
Consumer Perception of Two- Wheelers in India

*Dr. D. M. Gujarathi

**Kailas Srinivas Somani

Introduction

Indian is blessed with enormous resources. This feature has attracted number of countries to utilize and enhance their economy at the maximum level. Indian market is fast growing. Consumer is king of market. Consumer is the basic economic unit who has a power to decide what to buy, where to buy, when to buy and how much to buy. Consumers have preferences about the products that they buy. The companies must understand and implement these preferences to improvise their sales and to keep the consumer happy. Hence, they try to frame their business and marketing strategies as per consumer preferences. The quality of the strategy rises when more preferences are satisfied. However, fulfilment of all the likings of the consumers in a single design is not possible. This is not same as tough rules and restrictions that must be followed in all plans made while scheduling. Therefore, companies have to devise the strategies about identifying and satisfying consumer perceptions.

Objective of the Study:

The main objectives of the present study are as follows:

1. To study the consumer perception about two wheeler companies in India.
2. To study the factors influencing purchasing of two wheelers
3. To study the technical features perceived by consumers in two wheelers markets
4. To study the Customer's Satisfaction level if Business Strategy is as per their Perception

Research Methodology:

The study is based on primary data. For the purpose of Primary data, North Maharashtra has been selected. Four top sellers of two wheelers in India as per the FY 2019 have been selected. These four sellers are: Hero Motocorp Ltd., Honda Motorcycle and Scooter India (HMSI), Bajaj Auto Ltd., TVS Motor Ltd.

The primary data has been collected from North Maharashtra which comprises of five districts viz., Nashik, Nandurbar, Jalgaon, Dhule and Ahmednagar. For the purpose of study two districts- Ahmednagar and Nasik have been selected. Both the districts are further divided into two- north and south regions. From each region two tehsils are selected. The selected Tehsils are: Rahata and Sangamner from North Ahmednagar and Pathardi and Parner from South Ahmednagar, Malegaon and Kalwan from North Nasik and Nasik city and Sinnar from South Nasik. The primary data has been collected from four major brands company outlets: Hero, Honda, Bajaj and TVS of selected districts. A well -defined structured questionnaire was administered to the customers who came to the dealer outlets for either enquiry or purchase. The sampling technique used in this study is non probability and the sampling method is convenience sampling and voluntary sampling for selection of customers. Customers were contacted at dealer's office. Researcher had requested customers to fill up the questionnaire. Customers responded positively. A sample of equal number of customers (200) had been taken from each brand summing the overall sample to 800.

Data Analysis:

Factors Influencing the Purchase of Two Wheelers

Practically appearance of the product, its price, brand value, reliability, mileage, life of the vehicle, performance and style, after sales service and resale value are the major factors the determine the buying decision of the consumer. The responses of respondents related to these factors are as follows:

*Director, Ashoka Business School Nashik

**Research Scholar, S. N. Arts, D. J. Malpani Commerce & B. N. Sarda Science College Sangamner, Sangamner

Table No. 1.1
Factors Influencing the Purchase of Two Wheelers

Factors	Frequency								Total
	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	R6	R7	R8	
Mileage	240	220	100	99	43	37	26	35	800
Price	135	115	217	205	35	30	33	30	800
Brand Value	167	163	100	226	60	35	30	19	800
Reliability	45	102	89	90	189	113	142	30	800
Appearance	200	225	150	90	42	39	24	30	800
Life of Vehicle	40	47	55	135	150	169	154	50	800
Resale Value	35	48	58	152	161	138	168	40	800
After Sales Service	40	47	135	55	80	139	154	150	800

Source: Primary Data

Interpretation:

1. There are number of factors that influence buying decision of consumers. For the purpose of study, researcher has identified 8 factors and their importance in the mind of respondents is being measured and the data is presented in table no. 1.1
2. Ranking method was used to identify the importance of factors as per respondents' responses.
3. Majority respondents agree with most of the factors identified by the researcher. According to majority of the respondents, they agree that the selected factors are important in framing their buying decision.
4. Table depicts that mileage is the most important factor for almost all the buyers while making buying decision whereas they are least bothered about the resale value of the product.

