Madurai is the second largest city situated in the southern Tamil Nadu, on the banks of river Vaigai. According to history this city has been inhabited for more than 2500 years. This city is called the “city of temples” and “the city that never sleeps”. The old city is well laid out in the shape of “Lotus” with “Sri Meenakshi Amman” temple at its centre on the southern banks of river Vaigai.

Welcome to the abode of Goddess, Sri Meenakshsi.
In 1999 Suzuki introduced to the world a super bike Suzuki Hayabusa with 1.3L DOHC engine (Double over head camshaft). This started the evolutionary journey of the car “The Swift”. The first generation of swift cars was manufactured during 2000, fitted with M-family engine. The 2nd generations of Swift Cars were manufactured during the year 2004-2010. The 3rd generations of cars were manufactured in the year 2010 and later.

Welcome to world of Maruti Suzuki Swift and enjoy “comfort, convenience, style and safety”.
INTRODUCTION
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Executive Summary

Automobile sector in India is the fastest growing sector contributing significantly to GDP (KPMG) and by government estimates it is expected to rise exponentially to hundred fifty billion dollars in the year 2016. Automobile sector in India has grown from a couple of manufacturer to thirty five manufactures in a very short span of time. The marketing managers are finding it extremely difficult to differentiate the products and brand themselves uniquely, since all the automobile manufacturers deliver the same features, services and at an identical price. To navigate in this highly competitive market, the manager has to find a viable solution. Brand personality is the best solution for the marketing managers to differentiate and to be distinct. Maruti Suzuki has been voted as the “most trusted brand” consecutively for the 13 years by JD power Asia Pacific. The first Maruti Car was launched in 1983 as a poor man’s car and since then it has been in the market as the most successful brand for the past 30 years. The objective of the study is to study the various customer segments in Madurai city driving Maruti Swift cars and to determine the brand personality by studying the relationship and impact of human personality on brand personality.

The researcher received 402 filled in questionnaires from the Maruti swift car owners. The questionnaire was constructed based on Jenifer Aaker dimensions of Brand personality.

In stage I the analysis was based on the 42 brand personality items among the owners of Maruti Swift. To identify the segments Multiple Regressesion was used to identify the variables, which discriminated the sample into various segments. Also multiple regressions were conducted to identify the cause and effect relationship. In stage II multiple regressions was used to identify the impact of human personality on Brand personality dimensions. In stage III to identify the discriminating human personality items which influenced the brand personality items, multiple discriminate
analyses were used. Monaova was applied to the data to identify the personal factors that influenced the brand personality dimensions.

The segmentation of the owners of Maruti swift helped in identifying four major segments viz. utilitarian’s, traditionalist, emotionalist and protagonist. Structural equation modeling - Amos analyses revealed that the brand personality dimension of Maruti Swift as rugged and the human personality dimension extraversion.

1.2 Introduction

Indian automobile industry is slated to grow exponentially by contributing a major share of 10% to the GDP in 2016. Automobile industry will be one of the greatest pillars of growth for the Indian economy in the years to come. This industry alone is expected to contribute USD 150 billion in 2016 as per the government estimates. The domestic growth has been CAGR 9 percent and the export has been 27 percent (KPMG).

The Indian automobile market offers the customer a plethora of choice and hence it is becoming crowded with more number of manufactures entering the race. From just 10 manufactures of passenger cars in 1980s the market today has nearly 35 manufactures. Automobile industry analysts say even with this kind of race, the market penetration is far less compared to the other Asian countries. Hence the scope of Indian automobile industry to grow manifold is great.

The ever increasing Indian population coupled with faster urbanization has provided a great opportunity and challenge to the automobile industry. With more number of consumers becoming mobile due to the expansion of villages to cities to megacities, the need for a passenger car has become a dire necessity than a luxury. Urbanization breeds more nuclear and extended families than the traditional Indian joint families. This in turns creates a major demand for small and fuel efficient cars which can navigate the narrow, crowded city lanes efficiently.
Indian consuming class population of 450 million whose need is convenience and status is said to be a major factor propelling the demand. Their demands are still enhanced by availability of hassle free finance from Bankers and NBFCs.

