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A Study on Understanding Customer Perception and Satisfaction about Automobile Industry

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this research paper is to understand Customer Perception and Satisfaction towards Automobile Industry. This research is conducted in Pune city and a survey method was used to collect the data from 160 respondents. In the rapidly evolving automobile industry, understanding customer perception and satisfaction has become a key driver for business success. This study explores the critical factors influencing consumer attitudes toward automobile brands, products, and services, focusing on areas such as product quality, pricing, technology, customer service, and brand reputation. With increasing competition and the rise of electric vehicles, customer expectations are shifting toward sustainability, innovation, and value for money. Understanding these perceptions helps automobile companies align their strategies with customer demands, improve product offerings, enhance customer experiences, and foster long-term relationships. The study concludes that businesses that successfully adapt to the dynamic needs of consumers in the automobile sector are better positioned for sustained growth and competitive advantage.

Keywords: Customer Perception, Automobile Industry, Product quality, Satisfaction level

Introduction

Understanding customer perception and satisfaction is vital for any business aiming to thrive in a competitive marketplace. Customer perception refers to how customers view and interpret a brand, product, or service based on their experiences, marketing messages, and interactions with the company. It influences their attitudes, preferences, and buying decisions, ultimately shaping their loyalty or aversion to a brand. Customer satisfaction, on the other hand, measures how well a company's products or services meet or exceed customer expectations, directly impacting their overall experience and likelihood of repeat business. By analyzing both customer perception and satisfaction, businesses can gain valuable insights into how customers feel about their offerings and identify areas for improvement. A positive perception and high satisfaction levels lead to increased customer loyalty, positive word-of-mouth, and long-term business success, while negative experiences can harm a company's reputation. Thus, understanding these two elements is essential for businesses to enhance customer experiences, strengthen brand positioning, and foster growth.

Understanding customer perception and satisfaction in the automobile industry is crucial for companies striving to remain competitive in an evolving market. Customer perception encompasses how individuals view and evaluate a brand based on factors such as product quality, design, innovation, and service experiences. These perceptions shape a consumer's decision-making process and influence brand loyalty. Customer satisfaction, on the other hand, reflects how well a company meets or exceeds customer expectations, directly impacting retention rates and word-of-mouth referrals. In the automobile sector, where purchase decisions involve significant financial investments and emotional considerations, both perception and satisfaction play pivotal roles. As the industry embraces technological advancements, including electric vehicles, smart features, and sustainability initiatives, understanding these factors becomes even more critical. By gauging customer attitudes and satisfaction levels, companies can identify key strengths, areas for improvement, and emerging trends, allowing them to tailor their products and services more effectively to the needs and desires of their target audience. This insight not only enhances brand loyalty but also drives long-term success in a highly competitive and dynamic market.

The customer Perception and Satisfaction steps in Decision Process Models:-

- Problem Recognition
- Need Awareness
- Information Search
- Source Credibility

- Evaluation of Alternatives
- Emotional Influence
- Purchase Decision
- Post-Purchase Evaluation
- Loyalty and Repeat Purchases
- Word-of-Mouth and Advocacy

Literature review

Dembkowski (1998) in their study examined the environmental value-attitude system model to understand the divergence between stated environmental consciousness and overt consumer behavior.

Chumpitaz and Paparoidamis (2004) in there survey investigated the relationship between service quality and marketing performance in business-to-business markets by exploring the mediating role of client satisfaction.

Bamberg and Möser (2007) performed an investigation and a meta-analysis to find mean correlations between psycho-social variables and pro-environmental behavior. They also implemented the matrix of pooled correlations for a structural equation modeling (SEM) test. In their survey, they decided to find relationship between eight determinants of pro-environmental behavior of Meta-analytic SEM (MASEM). The results affirmed that pro-environmental behavioral intention could act as mediator for the effect of all other psycho-social variables on pro-environmental behavior. Their findings also confirmed that besides attitude and behavioral control personal moral norm was a predictor of pro-environmental behavioral intention.

Mahapatra Kumar and Chauhan (2010) mentioned a study on "customer satisfaction, dissatisfaction and post purchase evaluation: an empirical study on passenger cars in India" with the main objectives to examine the satisfaction and impact on future purchase decision and explore the performance of different attributes in automobile in giving satisfaction to customer with the sample size of 150 customers and they used the multiple regression techniques and they revealed from this study that customers are highly satisfied with the behavior, service quality etc. and other attributes like quality, dealers facility influence the consumer future purchase decisions and consumer give the more importance to these factors.

Sinnappan and Abd Rahman (2011) studied the factors, which impact green purchasing behaviors of Malaysian consumers and observes when the factors influencing green purchasing behavior vary by demographic profile. Respondents in this investigation were consumers from different age groups, education level, ethnic group, etc. The results demonstrated that the best predictor for green purchasing behavior was environmental attitude followed by perceived environmental responsibility; environmental concern, perceived seriousness of environmental problems, perceived effectiveness of environmental behavior and government's role.

