



Consumer Buying Behaviour in the Used Car Market of Salem District

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Abstract

The used car industry has experienced tremendous growth over the past few years due to the increased need for vehicles among consumers. The main aim of this study was to investigate the consumer buying behaviour towards used cars in Salem District. The research design adopted for this study was descriptive research design. The primary data collection method was used to collect information from the respondents through a structured questionnaire from a sample of 95 consumers using the simple random sampling technique. The research also analysed various aspects of the buying behaviour of consumers, including their attitude towards used cars, influence of society, economic factors, brand perception, purchase experience, push and pull factors, and satisfaction levels. The results revealed that the majority of the respondents (65.3%) had a positive attitude towards purchasing used cars, whereas nearly half of the respondents (49.5%) showed high buying behaviour. The results also revealed that economic factors (42.1%), brand perception (46.3%), and satisfaction levels (45.3%) played a major role in influencing the purchase behaviour of the consumers. The statistical tests showed that there was no significance in the results obtained from gender and the majority of the factors that influence buying behaviour, except social influence. The ANOVA test showed that the difference in attitude and satisfaction was statistically significant according to the mode of purchase. The correlation test showed that there was no significance in the relationship obtained from monthly income and consumer buying behaviour. The study showed that affordability, perception of the brand, and the overall purchase experience play an important role in influencing the demand for pre-owned cars.

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Keywords: Consumer Buying Behaviour, Pre-Owned Cars, Economic Factors, Brand Perception, Customer Satisfaction

Introduction

The automobile sector has registered substantial growth in the past few years, resulting in the rapid expansion of the pre-owned car segment. Pre-owned cars are vehicles that were previously owned and utilized by one or more individuals before being sold in the market once again. The demand for pre-owned cars in the Indian market has registered substantial growth owing to factors like affordability, availability, and the rising need for personal transportation. Many consumers prefer purchasing pre-owned cars because they provide the same benefits as new cars but at a low cost. Consumer buying behaviour is the process by which individuals in the market attempt to fulfill their needs, assess different alternatives, and make decisions to purchase certain products or services. In the context of pre-owned cars, consumers take into account various factors like cost, condition, mileage, brand, maintenance cost, and resale value before making the final purchase decision. All these factors affect the attitude and

perception of consumers towards used vehicles. In the last few years, the rise of organized used car dealers, certified pre-owned vehicles, and automobile websites has enhanced the reliability of the pre-owned car segment. This has enhanced the overall confidence level of consumers and has made it easier for consumers to compare various options before purchasing a used car. Hence, it is essential to study the buying behaviour of consumers in the context of pre-owned vehicles to help automobile marketers and dealers understand the needs and wants of consumers.

Review of Literature

Several researchers have also studied the buying behaviour of consumers in the automobile industry, with a particular emphasis on the factors that affect the purchase of pre-owned automobiles. According to the findings of the studies, the most important factors that affect the purchase of pre-owned automobiles are economic, social, and product-related factors. Kotler and Keller (2016)^[8] explained that the buying behaviour of consumers is influenced by cultural, social, personal, and psychological factors, which affect the overall decision-making process. According to the study, consumers are likely to assess different alternatives before purchasing high-value products, such as automobiles. According to the study, the price sensitivity and overall value of the product are the most important factors that affect the purchasing decisions of consumers in the automobile industry. In a study conducted by Reddy and Kumar (2019)^[18], the factors that influenced the purchase of pre-owned automobiles were identified, and it was concluded that affordability, brand, and reliability are the most important factors that affect the purchasing decisions of consumers. The study also revealed that the preference for used cars is higher among middle-income consumers due to the lower purchase price and lower rate of depreciation in comparison to new cars. In the study by Sharma & Singh (2020)^[23], the researchers focused on the influence of digitalization in the used car market. The study revealed that the use of online platforms has affected the buying behaviour of consumers in the used car market. The study concluded that the use of digitalization has played an important role in the development of trust among buyers in the used car market. In the study by Patil (2021)^[14], the author focused on the attitudes of consumers towards the use of certification pre-owned cars. The study revealed that the use of certification programs has increased the level of trust among buyers in the used car market. Likewise, Dhananjayan and Rajkumar (2017)^[2] observed that price affordability and resale value were major motivating factors, which influenced consumers to buy pre-owned vehicles. In addition, it was observed that social influence from family, friends, and colleagues was important factors that influenced consumer attitudes towards used cars.

