INTRODUCTION
CHAPTER – 1

INTRODUCTION

Car, which is technically called Cab was once called pleasure in the sense it gives pleasure in riding. Before India attained independence there were only imported cars. After independence car-manufacturing industry was brought under four wheelers, under broad-banding. The car manufacturing industry was in the licensed sector. Licence was given only to a limited number of manufacturers. Later it was Maruti Udyog Limited, which came into being to produce Maruti cars with Japanese collaboration. The present car market scenario is totally different from what was in the licensed sector. The car market is flooded with a number of brands in general and product differentiation within the same brand in particular. For example, the Maruti Udyog Limited produces 8 different varieties of cars by using only one imported Japanese technology. When there are 8 different models of cars under the brand Maruti it will be interesting to examine the attitude of buyers of Maruti cars towards one of the models.
STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The Government of India started encouraging car industry with the objective of import substitution by indigenous technology. The progress shown by the industry over the years resulted increase in car production. Car was a luxurious item once but today it occupies a part of day-to-day life and becomes a necessity. The car industry in India is growing at an enormous rate. Maruti cars are prominent in the Indian Car market. Consumers' preference on Maruti cars may depend upon a number of factors. With one Japanese technology the Maruti Udyog Limited differentiated its products i.e. cars. When there is product differentiation among Maruti products there may be common features among all the products of Maruti Company and also distinctive features among its products. Hence, it will be significant to examine the common features and distinctive features among the different models of Maruti cars. How the distinctive features among the different models of Maruti cars influence different groups of consumers to prefer a particular model is a question needs answer.
SCOPE OF THE STUDY

Now a days, car is a necessity and forms a part of life of even the middle class people. There are at present 8 different models of Maruti cars. All these 8 models are differentiated in many ways. All these 8 models are available in the market. A buyer of a Maruti car has to choose a model from the available 8 models. Therefore, there is a significant scope to examine the attitudes of the buyers of Maruti cars towards one of the models.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Maruti car market is a buyers' market with eight different models of Maruti cars. All these 8 different models are visibly and technically differentiated. Hence, an attempt has been made in this study to examine the consumer attitude towards a model of Maruti car. The specific objectives of the study are as follows.

i. To examine the theoretical nuances behind in studying buyers attitude and behaviour.

ii. To examine common features and distinctive features among Maruti cars.
iii. To analyse empirically the factors which influence the buyers attitude towards a model of Maruti car.

iv. To bring out suggestions from the empirical analysis to enable the Maruti company to strengthen the factors in a model of Maruti car which influences the attitudes of buyers mostly.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Studies relating to the subject matter of the study were searched and reviewed briefly in terms of the inferences and results.

A knowledge on consumer behaviour is very essential for the people in the field of marketing to make crucial decisions during various stages of a product's life cycle. Even a very minor aspect cannot be ignored as it may cause very serious repercussions.

On the one hand the purchase decision taken by the consumer is purely psychological. Owing to this feature one can't see what is going on in the minds of the consumers.

On the other hand it is very vital for the marketers to know what is flickering in the "black box".
Since a long period, research studies have been conducted to find out the affairs happening in the minds of the consumer through forming logics for the behaviour he is exhibiting at various points.

Consumer research is the methodology used to study consumer behaviour. As in any science, consumer behaviour theories must be tested and either supported or rejected before conclusions can be generalized as principle applicable to marketing practice. Some consumer behaviour research is conducted on the basis of observations of actual behaviour in the market place; other research is conducted under controlled conditions in the laboratory; still other research is based on the manipulation of marketing variables within a simulated marketing context. Only through constant testing, evaluation, rejection, and support of related hypothesis can behavioural principles be developed to provide marketers with meaningful insights into psychological and environmental factors that influence consumer decision-making. Consumer behaviour research also enables marketers to carve out new market segments based on variables that emerge as important discriminators among consumers for a specific product or product category.

