

# **FACTORS AFFECTING THE INTENTION TO BUY CHINESE BRAND CAR OF CUSTOMERS IN SHANGHAI, PRC**

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## **ABSTRACT**

People Republic of China (PRC) is one of the largest car manufacturers in the world. Chinese brand car has been gradually accepted by Chinese across country including the Shanghai City. Therefore, the researcher is interested in exploring factors affecting purchasing intention of Chinese customers in Shanghai, PRC. This study used questionnaire to collect data from 102 Shanghai Chinese customers. Data was analyzed by using descriptive statistics. Hypotheses were tested by using Chi-square ( $X^2$ -test) and Correlation analysis.

The findings revealed that customers in Shanghai from different demographic profiles (e.g. gender, age and monthly income) are likely to be differed in their purchasing intention towards Chinese brand cars. The result also showed there are effects of trust (e.g. trust in sellers, brand trust and emotional trust) and service marketing mix strategy (7Ps) (product, price, place, promotion, process, people and physical evidence) on the intention to buy Chinese brand car of customers in Shanghai at significant level of 0.05. The findings could be used as guidelines to improve the marketing strategies of Chinese car companies that can better capture the purchase intention of their customers.

**Keywords:** Chinese Customers in Shanghai, Chinese Brand Car, Customer's Intention.

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## **Introduction**

Nowadays, car becomes the most common transportation in the China. More and more families buy private cars for works and travel. There are many brands around the world but the mainstream brands are from two countries. One of them is German brand because of high performance and safety, another is Japanese brand because of economy and low fuel consumption. Moreover, there are some famous brands from America, France, Korea and China (CAAM, 2020).

Joint venture brands have Beijing Benz, Beijing Hyundai, Changan ford, FAW Audi and so on. Self-owned brands are Hongqi, Zhonghuacar, Great Wall Motor and so on. According to China Association of Automobile Manufacturers, by 2019 of Chinese brand market share, SAIC Motor is 25.82%, FAW is 11.49%, Dongfeng Group is 13.58%, BAIC is 10.60%, CCAG is 7.29%. In 2019, sales volume of Chinese brand cars were 8.407 million, decrease 15.8% year-on-year, accounting for 39.2% of total car sales volume, decrease 3% year-on-year. (CAAM, 2020).

Because of the fluctuation of Chinese brand car's sales volume in recent years, the researcher wants to explore factors that might affect the intention to buy Chinese brand car of Chinese customers in Shanghai. The results will help car producers to develop or improve their marketing strategies that meet the needs of their customers.

This study aims to test whether there are relationship between demographic profile, trust, service marketing mix 7P's and intention to buy Chinese brand car of customers in Shanghai, PRC. Therefore, this study proposed three hypotheses as follows:

H1: Customers in Shanghai from different demographic profiles are likely to be differed in term of their intention to buy Chinese brand car.

H2: There is an effect of trust on the intention to buy Chinese brand car of customers in Shanghai, PRC.

H3: There is an effect of marketing mix strategy (7Ps) on the intention to buy Chinese brand car of customers in Shanghai, PRC.

## **Investigating constructs**

This study addresses the intention to buy Chinese brand car of customers in Shanghai, PRC. The proposed factors of demographic profile, trust and service marketing mix 7P's were used to examine the relationship with intention of consumers to buy Chinese brand car in Shanghai, PRC. The definitions of key terms in this study are described as follows:

**Chinese brand car** – The cars were designed and manufactured by Chinese, and cars have independent intellectual property rights. i.e. Hong Qi, Brilliance Auto, Great Wall Motors

**Customers** – Chinese customers in BaoShan district, Shanghai who are interested to buy a Chinese brand car

**Trust** – It consists of brand trust and from trust in sellers, brand trust, emotional trust (Jing-Di Zhao, Jin-Song Huang and Song Su, 2019)

**Service marketing mix strategy** - In services marketing, an extended marketing mix is used, typically comprising 7Ps, made up of the original 4Ps extended. They are product, price, promotion, place, process, people, and physical evidence. (Booms and Bitner, 1981)

To further understand the relationship between demographic profile, trust and service marketing mix 7P's and purchase intention, the following relevant studies have been reviewed.