Methodology

Aim: To study the consumer buying behaviour towards pre-owned cars in Salem District

Objectives:

1. To Determine the Level of satisfaction towards Buying Pre owned cars

2. To analyse the relationship between gender of the respondents and consumer buying behaviour towards pre-owned cars.
3. To highlight the relationship between the monthly income of the respondents and consumer buying behaviour towards pre-owned cars.
4. To determine the difference in consumer buying behaviour towards pre-owned cars based on the mode of purchase of pre-owned cars.

Hypotheses:

1. There is no significant difference between the gender of the respondents and factors influencing the purchase of pre-owned cars.
2. The age of the respondents has no significant relationship with the factors influencing the purchase of pre-owned cars.
3. The monthly income of the respondents has a significant relationship with consumer buying behaviour towards pre-owned cars.

Research Design:

The descriptive research design was used for conducting the study on the consumer buying behaviour towards pre-owned cars. Descriptive research helps in gathering information about the attitudes, perceptions, and factors that influence the behaviour of the consumers while buying pre-owned cars.

Universe and Sampling:

The universe for the study included the consumers in the Salem District who have purchased or are planning to purchase pre-owned cars. For conducting the study, the researcher used the simple random sampling technique to select the sample for the study. A total of 95 respondents were selected as the sample for the study.

Tools for Data Collection:

The primary data for the study was collected through the questionnaire method. The questionnaire consisted of close-ended questions that measured the various dimensions of the factors that influence the behaviour of the consumers while buying pre-owned cars, such as:

- Attitude towards pre-owned cars
- Social factors
- Economic factors
- Brand perception
- Purchase experience
- Push and pull factors
- Overall satisfaction

The responses were measured using a Likert scale to analyse the opinions and perceptions of the respondents.

Analysis and Interpretation

Various statistical analysis were computed using SPSS V.21, to understand the factors influencing the buying behaviour towards pre-owned cars, this includes quartile deviations, 't'-Test, One-way analysis of variance and Karl Pearsons correlation. The findings are presented below:

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents Based on Levels of Consumer Buying Behaviour towards Pre-Owned Cars

Dimensions	Low		Moderate		High	
	Freq.	(%)	Freq.	(%)	Freq.	(%)
Attitude Towards Pre-Owned Cars	23	24.2	10	10.5	62	65.3
Social Influence	42	44.2	17	17.9	36	37.9
Economic Factors	27	28.4	28	29.5	40	42.1
Brand Perception	25	26.3	26	27.4	44	46.3
Purchase Experience	44	46.3	7	7.4	44	46.3
Push and Pull Factors	34	35.8	32	33.7	29	30.5
Satisfaction	34	35.8	18	18.9	43	45.3
Overall Buying Behaviour	24	25.3	24	25.3	47	49.5

From the above table, it is evident that a majority of the respondents demonstrated a high level of attitude towards pre-owned cars (65.3%) and buying behaviour (49.5%). Moreover, a majority of the respondents demonstrated high levels of economic factors (42.1%), perception of brands

(46.3%), and satisfaction (45.3%). However, a majority of the respondents demonstrated low levels of social influence (44.2%) and push and pull factors (35.8%). Generally, it can be concluded that respondents demonstrated a positive attitude and satisfaction towards pre-owned cars.

Table 2: 't' – Test based on gender of the respondents and consumer buying behaviour towards pre-owned cars.

