



Customer Feedback Factors Influencing Consumer Choice in Engine Oil Purchases: A Market Analysis

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ABSTRACT

This report presents a comprehensive study on the "CUSTOMER FEEDBACK FACTORS INFLUENCING CONSUMER CHOICE IN ENGINE OIL PURCHASES: A MARKET ANALYSIS". This market analysis investigates the factors influencing consumer choices in engine oil purchases, emphasizing the impact of customer feedback. With the automotive sector continually evolving, understanding consumer preferences has become crucial for manufacturers and retailers. The study combines quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews to uncover how brand reputation, product performance, pricing, and environmental concerns shape purchasing decisions.

Keywords: Brand Loyalty, Sustainability, Brand Reputation, Performance Metrics, Synthetic Oil, Competitive Pricing Strategies, Customer Satisfaction

Introduction

The engine oil market plays a critical role in the automotive industry, influencing vehicle performance, efficiency, and longevity. As consumer awareness and preferences evolve, the significance of customer feedback has surged, shaping purchasing decisions. This study explores how various factors, particularly those derived from customer reviews and experiences, affect consumer choices when selecting engine oil products. Engine oil serves multiple essential functions, including lubrication, cooling, and cleaning of engine components. High-quality engine oil minimizes wear and tear, enhances fuel efficiency, and ensures optimal engine performance. With advancements in automotive technology, the demand for specialized engine oils has grown, making it imperative for manufacturers to understand consumer preferences and perceptions to remain competitive in the market. Engine oil is a crucial component in the functioning of modern vehicles, serving several key roles that significantly impact engine performance and longevity.

Engine oil provides essential lubrication for moving parts within the engine. This reduces friction, which in turn minimizes wear and tear on components, preventing premature failure and extending the lifespan of the engine. Engine oil helps dissipate heat generated by the engine during operation. By maintaining optimal temperatures, it prevents overheating and maintains overall engine efficiency, which is vital for high-performance vehicles. Engine oil contains detergents and additives that help clean engine components by preventing sludge buildup and neutralizing harmful acids. This cleaning function ensures that the engine runs smoothly and efficiently. Protection Engine oil provides a protective layer against corrosion and oxidation, safeguarding internal components from moisture and harmful deposits that can lead to engine degradation. Using the right engine oil can improve fuel economy. Oils designed for low friction can help optimize engine performance, leading to better mileage and reduced fuel consumption.

In summary, engine oil is vital not only for the optimal functioning of vehicles but also for meeting consumer expectations regarding performance, reliability, and environmental responsibility. Understanding its importance helps manufacturers and retailers align their products with market needs.

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 Purchase
- Word-of-Mouth and Advocacy

Literature review

Maslow (1943) introduced a theory of motivation that emphasizes a hierarchy of needs, ranging from physiological needs to self-actualization. For products like engine oil, the focus is often on safety and reliability, which align with the "safety needs" tier. Consumers prioritize performance metrics such as durability and efficiency when evaluating their purchases.[7]

Festinger (1957) described how consumers often seek affirmation of their purchase decisions through feedback and reviews. Positive online reviews can reduce cognitive dissonance and reinforce satisfaction, whereas negative feedback may lead to regret or brand switching.[3]

Ajzen (1991) proposed that consumer behaviour is strongly influenced by their intention, shaped by attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control. In the context of engine oil, consumers' attitudes toward brand quality and peer recommendations significantly impact purchasing decisions.[1]

Robert Cialdini (2001) in *Influence: The Psychology of Persuasion* discussed the power of social proof, wherein consumers rely heavily on reviews and recommendations to validate their purchase choices. This concept aligns with the findings in your research, where positive online feedback significantly boosts consumer confidence in engine oil brands.[2]

Kotler and Keller (2016) highlighted the importance of demographic factors like age, income, and geographic location in segmenting markets for tailored marketing strategies. For instance, younger, urban consumers may have different preferences for engine oils compared to rural consumers.[4]

Ramesh Kumar (2017) in his article "Sustainability Trends in the Indian Automotive Sector," examined the increasing consumer shift towards eco-friendly engine oils. The research detailed how urban consumers in India are adopting environmentally responsible choices, driven by heightened awareness of climate change. Kumar's work underscored the role of government policies and regulations in promoting the adoption of bio-based and synthetic oils, urging manufacturers to invest in greener technologies to capture this growing market segment.[5]

Vikram Singh and Amit Sharma (2019) co-authored a paper titled "Price Sensitivity and Brand Loyalty in the Indian Engine Oil Market." This study revealed that price sensitivity remains a dominant factor influencing purchasing decisions, particularly among lower-income groups. Their findings also highlighted the prevalence of strong brand loyalty in urban markets, driven by established brand trust and performance. The research suggested that brands could benefit from tiered pricing strategies to cater to diverse consumer segments.[8]