Rao and Kumar (2012) revealed study on "Customer satisfaction towards automobile sector – A study on Passenger cars in India with the objectives to study the customer satisfaction with the usage of vehicles, after sale service, key area of strength, service and quality. They taken the sample of 100 respondents and used the percentage technique. They concluded from the study that majority of customers are satisfied with the safety, dealer service, customer relationship etc.

Shende V. (2014) studied consumer satisfaction towards passenger car segment in India. The objective of this study was the identification of factors influencing customer's satisfaction for particular segment of car. Proper understanding of Customer satisfaction will help the marketer to succeed in the market. Scenario of stagnancy in sales and cultivate future demand for automobile car market was also attempted in this study.

Kim (2015) investigated and compared the energy efficiency potential difference between a static front and a kinetic front using BIM programs. In this study, Dynamo software, an open-source visual programming environment, was used for parametric modeling in Autodesk Revit. Dynamo is designed to add new parametric possibilities to Revit that are not available in the software. The Revit energy analysis tool, Green Building Studio (GBS) was chosen for the energy simulation. However, since GBS could not recognize the complex panel as a shading device, the complex panel geometry was simplified while maintaining the opening rate. Furthermore, since GBS cannot provide hourly energy analysis results, the energy model is exported as a DOE2.2 input file to obtain energy simulation results using eQUEST, a widely used building energy simulation tool.

Objectives of the study

- To understand how customers perceive our products, services, and overall brand experience.
- To study what is the primary use of Electric Vehicle for respondents.
- To identify which is the important feature of Electric Vehicle for customer like Battery, Design, etc.
- To understand customer satisfaction level for Electric Vehicle.
- To study on additional features for making customer attract towards Electric Vehicle and to increase satisfaction level of customer for EVs.

Research Methodology

This research design seeks to describe the current landscape of Automobile EV adoption, consumer attitudes, market trends, technological advancements, and factors influencing the growth of the EV industry. This type of research is often observational, data-driven, and focuses on "what is" rather than exploring cause-and-effect relationships.

Data Collection Methods :-

Primary Data Collection :

Online or face-to-face surveys to collect quantitative data from consumers regarding their awareness, preferences, and attitudes toward EVs.

In-depth interviews with industry stakeholders to gather qualitative data on market trends, government initiatives, technological developments, and industry challenges.

Secondary Data Collection :

Use published market research reports to gather data on global and regional EV sales trends, consumer behaviour, and market forecasts. Analyse government policies and incentives aimed at promoting EV adoption, such as tax rebates, subsidies, and infrastructure initiatives. Review annual reports from automotive manufacturers to gather insights into their investment in EV technology and strategies for future growth.

This research employs a descriptive research design to explore customer perception and satisfaction with Automobile Industry. A sample of 160 participants, selected through non-probability convenience sampling, will be surveyed, allowing for accessible and practical data collection, though with limited generalizability. Data will be gathered using both primary and secondary methods, with a structured questionnaire as the main tool for primary data collection, supplemented by secondary sources such as reports and online reviews for added context. MS-Excel will be used for data analysis, enabling the calculation of descriptive statistics and visual representation of the findings, providing valuable insights into customer satisfaction and perceptions of the company's offerings.

Data Analysis

Table no.1 - Age of respondents

Age	No. of Respondent	Percentage
21-30	80	50%
31-40	40	25%
41-50	24	15%
51-60	16	10%
Total	160	100%

Table no.2 - Daily drive of respondents

Daily drive	No. of Respondent	Percentage
0-15	16	10%
15-30	24	12%
30-45	56	30%
45-60	32	20%
Above 60	32	20%
Total	160	100%

Table no.3 - Primary usage

Primary use	No. of Respondent	Percentage
Business purpose	48	30%
Delivery boy	32	20%
Family use	80	50%
Total	160	100%

Table no.4 - Price can spend

Price	No. of Respondent	Percentage
60000-70000	56	35%
70000-80000	32	20%
80000-90000	48	30%
90000-100000	24	15%
Above 100000	8	5%
Total	160	100%

Table no.5 - Range requirement

Range	No. of Respondent	Percentage
40-60	16	10%
60-80	32	20%
80-100	48	30%
100-120	64	40%
Total	160	100%

Table no.6 - Brands can consider

Brands	No. of Respondent	Percentage
Kinetic Green	48	30%
Okinava	56	35%
Zelio Eeva	24	15%
Ampere Magnus	32	20%
Total	160	100%

Table no.7 - Important Feature for respondents

	Least Important	Important	Highly Important
Battery	0	0	80
Design	58	58	44
Performance	0	56	104
Comfort	0	42	118

Table no.8 - Environmental impact

Environmental impact	No. of Respondent	Percentage
Very Important	112	70%
Important	48	30%
Less Important	0	0%
Total	160	100%

Table no.9 - Required warranty years by respondent

Warranty years	No. of Respondent	Percentage
3 years	32	20%
4 years	32	20%
5 years	64	40%
6 years	32	20%
Total	160	100%

Table no.10 - Would you recommend electric vehicle to others ?