Variable	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	df	Statistical Inference
Attitude					
Male (75)	19.51	7.329	.846	93	't' = 0.949 P > 0.05 Not Significant
Female (20)	19.40	2.780	.622		
Social Influence					
Male (75)	16.52	2.321	.268	93	't' = 0.046 P < 0.05 Significant
Female (20)	17.65	1.755	.393		
Economic Factors					
Male (75)	16.03	2.746	.317	93	't' = 0.791 P > 0.05 Not Significant
Female (20)	16.20	1.881	.421		
Brand Perception					
Male (75)	18.29	3.148	.364	93	't' = 0.058 P > 0.05 Not Significant
Female (20)	19.75	2.425	.542		
Purchase Experience					
Male (75)	15.04	2.528	.292	93	't' = 0.088 P > 0.05 – Not Significant
Female (20)	16.10	2.100	.470		
Push & Pull Factors					
Male (75)	19.31	2.982	.344	93	't' = 0.498 P > 0.05 Not Significant
Female (20)	18.80	2.876	.643		
Satisfaction					
Male (75)	18.81	3.039	.351	93	't' = 0.442 P > 0.05 Not Significant
Female (20)	19.40	2.945	.659		
Overall Buying Behaviour					
Male (75)	144.61	18.686	2.158	93	't' = 0.151 P > 0.05 Not Significant
Female (20)	138.10	14.305	3.199		

From the table presented above, it is clear that there is no significant difference between male and female respondents with regard to their attitude towards pre-owned cars, as $t = 0.949 > 0.05$. It is also clear that there is no significant difference between gender and economic factors, brand perception, experience of purchasing, push and pull factors, satisfaction, and buying behaviour, as $P > 0.05$, indicating that there are no differences. However, it is clear that there is a significant difference

H0: There is a significant difference between the gender of the respondents and factors influencing the purchase of pre-owned cars.

H1: There is no significant difference between the gender of the respondents and factors influencing the purchase of pre-owned cars

Table 3: One-way ANOVA Test based on the Mode of Purchase of Pre-Owned Cars and Consumer Buying Behaviour

Variable		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Statistical Inference
Attitude	Between Groups	446.454	4	111.614	2.733	Sig = 0.034 P < 0.05 Significant
	Within Groups	3675.272	90	40.836		
Social Influence	Between Groups	14.457	4	3.614	0.703	Sig = 0.592 P > 0.05 Not Significant
	Within Groups	462.975	90	5.144		
Economic Factors	Between Groups	29.246	4	7.312	1.103	Sig = 0.360 P > 0.05 Not Significant
	Within Groups	596.375	90	6.626		
Brand Perception	Between Groups	74.819	4	18.705	2.094	Sig = 0.088 P > 0.05 Not Significant
	Within Groups	803.981	90	8.933		
Purchase Experience	Between Groups	44.615	4	11.154	1.895	Sig = 0.118 P > 0.05 Not Significant
	Within Groups	529.806	90	5.887		
Push & Pull Factors	Between Groups	40.936	4	10.234	1.183	Sig = 0.323 P > 0.05 Not Significant
	Within Groups	778.264	90	8.647		
Satisfaction	Between Groups	85.238	4	21.309	2.496	Sig = 0.048 P < 0.05 Significant
	Within Groups	768.383	90	8.538		
Overall Buying Behaviour	Between Groups	1196.526	4	299.132	0.922	Sig = 0.455 P > 0.05 Not Significant
	Within Groups	29198.906	90	324.432		

- G1 = Direct from Owner
- G2 = Dealer
- G3 = Online Platform
- G4 = Auction
- G5 = Other

The above table reveals that there is a significant relationship

between the age of the respondents and overall satisfaction, as indicated by the value of Sig = 0.048, P < 0.05. It is, however, clear that there is no significant relationship between the age of the respondents and other dimensions of the study, which include social influence, economic factors, brand, purchase experience, push and pull factors, and overall buying behaviour, since the P value is greater than 0.05.

Table 4: Correlation between Monthly Income of the Respondents and Consumer Buying Behaviour towards Pre-Owned Cars

Variable	Correlation Value	Statistical Inference
Attitude	-0.017	P > 0.05 Not Significant
Social Influence	0.023	P > 0.05 Not Significant
Economic Factors	0.056	P > 0.05 Not Significant
Brand Perception	0.097	P > 0.05 Not Significant
Push & Pull Factors	0.063	P > 0.05 Not Significant
Satisfaction	0.059	P > 0.05 Not Significant
Purchase Experience	0.071	P > 0.05 Not Significant
Overall Buying Behaviour	-0.189	P > 0.05 Not Significant

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)
 * . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

The above table indicates that there is no significant relationship between the monthly income of the respondents and the dimensions of consumer buying behaviour towards pre-owned cars. It is clear that there is no significant relationship between the monthly income of the respondents and overall attitude towards pre-owned cars, social influence, economic factors, brand, push and pull factors, overall satisfaction, purchase experience, and overall buying behaviour, as the P value is more than 0.05 for all the variables.

