuel efficiency and older consumers prioritizing safety and maintenance costs. By addressing these key factors, car brands can improve customer satisfaction, strengthen brand perception, and increase long- term customer loyalty in a competitive market.

CONCLUSIONS

This study provides valuable insights into the factors influencing car owner satisfaction in Coimbatore, highlighting key areas such as pricing, mileage, maintenance costs, safety features, and after-sales service. The findings indicate that affordability and fuel efficiency remain top priorities for consumers, while reliable after-sales service and lower maintenance costs play a crucial role in long-term brand loyalty. Additionally, safety features are increasingly important, influencing purchase decisions across various demographic segments.

By addressing these factors, car manufacturers can enhance customer satisfaction and improve their market positioning. Tailoring products and services to different consumer preferences, optimizing pricing strategies, and investing in superior after-sales support can significantly boost brand trust and loyalty. These insights serve as a guide for manufacturers, dealers, and policymakers to enhance overall service quality and meet evolving consumer expectations.

REFERENCES

1. Anderson, Nicholas & Hengbert (2023) defined customer satisfaction as the comparison between expectations and actual product performance.
2. Arvind Mallik D.M and Aqib Javeed Khan (2022) studied brand positioning and consumer behaviour, particularly in relation to Hyundai, highlighting the need for differentiation in a competitive market.
3. Dr. V. Suganthi (2020) identified that fuel efficiency and mileage are key factors influencing customer satisfaction, with Maruti Suzuki Swift being a popular choice.