In this scenario the marketing managers are feeling the heat to position their brand in the minds of the consumers. Brand personality is one such tool which has been proved time and again as great differentiator within the brands having identical attributes and hence this detailed study of Maruti swift’s brand personality.

1.3 Brand personality

A product’s brand connects a company output and reputation with customers needs and investor hopes (Ulrich 2007). Other definition highlighting various aspects of brand have been put forth by various researches like the concept of brand equity (Kellor 1993, Aaker 1996), brand personality (Aaker 1996) and of added values (De Chernatory 1998).

De Chernatory (1998) model of added values, of a brand has two major dimension viz. tangible and intangible. According to de Chernatory, the brand personality is one of the most important factors in the intangible dimension, of the emotional factor for brand construct and hence a viable strategy for establishing and emphasizing the distinctiveness of a brand is through brand personality.

Brand personality contributes in differentiating brand identity making brands more desirable to consumers. Positioning a brand in generic manner will make the brand a commodity and the brand gets lost in the crowded market. To survive the market if the brand has personality, it becomes live and the consumers is able to make an emotional connect, that is “all in the mind”. A distinct brand personality helps to create a unique and favorable association in consumer memory and helps to build and enhance brand equity.

According to Aaker (1997) in the brand management literature Kapferer was the first to introduce in 1970’s the concept of brand personality. Upshaw defines brand personality as “the outward face of a brand, its characters closely associated
with human traits” (Upshaw 1995) Aaker states that a person perceived personality is affected by everything associated with that person like neighborhood, friends, clothes and activities (Aaker 1996).

These path breaking contributions provide brand personality as a means for making a brand to standout in the market. Today the brand personality is defined as “the set of human characteristics associated with brand” (Aaker 1997) and ”it involves nothing more than describing a product as if it were a human being” (Hendon & William 1985 ) Aaker (1997) suggested that brand personalities are genuine and could be used to measure brand personality across product categories and cultures.

1.4 Human Personality

The word personality is defined variously in ancient Latin and theology. But the first psychologist who observed and constructed a personality theory was Sigmand Freud. Freud considered that personality to be something dynamic, cumulative and which is also durable and relatively stable over time.

Allport (1937) while writing a book devoted to explain what personality really is, by contributing an entire chapter titled “defining personality”. In this chapter he reviewed 49 definitions before giving his own. Allport described, that a trait is “a generalized and localized neuropsychic system (peculiar to individual) with capacity to render many stimuli and to initiate and guide consistent (equivalent) forms of adaptive and expressive behavior”. In the “fundamental psychological dictionary Bloch and Aliii(1997) summarized personality as “Set of relatively stable and general dynamic, emotional and effective characteristics of an individual’s way of being, in his way to react to the situation in which he/she is”.

The study of personality dates back to 1920 and 1930s in Germany and USA by the lexical hypothesis approach. The first exhaustive and published list of terms related to personality was done by Allport and Odbert in 1936 (with 18000 terms). Later studies have been conveying towards the conclusion that human personality could be summarized by a small number of factors (from 2 to 16). After a large
number of studies the researches have reached a quite conservative number of 5. The reduction of the number of item has been done on the basis of relevancy criterion. The big 5 factors are the result of factor analysis with varimax rotation. Digman and Goldberg observed that the five factor model was a result on the basis of their independent research, apart from the earlier works. Earlier the five factors framework was studied by researchers Cattel, Norman, Eysneck Gilford and Wiggins.

An individual’s stable and recurrent traits are reflected by these 5 dimensions. They are openness to experience, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness and neuroticism commonly referred by the acronym OCEAN.

1.5 Problem statement

The automobile industry in India has recorded a phenomenal growth by contributing 5% of the GDP (KPMG) and the industry is poised to contribute 10% to GDP as per the Government prediction in 2016 and in terms of USD 150 billion. As there is a steep increase in the marketplace competition with more Indian and foreign manufactures vying for a coveted spot, the process of brand differentiation is becoming an difficult task. To mitigate this problem it is important for marketing managers to evolve an strategy for the market combat.