H1: The monthly income of the respondents has a significant relationship with consumer buying behaviour towards pre-owned cars.

H0: The monthly income of the respondents has no significant relationship with consumer buying behaviour towards pre-owned cars.

Result: The correlation test has been performed on the variables, and it is clear that the monthly income of the respondents has no significant relationship with consumer

buying behaviour towards pre-owned cars. Hence, the null hypothesis (H₀) is accepted by the researcher.

Major Findings

The findings of the study on Consumer Buying Behaviour towards Pre-Owned Cars in Salem District revealed that the majority of the respondents showed a high level of attitude towards pre-owned cars, which is 65.3%, indicating that the general consumer has a positive attitude towards buying used cars. Almost half of the respondents showed a high level of buying behaviour, which is 49.5%, indicating that pre-owned cars are highly accepted among the general consumer population. Furthermore, the findings revealed that the influence of economic factors, such as 42.1%, and the influence of brand perception, such as 46.3%, are significant in the buying decisions of the general consumer towards pre-owned cars. In addition, the level of satisfaction among the respondents was high, which is 45.3%, indicating that the general consumer is highly satisfied with the buying experience. However, the study revealed that the influence of social factors, such as 44.2%, and the influence of push and pull factors, such as 35.8%, are relatively lower in the buying behaviour of the general consumer. The t-test analysis revealed that there was no significant difference between male and female respondents in terms of the majority of the factors influencing consumer buying behavior towards pre-owned cars, except for social influence. The ANOVA test revealed that the overall attitude of the respondents towards pre-owned cars was significantly different (Sig = 0.034), as was the overall satisfaction of the respondents (Sig = 0.048), depending on the mode of purchase, while the other factors did not reveal significant differences. The correlation test revealed that there was no significant relationship between the monthly income of the respondents and consumer buying behaviour towards pre-owned cars because the P value was more than 0.05.

Suggestions

From the results obtained in the study, several suggestions can be made that can improve the pre-owned car market, which in turn can improve the buying behaviour of the consumers. Since the majority of the respondents had shown a positive attitude towards pre-owned cars, the dealers of automobiles must ensure that they maintain transparency in the market. Dealers must ensure that they provide detailed information regarding the history of the vehicle, ownership, mileage, and maintenance status, which can help the consumers make the right decision. Economic factors have also shown significant impact on the consumers, which must be addressed by the dealers. Dealers must ensure that they introduce easy loan facilities, instalment plans, and affordable pricing strategies, which can attract more consumers towards buying pre-owned cars, especially those from the middle-income group. Brand perception also played an important role in influencing consumer decisions. Therefore, it is essential for dealers to promote renowned and dependable automobile brands in the pre-owned car market. Certified pre-owned car programs and quality inspection services will further boost consumer confidence and reliability of brands.

Conclusion

The present study aims to investigate the consumer buying behaviour towards pre-owned cars in Salem District and the

factors that affect the consumers' buying behaviour. According to the findings, consumers showed a positive attitude towards pre-owned cars. A majority of the respondents showed a high level of attitude towards pre-owned cars, and a considerable number of consumers showed a high level of overall buying behaviour. This shows that pre-owned cars are gaining popularity as a viable option for consumers, and consumers are increasingly accepting them as a viable option. According to the findings, the factors that affect the consumers' buying behaviour are the economic factors, the brand, and the overall satisfaction level. A considerable number of consumers showed a preference towards pre-owned cars because they are affordable and provide the opportunity to own a branded car at a low cost. According to the findings, consumers are satisfied with the purchase of pre-owned cars. According to the findings, the statistical analysis showed that gender does not affect the consumers' overall buying behaviour except the social influence. According to the findings, the ANOVA test showed that the mode of purchase has a significant effect on the consumers' attitude and satisfaction level. The correlation analysis revealed that the monthly income had no significant relationship with the consumer buying behavior. Based on the above analysis, the study concludes that affordability, brand trust, and enhanced buying experiences are the factors that increase the demand for pre-owned cars.

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