INTERNAL INFLUENCES ON CONSUMER BEHAVIOR
- Involvement
- Values/Beliefs
- Belief-Expectancy Models
- Attribution
- Information Processing
- Physiological
- Life Style
- Cognitive Dissonance
- Learning
- Personality
- Perception
- Motivation
- Attitudes

EXTERNAL INFLUENCES ON CONSUMER BEHAVIOR
- Persuasion
- Consumer Socialization
- Situation
- Culture
- Opinion Leaders
- Segmentation
- Group Influences
- Innovators/Innovations
- Communications
- Social Stratification
- Family Decision Process
- Demographics

CONSUMER DECISION MAKING
- Post-Purchase
- Evaluation
- Search for Information
- Purchase Decision Process
- Choice
- Brand Awareness/Loyalty

MISCELLANEOUS
- Public Policy
- Consumerism
- General
- Models
- Store Patronage
- Preference

Consumer behaviour research is conducted for every phase of the consumption process: from before the purchase takes place (when the consumer becomes aware of a need), to the search and evaluation of product alternatives (ranging from simple to extensive information search), to the actual purchase decision (including such factors as product and brand choice, store choice, and method of payment), to after the purchase takes place (through any periods of uncertainty, satisfaction, dissatisfaction, repurchase or further search in the marketplace).

As early as 1939, a Viennese Psycho-analyst named Ernest Dichter began to use Freudian Psycho-analytic techniques to uncover the hidden motivations of consumers. By 1950s, his research methodology, which has come to be known as marketers and advertising agencies, motivational research methods consist of projective techniques and depth interviews. Motivational research requires highly trained interviewer / analysts to collect data and to analyse research findings. Because sample sizes are necessarily small, findings cannot be generalized to larger populations. Motivational research findings are highly subjective because they are based on analysts interpretations used primarily to obtain new ideas for promotional campaigns. Motivational research is considered to be qualitative research.
Maston (1982) in his study situational influence on store choice concluded that time pressure is a main component of the usage situation. It depends upon the rush in the departmental store. Further it represents the consumer feelings that they can get in an out at the earliest, after selecting the product.

Shugan (1983) in his study on price and quality relationship exposed that price is an indicator of the quality. Consumers are encouraged to raise the quality of their product. He believes delivering a good quality of goods is the right image among and uses of the product.

Bitta (1984) in his study viewed that buying behaviour is "the decision process and physical activity which the individuals engage in when evaluating, acquiring, using and disposing of goods and services".

Dhunna (1984) in his study focused that "the consumer behaviour of soft drinks among 100 respondents representing fairly the various categories of people. He studied the brand with high awareness and preference value, and the consumption pattern of soft drinks. Taste was found to be important feature in preferring a particular brand of soft drink. Brand switching occurred because of non-availability of preferred
brand. Most of the respondents showed interest in soft drink advertisement more specifically by those who were in the teenage group.

Fairhurst, Ann Elizabeth's study (1985). This study was conducted to determine the relationship between the level of consumer clothing involvement and apparel store patronage behaviour. The specific object of the study was to determine the relationship between the level of consumer involvement, demographic, psychographic and salient store attributes and to develop market segment profit based on the consumer involvement. It results in general, indicated that the higher involved consumer perceived 10 store attributes as important and lower involved consumer tended to rate only store attribute as important.

Foxman, Ellen Ruth's study (1986). With the purpose of investigating the interpersonal influence as an explanatory variable in husband-wife decision making, Ruth of Louisiana State University, conducted a study on 60 married couples during 1986. Interview and observations of role-play were used besides questionnaires to get the demographic, psychological and sociological information. The data were subjected to muti-method (MTMM). After MTMM analysis results were further subjected to sequential analysis. The results revealed that there prevailed some significant influence.
Kim, Kyung Hoon's study (1987). A study of United States International University by Kim Kyung Hoon with an objective to explore the relationship between brand loyalty and “origence” and “intelligence” during the purchase of a low investment product revealed the following results.

i) “Origence” element of “consumer creativity” was not significant related to brand loyalty;

ii) “intelligence” an element was found to be one of the most important predictors of brand loyalty.

iii) While sex and family income were found most important in brand loyalty, age found significant.

