A Study on Consumer Preferences of Petroleum Retail Outlets

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Abstract: *An understanding of buyer behaviour is essential in marketing planning and programmes. Buyer behaviour is one of the most important keys to successful marketing. It is a process. Potential customers are subjected to various stimuli. The customer is regarded as a black box as we cannot see what is going on in his mind. He responds to the marketing management. The model of be buyer behaviour is a stimulus-response model. Response may be decision to purchase or not to purchase. In the present scenario, the automobile companies are offering unimaginable price and schemes to boost up their sales volume. This induce the people to purchase more number of vehicles and it increase the consumption of people to purchase more number of vehicles and it increase the consumption of fuel. It gives more trouble to the government to avail the maximum capacity of fuel in the country. In this situation the government liberalized the petroleum policy to the petroleum corporations, to fix the price by themselves by consulting with OPEC (oil and petroleum exporting council) and also private petroleum corporation can establish their own retail outlets to build up the brand and to capture the market. For this a study has been conducted to assess the preference of retail outlet (petroleum corporations) among the consumers. It helps to identify the perception of consumers towards petroleum corporations and to create the brand image among the petroleum corporation.*
Keywords: *Petroleum products, Lubricating oil, Speed, Power and Petro net card*

I.   Introduction

Buyers behaviour includes the acts of individuals directly involved in obtaining and using economic goods and services including sequence of decision processes that precede and determine these acts. Actual purchase is only a part of the decision process. In buyer behaviour we consider not only why, how, and what people buy but other factors such as where, how often, and under what conditions the purchase is made. An understanding of buyer behaviour is essential in marketing planning and programmes. Buyer behaviour is one of the most important keys to successful marketing. It is a process. Potential customers are subjected to various stimuli. The customer is regarded as a black box as we cannot see what is going on in his mind. He responds to the marketing management. The model of be buyer behaviour is a stimulus-response model. Response may be decision to purchase or not to purchase.

Statement of The Problem

In the present scenario, the automobile companies are offering unimaginable price and schemes to boost up their sales volume. This induce the people to purchase more number of vehicles and it increase the consumption of people to purchase more number of vehicles and it increase the consumption of fuel. It gives more trouble to the government to avail the maximum capacity of fuel in the country. In this situation the government liberalized the petroleum policy to the petroleum corporations, to fix the price by themselves by consulting with OPEC (oil and petroleum exporting council) and also private petroleum corporation can establish their own retail outlets to build up the brand and to capture the market. For this a study has been conducted to assess the preference of retail outlet (petroleum corporations) among the consumers in Kumbakonam town. It helps to identify the perception of consumers towards petroleum corporations and to create the brand image among the petroleum corporation.

Objectives of The Study

Suggest better ways &means for the improvement of services & facilities in the petroleum corporations (bunks).

II.   Research Methodology

The research methodology is systematically used to solve the research problems. It may be under stood as a science of studying now research is done scientifically. In this we study various step that are generally adopted by the researcher in studying his/her researcher problem along with the logical behind them. Sampling method was used collect the pertinent data from the respondents were convenience sampling. The study was conducted in and around Kumbakonam town and hence, the sample for the study was selected among the two wheelers and four wheelers and four wheelers in Kumbakonam.

Sampling Size

The total population of the study was unlimited. A sample of 80 consumers using two wheelers and 30 consumers using four wheelers was taken for conducting the study.

Sampling Technique

The respondents were selected by using convenience sampling from the selected areas of Kumbakonam town.

Statistical Tools

Data collected through questionnaire were presented in a master table. From the master table, sub-tables were prepared. In order to analysis and interpretation of the data simple statistical tools like percentage analysis, chi-square analysis and ranking method was used.