Particulars	No. of Respondent	Percentage
YES	158	99%
NO	2	1%
Total	160	100%

Table no.11 - Satisfaction level of respondents

Satisfaction level	No. of Respondent	Percentage
Highly Satisfied	34	21%
Satisfied	92	58%
Neutral	34	21%
Dissatisfied	0	0%
Highly Dissatisfied	0	0%
Total	160	100%

Table no.12 - Requirement of Additional features

Additional feature	No. of Respondent	Percentage
Phone call connectors	128	80%
Camera	24	15%
Social media use	8	5%
Total	160	100%

Table no.13 - Would you consider purchasing another electric vehicle in the future ?

Particulars	No. of Respondent	Percentage
YES	158	99%
NO	2	1%
Total	160	100%

Table no.14 - Mostly liked feature in Electric Vehicle

Liked feature	No. of Respondent	Percentage
Loading capacity	48	30%
Safety feature	64	40%
Easy to drive	48	30%
Total	160	100%

Table no.15 - What motivates you to consider an electric vehicles ?

Particulars	No. of Respondent	Percentage
Environmental concern	32	20%
Cost saving	64	40%
Technology	8	5%
Performance	16	10%
All of the above	40	25%
Total	160	100%

Findings

1) From Table no-1, it is interpreted that 50% respondent people are between 21-30 age, 25% respondent people are between 31-40 age, 15% respondent people are between 41-50 age, 10% respondent people are between 51-60 age.
2) From Table no-2, it is interpreted that 10% respondent for 0-15 km use in a day, 15% respondent for 15-30 km use in a day, 35% respondent for 30-45 km use in a day, 20% respondent for 45-60 km use in a day, 20% respondent for Above 60 km use in a day.
3) From Table no-3, it is interpreted that 30% respondent for Business purpose, 20% respondent for Delivery boy, 50% respondent for Family use.
4) From Table no-15, it is interpreted that 35% respondent for 60000-70000, 20% respondent for 70000-80000, 30% respondent for 80000-90000, 15% respondent for 90000-100000, 5% respondent for Above 100000.
5) From Table no-5, it is interpreted that 10% respondent requirement range for 40-60, 20% respondent requirement range for 60-80, 30% respondent requirement range for 80-100, 40% respondent requirement range for 100-120.
6) From Table no-6, it is interpreted that 30% respondent are interested in Kinetic Green, 35% respondent are interested in Okinava, 15% respondent are interested in Zelio Eeva, 20% respondent are interested in Ampere Magnus.
7) From Table no-8, it is interpreted that 80 people respondent battery is highly important, and 0 for both least important and important, 29 people respondent design is least important, 29 for important and 22 for highly important, 28 people respondent performance is important, 52 for highly important and 0 for least important, 21 people respondent comfort is important, 59 for highly important and 0 for least important.
8) From Table no-8, it is interpreted that 70% respondent Environment impact is very important for them, 30% respondent Environment impact is Important for them, 0% respondent Environment impact is less important for them.
9) From Table no-9, it is interpreted that 20% respondent peoples want 3 years of warranty, 20% respondent peoples want 4 years of warranty, 40% respondent peoples want 5 years of warranty, 20% respondent peoples want 6 years of warranty.
10) From Table no-10, it is interpreted that 99% respondent to recommend electric vehicle to others, 1% respondent will not recommend electric vehicle to others.
11) From Table no-11, it is interpreted that 21% respondent were hardly satisfied with electric vehicle, 58% respondent were satisfied with electric vehicle, 21% respondent were neutral with electric vehicle, 0% respondent were dissatisfied with electric vehicle, 0% respondent were hardly dissatisfied with electric vehicle.
12) From Table no-12, it is interpreted that 80% respondent Phone call connectors, 15% respondent Camera, 5% respondent Social media use.
13) From Table no-13, it is interpreted that 80% respondent Phone call connector, 99% respondent they will purchase another electric vehicle in the future, 1% respondent they will not purchase another electric vehicle in the future.
14) From Table no-14, it is interpreted that 30% respondent like loading capacity, 40% respondent like safety features, 30% respondent like Easy to drive.
15) From Table no-4, it is interpreted that 20% respondent for Environmental concern, 40% respondent for Cost saving, 5% respondent for Technology, 10% respondent for Performance, 25% respondent for All of the above.

Conclusion

Consumer perception and satisfaction are pivotal in shaping the growth and success of the electric vehicle (EV) industry. As awareness of environmental sustainability increases, many consumers perceive EVs as a responsible choice, aligning with eco-conscious values. Positive perceptions of electric vehicles—such as reduced environmental impact, lower operational costs, and technological innovation—have fueled interest and adoption. However, challenges like concerns over range, charging infrastructure, and upfront costs still affect consumer confidence. Satisfaction is closely tied to the extent to which EVs meet or exceed consumer expectations regarding performance, affordability, and convenience. Automakers that deliver on these promises, providing reliable vehicles with robust charging networks and enhanced features, see higher satisfaction levels, which in turn drive brand loyalty and positive word-of-mouth.

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