Technical Features in Two- Wheelers

Today two wheelers come with lots of new cool technical features such as combined or integrated braking system, external fuel filling, bigger wheels with tubeless tyres, mobile charger, telescopic front suspension, anti - theft system, adjustable seat height, boot light, etc. not all but many of the recent two wheelers are equipped with these features. The following are the responses of the respondents about technical feature they look for in two wheelers. Obviously any customer would expect all the features in his/her vehicle, hence researcher has shortlisted few features and respondents have ranked them as per their preference:

Table No. 1.2**Technical Features in Two Wheelers**

Technical Features in Two- Wheeler	Frequency								Total
	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	R6	R7	R8	
Combined or Integrated Braking System	250	210	100	89	43	37	26	45	800
External Fuel Filling	145	125	217	205	35	30	23	20	800
Bigger Wheels With	167	163	110	216	60	35	30	19	800

Tubeless Tyres									
Mobile Charger	45	112	89	90	179	113	142	30	800
Telescopic Front Suspension	200	225	140	90	42	39	24	40	800
Anti Theft System	40	47	55	135	150	169	154	50	800
Adjustable Seat Height	35	48	58	152	161	138	168	40	800
Boot Light	40	47	135	55	90	129	154	150	800

Source: Primary Data (R = rank)

Interpretation:

1. Respondents have ranked combined or integrated braking system as first because a balanced braking effort is required on both the wheels to stop without skidding. Telescopic Front Suspension has been ranked second by the users. It helps to reduce the shocks and vibrations on uneven roads and makes the ride smoother and comfortable. Almost all the two wheelers available in India have this feature.
2. External fuel filling has been ranked third by the users. Some vehicle have fuel tank opening below the seats. Hence, they have to get down at the fuel station for fuel filling. This leads to inconvenience and wastage of time. Bigger wheels with tubeless tyres are ranked fourth by the respondents. Bigger wheels help to increase stability and manoeuvrability of the scooter.
3. Mobile phones have become utmost important for everyone today, hence, mobile charger feature has been ranked fifth by the respondents. This feature helps the customers to charge their phones in case the battery is drained. Sixth rank has been given to anti- theft system in the two wheelers. If this feature is available the user need not worry about his two wheeler parked in the parking.
4. Seventh rank is given to adjustable seat height that can be adjusted as per the requirement of the rider. Eighth rank is bagged by boot light. Boot light in the scooter will save you from the hassle of holding your phone in one hand with flashlight on and searching for your lost stuff.
5. It can be concluded that there are remarkable features present in the two wheelers today. Hence the expectations of the customers have also increased. Customers go through the options precisely before making the big move. Hence, companies must try to include as many features as possible in their vehicle to attract the consumers.

Servicing the Two Wheeler:

Companies provide limited free servicing for the vehicle, thereafter customers have to pay and get their vehicle serviced. When customer has to pay for servicing the two wheeler, many of them do not go to the authorized service station. They take their vehicle to the nearest mechanic as per their convenience. Hence, researcher has included a question about customers' preference to service their two wheelers at authorized or unauthorized service station:

Table No. 1.3

Servicing Two Wheeler

Servicing Two Wheeler	Frequency	Percentage
Authorized Service Station	728	91
Unauthorized Service Station	72	9
Total	800	100

Source: Primary Data

Interpretation:

1. 91 per cent of the customers prefer authorized service station for servicing of their two wheelers. Whether it is paid or free does not matter to them.
2. 9 per cent of the customers take their vehicle to unauthorized service station for maintenance service. It can be concluded that whether the servicing is free or paid, servicing the two wheeler at authorized service station is preferred by customers

Reason for Servicing the Two Wheeler from Authorized Service Station:

As discussed in the earlier question, some customers prefer to service their two wheelers from the authorized service stations while some prefer to do it from unauthorized service stations. Both the options are available to the consumers and they have a choice which option to follow. There are local mechanics

too who provide servicing facility. However, it is advisable that two wheelers must be serviced from authorized workshops if possible. There are number of reasons for this.

Table No. 1.4**Reason for Servicing the Two Wheeler from Authorized Service Station**

Factors	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Warranty	296	37	368	46	104	13	24	3	8	1
Guarantee	184	23	288	36	216	27	88	11	24	3
Original Parts	240	30	360	45	144	18	40	5	16	2
Annual Maintenance Contract	304	38	376	47	104	13	8	1	8	1
Trust	456	57	248	31	56	7	24	3	16	2
Special Offers	248	31	376	47	144	18	24	3	8	1
Satisfactory Service	256	32	312	39	136	17	64	8	32	4

Source: Primary Data

Interpretation:

1. There are number of reasons for servicing the two- wheeler from authorized service station by the consumers. For the purpose of study, researcher has identified six such reasons and their importance in the mind of respondents is being measured and the data is presented in table no. 1.4
2. Five Point Likert Scale of Agreement (strongly agree to strongly disagree) was used to identify the importance of factors as per respondents' responses
3. Table shows that trust is the factor that is strongly agreed upon by 57 per cent of the respondents. Maximum respondents agree that warranty (37 per cent) and annual maintenance of contract (38 per cent) are the main reasons of getting their vehicle services from authorized service station.
4. It can be concluded that majority consumers agree that servicing two wheelers from authorized service station is beneficial in many regards and hence, majority of them prefer to do so.