Table 1: Profile Of The Respondents

Gender	Male	35	70
	Female	15	30
Age	18-25	23	46
	26-40	20	40
	Above 40	7	14
Education	School level	11	22
	Degree level	15	30
	Post graduate	10	20
	Professional	12	24
	Diploma	2	4
Occupation	Students	16	32
	Service	2	4
	Profession	9	18
	Business	15	30
	Agriculture	2	4
	House wife	6	12
Monthly Income	< Rs.5000	12	24
	Rs.5000- Rs.10000	18	36
	Rs.10000- Rs.15000	16	32
	Rs.15000- Rs.20000	3	6
	> Rs.20000	1	2

Source: Primary Data

Table 2: Preference Of Special Brand Of Fuel Offered By Various Corporations

Preference of Branded Fuel	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Speed	7	14
Power	12	24
Extra premium	3	6
Speed diesel	-	-
Extra mile speed	4	8
Turbo jet speed	1	2
None of the above	23	46
Total	50	100

From Table 2, it is clear that 46% of the respondents didn't prefer any branded fuel following that 24% of the respondents prefer power, 14% of the respondents prefer speed, 8% of the respondents prefer extra mile speed, 6% prefer extra premium, and 2% of the respondents prefer Turbojet speed. Thus, it can be concluded that the majority of the respondents didn't prefer branded fuel in this study area.

Table 3: Preference Of Branded Lubricating Oil Offered By Various Corporations

Preference of Lubricating Oil	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Servo	26	52
Make	3	6
4T oil	1	2
None of the above	20	40
Total	50	100

From Table 3, it is clear that 52% of the respondents prefer servo, following that 40% of the respondents didn't prefer any branded lubricating oil, 6% of them prefer Mak and remaining 2% of the respondents prefer 4T oil. Thus, it can be concluded that the majority of the respondents prefer servo brand of lubrication oil.

Table 4: Sources Of Awarness About Brands Offered By Corporations

Source of Awareness	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Advertisements	16	32
Friends % relatives	23	46
Recommended by Vehicle Manufacturers	10	20
Self	1	2
Total	50	100

From Table 4, it is clear that 46% of the respondents are aware about corporation brands through friends & relatives, following that 32% of the respondents are aware through Advertisements 20% of the respondents are aware through vehicle manufactures are remaining 2% of the respondents are by self. Thus, it can be concluded that the majority of the respondents are aware about corporation brands through friends and relatives in the field of study.

Table 5: Gender Vs Litres Of Fuel Filled In A Visit

Gender	Litres of fuel filled in a visit			Total
	1-2	**3-4**	**5-6**	
Male	20(57.14)	7	9(25.71)	36
Female	14(100)	-	-	4
Total	34	7	9	50

It is found Table 5 that 57.14% of the male respondents fill 1-2 liters of fuel following 25.71% of the male respondents fill 3-4 liters of fuel following 25.71% of the male respondents fill 5-6 liters of fuel and 100% of the female respondents fill1-2 liters of fuel. Thus it can be concluded that majority of the male respondents fill 1-2 liters of fuel in the study area.

Table 6: Gender Vs Monthly Expenses Of The Respondents

Gender	Monthly expenses					Total
	100-300	**301-500**	**501-700**	**701-900**	**901-1100**	
Male	5(14.29)	12(34.29)	4(11.43)	6(17.14)	8(22.85)	35
Female	8(53.33)	4(26.67)	3(20)	-	-	15
total	13	16	7	6	8	50

It is found from Table 6 that the 34.29% of the male respondents spending Rs. 301-500 for consumption of fuel following that 17.14% of the respondents spending Rs. 701-900 and 53.33% of the female respondents spending Rs. 100-300. Thus, it can be concluded that majority of the male respondents spending Rs. 301-500 in the study area.

With a view to find the degree of relationship between gender of the respondents and monthly expenses chi-square test is applied. The following depicts the relationship between the variables. Ho: There is no relationship between gender of the respondents and monthly expenses.

