CHAPTER 7
CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

7.1 CONCLUSION

Though there are number of studies that have been done on flexibility in almost all other disciplines, marketing flexibility concept has largely been remained untouched as extant literature reveals. There is total dearth of studies that deal with marketing flexibility concept in detail and this resulted in scant availability of knowledge related to this critical aspect. Further the underexplored nature of marketing flexibility has hamstrung the prospects of its practical applications.

Marketing as a discipline is one of the most affected areas in terms of perennial changes that keep on happening in environment on regular basis. Marketing flexibility can play a significant role in cushioning the organizations against the ill-effects of this turbulence. In fact the segment chosen for study comprising of 4 wheeler automobile companies is one of the most affected category in India that is at receiving end of this continuous tumult. The implications of marketing flexibility scale are immense for these organizations as it can certainly help in enhancing the overall marketing flexibility in these organizations.

Top strategists and marketing echelons of automobile companies can face the day-to-day changing market situations in a better way with incorporation of flexibility in their marketing system. Further this incorporation must take place from holistic point of view rather than handpicking one or another marketing dimension and then equipping it with flexibility. Without embracing all-important dimensions of marketing in order to enhance flexibility the desired results will be difficult to achieve. Thus marketing flexibility scale developed in study can help the managers to not only diagnose weak areas of flexibility in their marketing system and then taking corrective measures.
7.2 CONTRIBUTION TO KNOWLEDGE

Study's contribution to knowledge and marketing flexibility theme is significant. First of all study takes a holistic approach towards developing and validating marketing flexibility attributes that in itself a major contribution to scant knowledge available in field of marketing flexibility. Although literature provides flexibility studies related to one or another marketing dimension, there is complete dearth of the research taking the marketing flexibility concept holistically. In this way study contributes significantly to literature of marketing flexibility. Second to best of knowledge of researcher, there has not been any scale that measures the marketing flexibility of automobile companies. So to that effect, AUTOFLEX scale is first scale that measures marketing flexibility of automobile companies. Third study has special managerial significance for automobile companies that are nowadays facing one of the stiffest challenges in terms of intensifying competition and decreasing loyalty. Because of specificity of scale for automobile companies, this study will help managers of automobile companies to understand the crucial importance of marketing flexibility. Further this study is sure to act as solid foundation for researchers who want to delve into details of flexibility theme; especially from marketing point of view.

7.3 SUMMARY OF CONTRIBUTION OF STUDY

The major contributions of the study are as follows:

- AUTOFLEX scale; a scale for measuring marketing flexibility of automobile companies has been developed. This scale measures marketing flexibility of automobile companies and according to their total score can differentiate between organizations on basis of their marketing flexibility level.

- AUTOFLEX scale has six dimensions: Price, Customer orientation, Product, Place, Promotion and Structural hierarchy. Total of 26 items form AUTOFLEX scale under these six dimensions.

- Four categories of marketing flexibility; ranging from low to excellent have been developed by study that can be used to categorize the automobile organizations.

- Further nomological validation of AUTOFLEX scale indicates positive relation between marketing flexibility and market orientation aspect.
7.4 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

In spite of being unique and first on several counts especially on aspect of scale development on marketing flexibility for automobile companies, this study has some limitations.

First of all data has been taken only from a selected number of automobile organizations operation in 4-wheel segment. Only a selected few companies were being administered for survey because of time, effort and money constraint researcher has been grappled with.

Second customer view point about marketing flexibility has not been included as research was focussed single-mindedly from organizations’ point of view. It may be case that customers of these automobile companies have different perspective especially on customer orientation front.

Third although there are lot of similarity between 2-wheeler and 4-wheeler segment of automobile industry; application of AUTOFLEX scale shouldn’t be done on 2-wheel segment without conducting its validation for aforementioned category.

7.5 FUTURE RESEARCH

AUTOFLEX scale is first scale that measure marketing flexibility of automobile companies; hence it can act as basis for other marketing flexibility scales either modified or adapted for automobile companies.

- This study was conducted for 4-wheel segment of automobile industry. Future research will expand the ambit of study by including major players of 2-whhel segment.

- Luxurious saloon category of Indian auto market consisting of high-end offerings like Mercedes, BMW, Audi, Jaguar Land rover etc. The validation check of AUTOFLEX scale on this high-end category of market is also in future scope of study.
• Further investigation regarding inclusion of some more dimensions that although not comes directly under purview of marketing but subtly affect outcomes of marketing manoeuvres may be undertaken in future.

• Customer perspective towards marketing flexibility of automobile organizations will also be an interesting aspect for future study.