Features Perceived in Two Wheelers by Customers:

The competition among the two wheeler companies is growing very fast due to large number of players in the market. Hence, customers too have a set of preferences and choices from the company or brand. Knowing that people do have certain criteria of preferences in their minds before going for purchasing a two wheeler, researcher has tried to find the factors that customers evaluate before making their buying decision. Researcher has tried to explore real order of preferences which a customer has while making buying decision which are as follows:

Table No. 1.5**Features Perceived in Two Wheelers by Customers**

Features Perceived	Frequency					Total
	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	
Long Life	145	297	144	130	84	800
Style	157	145	250	151	97	800
Average	335	168	112	95	90	800
After Sale Service	84	97	194	180	245	800
Resale Value	146	153	93	235	173	800

Source: Primary Data (R= rank)

Interpretation:

1. Customers expect their vehicles to give better average so that it can prove cost effective and fuel efficient. Hence, mileage is ranked first by the 43 per cent customers in their list of perception followed by long life. Obviously, durability is the second most important thing that 38 per cent of the consumers perceive to be a feature of their product
2. Style is ranked third by 32 per cent of respondents whereas after sales service is ranked fourth
3. Resale value is yet another feature that consumers perceive to be present in their product. Resale value has been ranked fifth by 30 per cent of the respondents

4. It can be concluded that mileage is the first the most important feature perceived by consumers followed by durability, style, after sales service and resale value

Fulfilment of Customers' Perception:

As discussed in the above point customers have a lot of perception about two wheelers that they have to buy and they have ranked these perceptions in a particular order, but the question arises whether customers feel that their perception has been fulfilled by the two wheeler companies. Whether companies frame their business strategy as per consumer perception? Researcher included a question related to this in questionnaire, the responses are as follows:

Table No. 1.6

Fulfilment of Customers' Perception

Fulfilment of Customers' Perception	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	568	71
No	232	29
Total	800	100

Source: Primary Data

Interpretation:

1. 71 per cent respondents are of the opinion that their two wheeler company fulfils their perception and hence they are satisfied
2. 29 per cent of the respondents feel that their perceptions are not being understood and fulfilled by their two wheeler company
3. It can be concluded that not all the perceptions of the consumers are taken care of and fulfilled by the companies. Though fulfilment of all the consumer perception is not practically possible, companies must try to fulfil as many as possible to keep their existing customers happy and satisfied and to attract new customers.

Level of Customer's Satisfaction if Business Strategy is as per their Perception:

Consumer perception plays an important role in business. If it is properly used and applied, it can prove to be an important key to help business grow and survive in the market. Modern marketing is consumer oriented. Hence it is necessary to understand the consumer perception by the companies towards their products or service while formulating the decisions related to product, price, channel and promotion policies. The consumer perception can help the companies to know the factors that influence buying decision of the consumers and hence, they can formulate their business strategies accordingly. Also if the business strategy is developed as per consumer perception, the consumers are more satisfied. Researcher has tried to analyse the level of customers' satisfaction if business strategies are set as per consumer perception:

Table No. 1.7

Level of Customer's Satisfaction if Business Strategy is as per their Perception

Level of Customer's Satisfaction if Business Strategy is as per their Perception	Frequency	Percentage
Very High	408	51
High	240	30
Neutral	128	16
Low	24	3
Very Low	8	1
Total	800	100

Source: Primary Data

Interpretation:

1. 51 per cent of the customers said that their level of satisfaction will be very high if the business strategy is set as per consumer perception whereas 30 per cent said they will be highly satisfied
2. 16 per cent has given a neutral reaction saying that it won't affect them must whether the business strategy is set as per consumer perception or not
3. 3 per cent said that their level of satisfaction will be low and that of rest 1 per cent will be very low if business strategy is set as per consumer perception

4. It can be concluded that setting up of business strategy is set as per consumer perception can add to satisfaction level of the consumers. Satisfied consumer is a loyal consumer, hence, company must make efforts to set their strategy after making a detailed study of what their consumers perceive

Concluding Remark:

Above study shows how consumer perception is important to be considered while framing the business strategies. If the strategies are framed as per perception, the sale of the product becomes easier and consumers are satisfied with the features of the product. To survive in this competitive environment understanding consumer perception has become utmost important.

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