Namasivayam (1988) in his study on impact of advertisement and consumer preference on Toilet soap focused that audio visual medium of advertisement is the catching point to inspire the potential customers in selecting their brand of toilet soap. This study was conducted based on the socio-economic and psychological factors.

The proposed study on consumer attitudes towards a model of Maruti Cars is significantly differ from earlier studies because it attempts to find out the factors which influence most in buying a model of Maruti car
from the same brand i.e. how product differentiation influences the consumers to make their preference.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

i. The study is confined to Salem District.

ii. The response received from the sample group may not be totally true and may not represent the views of the entire population.

iii. The data collected is based on the questionnaire. The result would be varying according to the opinions of individuals.

iv. As the time available with the researcher is rather limited, the study is based on the information of the representative sample group selected from the total population.

v. The study is confined to only eight models of Maruti cars selected for the study.

METHODOLOGY

The proposed study is on consumer and buyer behaviour. Therefore, it is a part and parcel of marketing research. Marketing research is to describe the existing situations and not the future. To describe the existing situation survey method of research is adopted. A statistical survey is conducted to analyse the existing marketing situations. From among the users of cars only the users of Maruti cars is surveyed.
SAMPLING

The study is confined to Salem District. Salem District is comprised of 8 taluks. The population i.e. the users of car may be in terms of thousands. From the users of car a hundred users of Maruti car is taken as sample at random. In an average 12 users of Maruti car were examined from each taluk of Salem District. Within a taluk 12 villages were chosen at random and from each village a Maruti car user is taken as sample at random. In the Salem City there are 60 wards and 12 wards were chosen at random and one user of Maruti car from each ward was taken as sample.

Therefore, the probability sampling of area sampling was applied. While choosing the sampling unit a disproportionate stratified random sampling technique was adopted.

DATA COLLECTION

Both primary and secondary data were used for the purpose of this study. Secondary data were obtained from books, newspapers, magazines, brouchers, notices, radio and televisions, etc. For the purpose of empirical analysis primary data were by and large used. To describe the existing situation of the market and to survey the market primary data were obtained by way of questionnaires. The
questionnaires were given to the respondents in person and got back the filled up questionnaires. Apart from questionnaires, informations from the respondents were also obtained by interviews.

DATA ANALYSIS

The data obtained as primary data were arranged and tabulated. The tabulated data were analysed and interpreted. The statistical tools such as average and percentage were widely used. In addition to the statistical techniques, charts and diagrams were also drawn to give the clear picture of buyers behaviour towards a particular model of Maruti car.
CHAPTER ARRANGEMENTS

The study has been divided into five chapters.

CHAPTER I

The statement of the problem, scope of the study, objectives of the study, review of literature, limitations of the study, research methodology, sampling, data collection and data analysis have been stated in this chapter.

CHAPTER II

Several terms such as Consumer, buyer behaviour, consumer preference, consumer goods (convenience goods, shopping goods, speciality goods, unsought goods), industrial goods, durable goods and non-durable goods have been defined. A few theories, which are associated with consumer behaviour such as Economic theories, Income and savings theory, psychological theories (stimulus response theories, cognitive theories, Gestalt and field theories), Psycho-analytic theories and socio-cultural theories have been briefly stated. Besides, various factors influencing consumer behaviour have been analysed.
CHAPTER III

The profile of Maruti Udyog Limited and its products have been analysed. Among the different models of Maruti cars their common features and distinctive features have been analysed.

CHAPTER IV

The data collected by means of Questionnaire from among 100 Maruti Car owners in Salem District have been analysed and interpreted.

CHAPTER V

A summary of all the chapters have been stated.