Automobile market in India is poised for an exponential growth, with the increase in per capita income. Earlier an automobile was luxury product. With the explosion of urban growth and the need to travel on daily basis, owning a car has become a necessity. As the numbers of players are increasing in the automobile sector every year, the need to differentiate and position is proving to be tough job for the marketing managers at Maruti. Also the products available in the market are technically and aesthetically similar to one another. To combat this market competition a strong brand is necessary and to build this strong brand, brand personality is an effective tool. One of the viable solutions for establishing the distinctiveness of a brand is through building strong Brand personality.

Brand personality will help in solving the following research issues such as in identifying the different segment of customers existing among the users of Maruti
Swift, the impact of personal and demographic and rational factors on Brand personality dimension. Hence the main problem is to identify the various segments of owners, users and to study the impact of human personality dimension on brand personality dimension. And also to identify whether Jenifer Aaker Brand personality scale could be applied to study Maruti swift’s brand personality in Madurai.

1.6 Objectives of the study

- To study the profile of Maruti swift customers.
- To apply and evaluate the Jenifer Aaker Brand personality dimension theory and the big five human personality theory.
- To identify the various segments of Maruti swift customers.
- To study the cause and effect relationship among brand personality items.
- To study and evaluate the impact of human personality items on brand personality dimensions.
- To study the multi dimensional effect of human personality on brand personality.

1.7 Research Propositions

1) \( H_0 \) There is no discrimination between the segments of customers based on 42 for brand personality items
   \( H_1 \) There is discrimination between the segments of customers based on 42 brand personality items

2) \( H_0 \) No significant cause and effect relationship exists among brand personality items.
   \( H_1 \) There is significant cause and effect relationship among brand personality items.

3) \( H_0 \) Personal demographic and rational factors do not contribute to the brand personality dimensions and BP.
   \( H_1 \) Personal demographic and rational factors contribute to the brand personality dimensions and brand personality
4) $H_0$  No predictable human personality factors influence brand personality dimension.

$H_1$  There is predictable human personality factors influencing brand personality dimension.

5) $H_0$  No significant impact of human personality on brand personality

$H_1$  There is significant impact of human personality on brand personality

1.8 Brand Selection

Maruti is a trusted brand name which comes first into the mind of a person who wishes to buy a new car or a used car. Maruti was launched in India in 1983 and for the past 30 years it has become a household name among automobile users. Maruti started catering to the Indian automobiles industry with a single product - M800 (car), today Maruti Suzuki has nearly 17 brands and 150 variants, catering to all segments of customers. Maruti has got products ranging from Rs.2.5 lacs to Rs.25 lacs. Maruti has been ranked first in the customer satisfaction ranking, for India by global marketing information firm JD power Asia Pacific for consecutively 13 years from 2000. Maruti also provides services station at every 25-30 kilometers on the highways and has the maximum number of service stations throughout the country.

1.9 Data Analysis

Data Analysis was carried out in 3 stages on the data collected. In the 1st stage multiple regression was used to analyze the four segments among the users in Madurai city on the 42 brand personality items. Multiple regressions were used to study the variables, which differentiated the sample into various segments. Also it was used to study the cause and effect relationship among the segments. In the 1Ind stage multiple regressions was used to study the impact of human personality on brand personality dimension. In this stage multi discriminate analysis was used to study the human personality items, discriminating the brand personality dimensions and BP. In the last stage -III –Structural equation modeling - Amos was used to study the multidimensional analysis of human personality on brand personality of the Maruti Suzuki Swift owners.
1.10 Scope of the Study

In this study the researcher has complied to make a confirmatory study of Jennifer Aaker brand personality for Indian Automobile brand. A separate study can be made to explore the Indian brand personality dimensions. In future this study can be conducted in any other city or a village anywhere in India to study the brand personality of a brand.

This kind of a study will help the marketing managers to build a strong brand with a strong positioning strategy. This study was conducted only for Maruti swift and this study can be extended to all other brands of Maruti and a consolidated brand personality of Maruti Suzuki in Madurai city can be deduced, which will further improve the brand positioning.