Table 7: Gender Vs Monthly Expenses Of The Respondents Chi-Square)

Factors	Degree of freedom	Calculated value	Table value	Result
Gender Vs Monthly expenses	4	6.986	9.49	insignificant

From Table 7, it is clear that calculated value is less than the table value (6.9876<9.49). If calculated value is less than the table value alternative hypothesis (ha) is rejected and null hypothesis (Ho) is accepted. So there is no significance relationship between gender and monthly expenses.

Table 8: Income Of The Respondents Vs Consumption Of Fuel In A Week

Income Rs.	Consumption of fuel in a week			Total
	1-5	**6-10**	**11-15**	
Below 5000	10(83.33)	2(16.67)	-	12
5001-10000	9(50)	8(44.44)	1(5.56)	18
10001-15000	9(56.25)	6(37.5)	1(6.25)	16
15001-20000	2(66.67)	1(100)	-	3
Above 20000	-	1(100)	-	1
Total	30	18	2	50

It is found from the Table 8 that 50% of the income between Rs. 5001- 10000 consume 1-5 litres of fuel in a week, following that 83.33% of the respondents of income below Rs. 5000 consume 1-5 litres of fuel in a week and 56.25% of the respondents of income between Rs. 10001- 15000 consume 1-5 litres of fuel in a week. Thus, it can be concluded that majority of the respondents of income Rs. 5001-10000 consume 1-5 litres of fuel in the style area.

With a view to find the degree of relationship between income and consumption of fuel in a week, chi-square test is applies. The following depicts the relationship between the variables.

Table 9: Income Of The Respondents Vs Consumption Of Fuel In A Week

Factors	Degree of freedom	Calculated value	Table value	Result
Income Vs Consumption of fuel in a week	8	1.604	15.507	Insignificant

From Table 9, it is clear that calculated value is less than the table value (1.604< 15.507). If calculated value is less than the table value alternative hypothesis (Ha) is rejected and null hypothesis (Ho) is accepted. So there is no significance relationship between income and consumption of fuel in a week.

Table 10: Age Of The Respondents Vs Corporation Name

AGE (Yrs)	CORPORATION NAME			Total
	IOC	BPCL	HPCL	
18-25	5(21.74)	9(39.13)	9(39.13)	23
26-40	22(10)	13(65)	13(65)	20
Above40	2(28.25)	3(42.86)	3(42.86)	7
Total	9	16	25	

It is found from the Table 10 that the 39.13% respondents belongs to age group of 18-25 yrs prefer HPCL, following that 39.13% respondents belongs to age group of above 18-25 yrs of BPCL, 65% respondents belongs to age group between 26-40 yrs prefer HPCL, 25% respondents belongs to age group between 26-40 prefer BPCL and 42.86% respondents belongs to age group of above 40 yrs prefer HPCL. Thus, it can be concluded that 43. 48% respondents belongs to age group 18-25 yrs prefer HPCL in the study area.

With a view to find the degree of relationship between the age of the respondents and corporation name, chi-square test is applied. The following hypothesis was framed. Ho: There is no relationship between age of the respondents and corporation name.

Table 11: Age Of The Respondents Vs Corporation Name (Chi-Square Test)

Factors	Degree of freedom	Calculated value	Table Value	Result
Age of the respondents Vs Corporation name	6	2.043	2.592	Insignificant

From the Table 11, it is clear that calculated value is less than the table value (2.042< 12.592). If calculated value is less than the table value null hypothesis (Ho) is accepted. So, there is no significance relationship between age and corporation name.

Table 12: Occupation Of The Respondents Vs Consumption Of Fuel In A Week

Occupation	Consumption on Fuel			Total
	1-5	6-10	11-15	
Student	12(75)	4 (25)	-	16
Service	1(50)	1(50)	-	2
Professionals	4(44.44)	4(44.44)	1(11.2)	9
Business	8(53.33)	6(40)	1(6.67)	15
Agriculture	-	2(100)	-	2
House wife	5(83.33)	¤ 1(16.67)	-	6
Total	30	18	2	50

Table 13: Occupation Of The Respondents Vs Consumption Of Fuel In A Week

Factors	Degree of freedom	Calculated value	Table value	Result
Occupation Vs Consumption of fuel in a week	12	1.227	21.026	Insignificant

From the Table 13, it is clear that calculated value is less than the table value [1.227<21.026]. If calculated value is less than the table value alternative hypothesis (Ha) is rejected and null hypothesis (Ho) is accepted. So there is no significance relationship between occupation and consumption of fuel.