Oldroyd (1999) notes demography is an important demand condition, helping the marketer to predict both size and change in target markets. Trust is a central issue in most economic and social transactions, especially in an online context where there may be lots of uncertainty (Pavlou, 2003). Kotler (2003) also said that Marketing mix is variable that control the market. Variable factor that supply the consumer need and make them satisfy. Many factors affect the consumer's intention while selecting the product and the ultimate decision depends on consumers' intention with large external factors (Keller, 2001)

## **Methodology**

This research is a survey research design using a self-administrative questionnaire for data collection. The research adopted convenience sampling method by distributing questionnaire to customers who are interested to buy Chinese brand car in Baoshan District at car dealers ( i.e. Chinese brand car dealers and repair shop) and people who live in Baoshan District online at link address (<https://www.wjx.cn/>). Convenience sampling was used for this study because the respondents are selected to be in the right place at the right time and least time consuming compared to other sampling techniques (Malhotra, 2007). According to National Bureau of Statistics in China, there are 1.9 million people in the BaoShan district, Shanghai. However, the

number of people who are interested to buy a car is unknown. So researcher will use the Cochran formula to calculate the estimated sample size at 95% of confidence level and, 0.05% sampling error.

Data has performed normal distribution with  $-1 < \text{Skewness} < 1$  and  $-2 < \text{Kurtosis} < 2$  (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). Data was analyzed using descriptive statistic to describe variables by mean, frequency standard deviation and percentage. Chi-Square was used to test the relationships between demographic profile and purchasing intention of Chinese brand cars' customers Correlation analysis used to test the relationship between trust and service marketing mix (7ps) on the purchasing intention of Chinese brand cars' customers at the confidence level of 95% or  $\alpha < 0.05$ .

## **Results and Discussion**

Questionnaires were distributed 150 respondents and 117 sets were received. Therefore, the response rate of 78% were achieved.

The majority of respondents are female (54.5%) and male are 45.5% of the total. The largest groups are aged 26-35 years old (35.6%) and 36-45 years old (29.7%), they graduated with bachelor's degree. Most of them are work as staffs with average monthly income are less than 3,500 yuan per month (20.8%) followed 9,001-12,000 yuan per month (15.8%).

Most respondents agreed that trust in sellers, brand trust and emotional trust have an impact on their intention to buy Chinese brand car in Shanghai, PRC. The study revealed that the most important factors of the trust focused by the customers are quality of products and service, reputation and emotional support of domestic products. This result implied that trust (e.g. trust in sellers, brand trust, emotional trust) factors effecting the customers intention when purchasing Chinese brand cars. This result was in line with the study of Wang, Yang and Liu (2009) which reveal that product, brand reputation and patriotism had relationship with customers intention. And it was related to Zhao, Huang, Su (2010) whose study on trust affecting purchasing intention of parents on selecting the English language institute for their children in in C2C social commerce.

In terms of service marketing mix 7Ps, the respondents agree to the importance of product, price and promotion. The study revealed that the most important factors of the marketing mix focused by the customers are variety choice, car loan and test drive service. The result showed that product, price and promotion factor effecting the customers intention when purchasing Chinese brand cars. This result was in line with the study of Mahmoud, Ibrahim, Ali and Bleadly (2017) which reveal that product, price and promotion had relationship with customers intention. But Ulfah, Sumarwan and Nurrochmat found that only price and physical evidence factors influence consumers to buy. But the result was different from Ulfah, Sumarwan, and Nurrochmat (2016) who research the marketing mix factors that influence the desire to purchase fruit beverages in the city of Bogor. Their study revealed that only price and physical evidence factors

influenced consumers intention.

This leads to development of conceptual framework of the study and the following hypothesis:

H1\*: Customers in Shanghai from different demographic profiles are likely to be differed in term of their intention to buy Chinese brand car.

H2\*: There is an effect of trust on the intention to buy Chinese brand car of customers in Shanghai, PRC.

H3\*: There is an effect of marketing mix strategy (7Ps) on the intention to buy Chinese brand car of customers in Shanghai, PRC.

Note: \*Partial support at significant level of 0.05

**Table 1** Effect of Demographic profiles on purchasing intention

<i>Items</i>	<i>Value</i>	<i>Df</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
Age/Probably buy	9.887 <sup>a</sup>	4	0.042*
Gender/Definitely will buy	35.389 <sup>a</sup>	16	0.004*
Status/Purchasing Intention	40.59	36	0.275
Education level	31.911 <sup>a</sup>	20	0.044*
/Definitely will not buy			
Occupation/Will buy	40.347 <sup>a</sup>	24	0.020*
Income/Purchasing Intention	56.763	72	0.906

\*Level of significant  $\alpha = 0.05$

Table 1 showed that gender was found to have a partial effect on purchasing intention (probably buy). Age was found to have a partial effect on purchasing intention/Definitely will buy. Education level was found to have effects on purchasing intention (definitely will not buy). Occupation was found to have effects on purchasing intention (will buy). Status and income was found to have no effects on purchasing intention.