Table 14: Influencing Factor To Go For Particular Bunk Regularly [Ranking method]

S. No.	Factors	Total score	Mean score	Rank
1	Nearness to my place	3318	77.16	I
2	No adulteration	2403	55.88	IV
3	Name of the Corporation	1862	43.30	VI
4	Good services	3000	69.77	II
5	Always rendering the balanced money exactly	1996	46.42	V
6	Credit facility	1616	37.58	VII
7	Organization tip up with bunk	1400	32.56	VIII
8	Provide all basic facilities like air, water, parking facilities, etc.	2499	58.12	III
9	Providing additional facilities like STD booth, snack bars, cafeteria and ATM.	1268	29.49	IX

It could be observed from the above table that nearness to my place was topped list of factors influenced to go for the particular bunk regularly among the respondents with the mean score of 77.16. The second important factor, which influenced to respondents to fill the fuel are providing all basic facilities like air, water and parking facilities etc. No adulteration, always rendering the balanced money exactly, credit facility, organization tie up with bunk are also influence the respondents with different mean score. The least important factor which influences the respondents was providing additional facilities like STD booth, snack bars, cafeteria ATM with a mean sore of 29.49 in the study area.

III. Findings

1. The majority (46%) of the respondents are belongs to the group of above 18-25 years in the two-wheeler and in the four-wheeler the majority (60%) of the respondents are in the age of group of above 40 years.
2. The majority (70%) of the respondents are male member in Two wheeler and it is (96.7%) in four wheeler.
3. The majority (15) of the respondents are studied up to graduation in Two wheeler and the majority (17) of them are studied up to school in four wheeler.
4. Out of (50) respondents, the majority (16) of them are students in two wheeler and in the four wheeler among (30) respondents the majority (18) of them are doing business.
5. (36%) of the respondents monthly income is in between Rs.5001-10000 in two wheeler, and it is (60%) in four wheeler.
6. The majority (20%) of the respondents brand of vehicle is TVS Scooty and in four wheeler the majority (20%) of the brand of vehicle in Maruti 800.
7. (100% of the respondents fuel version in petrol in two wheeler and the majority (60%) of the respondents fuel revision is diesel.
8. (100%) of the respondents are self driving in two- wheeler and it is (90%) in four-wheeler.
9. Out of (50) respondents the majority (35) of them fill 1-2 litres of fuel in a visit in two-wheeler and in four wheeler among (30) respondents the majority (18) of them fill 1-20 litres of fuel in (9) visit.

Suggestions
1. Like Indian Oil corporation the other corporation should also introduce friendly services like 'Swagat'.
2. Every corporation must provide petro net card.
3. The various petroleum corporations for regular customer should provide credit facilities.
4. National highway corporation must refreshment rooms and medical shops,
5. Cleaning of vehicle must be provided in every bunk.
6. Facilities like ATM, telephone booth must be provided in all bunks.
7. Spacious parking area must be provided in all the corporation bunks.
8. Fast service will lead to customer satisfaction.

IV. Conclusion

Today, the majority of the people were using vehicle (two wheeler and four wheeler) for transporting from one place to another place for different purpose. Petroleum corporations are introducing varieties of schemes to attract the people as well as to fulfil the expectations of the people towards fuel consumption. It makes more competition among the petroleum corporation to retain the consumers and to be a leader in the market. In this situation government liberalized the policy for the private petroleum corporations to establish their own retail outlets (Bunks).

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