**Table 2** Effect of trust on an average purchasing intention

Trust	Purchasing intention
<b>Trust in sellers</b>	
Reliable quality products	0.002
Reliable services	0.028
Reliable sellers	0.001
<b>Brand trust</b>	
Trusting in this brand	0.009
Recognizing because of reputation	0.001
Good reputation brand	0.000
<b>Emotional trust</b>	

Buying Chinese car if price was same	0.000
The quality of Chinese car was better than	0.001
From home country	0.002

\*Level of significant  $\alpha = 0.05$

Table 2 trust in sellers showed the significant positive relationships between reliable quality products ( $R = 0.308, P < 0.05$ ), reliable services ( $R = 0.219, P < 0.05$ ); reliable sellers ( $R = 0.322, P < 0.05$ ) and an average purchasing intention.

Brand trust showed the significant positive relationships between trusting in this brand ( $R = 0.260, P < 0.05$ ), recognizing the quality because of the brand reputation ( $R = 0.314, P < 0.05$ ) and good reputation brand ( $R = 0.367, P < 0.05$ ) and an average purchasing intention.

Emotional trust showed the significant positive relationships between buying Chinese car if price was same ( $R = 0.426, P < 0.05$ ), the quality of Chinese car was better than Western-make car ( $R = 0.329, P < 0.05$ ) and from their home country ( $R = 0.303, P < 0.05$ ) and an average purchasing intention.

**Table 3** Effect of marketing mix strategy on an average purchasing intention

Service Marketing mix 7Ps	Purchasing intention
<b>Product strategy</b>	
Variety choice of car models	0.033
The quality of car	-
The after-sales service	-
<b>Price strategy</b>	
Lower price	-
Warrant of Chinese car brand	-
Car loan	0.02
<b>Place strategy</b>	
Number of car dealers	-
Car maintenance service	-
<b>Promotion strategy</b>	
Discount Promotion	-
Out-of-home advertisement	-
Banner on websites	-
Advertisements on social media	-
Get information from promotion brochure	-
Receive promotion e-mail	-
Test drive service	0.022
<b>People strategy</b>	
Professional staff	-
Polite staff	-
Staff's feedback	-
Test drive staff	-
<b>Process strategy</b>	
Online consultant	-
Quick payment process	-
Quick service	-
<b>Physical evidence strategy</b>	
Dealer shop's environment	-
Large choice of car	-
Good test drive of car and road	-
Comfortable lounge or seat	-
Free drink and Internet	-

\*Level of significant  $\alpha = 0.05$

Table 3 product strategy showed the significant positive relationships between variety choice of car models and an average purchasing intention ( $R = 0.212$ ,  $P < 0.05$ ). Price strategy showed the significant positive relationships between car loan and an average purchasing intention ( $R = 0.230$ ,  $P < 0.05$ ). Promotion strategy showed the significant positive relationships between test drive service and an average purchasing intention ( $R = 0.228$ ,  $P < 0.05$ ). Place, People, Process and Physical evidence strategy showed there is no significant relationship between physical evidence strategy and an average purchasing intention ( $P > 0.05$ ).

### **Implication of the study**

1. The result is the 2.0 litres of SUV and small family cars will be the popular products and the function of the car is more focused on travel safety and daily use such as fuel consumption, easy to maintain.

2. The result from the study also revealed that most of customers didn't think domestic car brands were good as western brands even exceeded because they thought Chinese brands were not reliable enough. But depends on supporting to domestic brands, it's positive for customers to buy Chinese brand cars. Chinese car companies should focus on brand reputation.

3. The research findings showed that there are relationship between variety choice of car models, car loan, test drive service and customers purchasing intention. They can launch some new car models to make up for the luxury and middle Chinese brand car market. And car dealers should consider the effects of test drive service and discount of car loan.

4. Car dealers can keep the number of shops and staffs and should not focus on counsel and payment method, luxurious environment and entertainment.

### **Limitations and Recommendations for Future Study**

In this study, researcher met some limitations. So the limitations of the study still leave room for future study in the following areas:

1. The future study can extend sampling frame to other developed city, such as Beijing and Guangdong. The larger sample size may help to get better and more reliable result.

2. Another avenue for future study is to do a comparative study, comparing the factor affecting purchasing intention of customers in different country of origin, such as American car, German car, Japanese car and Chinese car. It will be good for dealers to develop their competitive marketing strategies.

3. Future study could explore the effect of an individual Chinese brand on customers purchasing intention in Shanghai, PRC. It would yield a deep insight about proper marketing strategies for a particular Chinese brand.



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