John Smith (2021) in the *Journal of Consumer Research* highlighted how advancements in engine oil formulations, such as synthetic and semi-synthetic options, have shifted consumer preferences toward high-performance products. This aligns with the emphasis on quality and durability observed in your report.[9]

Lee (2023) explored the impact of environmental concerns on consumer preferences, highlighting that a growing number of customers prefer sustainable engine oil options. This aligns with broader trends in eco-conscious consumer behaviour noted by *Ottman (2011)* in her book, *The New Rules of Green Marketing*. [6]

Objectives of Study

- To identify the Consumer preferences for bike engine oils among all the brands which are available in the market.
- To analyse the consumer behaviour that how often they change their engine oil.
- To analyse the satisfaction level of the consumer for a specific brand of engine oil they use.
- To determine the role of word-of-mouth and online reviews in shaping consumer preferences.
- To identify the price point at which consumers are willing to prefer good quality engine oil based on their value and product features.

Research Methodology

To analyse and find the effectiveness of communication strategy in developing brand, communication through social networking sites was done with the survey method and content analysis in the research. Research methodology is a strategy that guides a researcher in providing answers to research questions and for this research questions and for this research survey is being done. "Accuracy of the study depends on the systematic application of the method. The researcher has to decide the method to be used that helps in to get a desired direction in a systematic ARM The research methodology used here is Quantitative research Methodology.

Data Collection Method:

Primary Data Collection -

Primary data is information that is collected directly from original sources for a specific research purpose. This data is gathered firsthand through methods such as surveys, interviews, experiments, or observations. Primary data is valuable because it is tailored to the researcher's specific needs and often reflects the most current information available. It contrasts with secondary data, which consists of information that has already been collected and published by others.

Sample Size of 103 customers is considered for the customer feedback.

Secondary Data Collection –

Secondary data refers to information that has already been collected, processed, and published by someone else for a purpose different from the current research. This data can be obtained from various sources, including books, articles, reports, databases, and government publications. Secondary data is useful for gaining insights, supporting primary research, or conducting comparative analyses, but it may not always perfectly align with the specific needs of the researcher.

Data Analysis

Table No. 1: Age of Respondents

Age Group	Frequency	Percentage
18-25	63	61.20%
26-35	31	30.10%
36-45	8	7.80%
46+	1	1%
Total	103	100%

Table No. 2: Occupation of Respondents

Occupation	Frequency	Percentage
Student	53	51.50%
Working Professional	42	40.80%
Business Owner	5	4.90%
Retired	2	2.00%
Private Job	1	0.80%
Total	103	100%

Table No. 3: Income of Respondents

Income Level (Monthly)	Frequency	Percentage
Less than ₹25,000	38	36.90%
₹25,000 - ₹50,000	53	51.50%
₹50,000 - ₹1,00,000	11	10.70%
More than ₹1,00,000	1	1.00%
Total	103	100%

Table No. 4: Vehicle Owned by Respondents

Type of Vehicle Owned	Frequency	Percentage
Two-Wheeler	78	75.70%
Car	16	15.50%
SUV	8	7.80%
Truck/Heavy Vehicle	1	1.00%
Total	103	100%

Table No. 5: Frequency of Engine Oil Changes

Engine Oil Change Frequency	Frequency	Percentage
Every 3 Months	47	45.60%
Every 6 Months	40	38.80%
Annually	15	14.60%
Every 2 Months	1	1.00%
Total	103	100%

Table No. 6: Preferred Purchase Locations

Purchase Location	Frequency	Percentage
Authorized Service Centres	49	47.60%
Local Mechanics	32	31.10%
Online Platforms (e.g., Amazon, Flipkart)	11	10.70%
Retail Stores	9	8.70%
Petrol Pumps	2	1.90%
Total	103	100%

Table No. 7: Sources of Information Gathered

Information Source	Frequency	Percentage
Recommendations from Mechanic	62	60.20%
Online Reviews	39	37.90%
Social media/Advertisements	38	36.90%
Friends/Family Recommendations	45	43.70%
Personal Experience	20	19.40%
Total	103	100%

Table No. 8: Preferred Engine Oil Type

Engine Oil Type	Frequency	Percentage
Synthetic	56	54.40%
Semi-Synthetic	28	27.20%
Mineral Oil	14	13.60%

I am not sure	5	4.90%
Total	103	100%

Table No. 9: Preferred Engine Oil Brand

Engine Oil Brand	Frequency	Percentage
Castrol	54	52.40%
Shell	23	22.30%
Mobil	10	9.70%
Total	9	8.70%
Indian Oil	5	4.90%
Bullet	1	1.00%
Idemitsu	1	1.00%
Total	103	100%

Table No. 10: Reason of Purchasing

Reason	Frequency	Percentage
Price	55	53.40%
Quality/Durability	70	68.00%
Brand Reputation	49	47.60%
Recommendations from Mechanics	47	45.60%
Previous Experience	24	23.30%
Availability	15	14.60%
Promotions/Discounts	12	11.70%
Total	103	100%

Table No. 11: Brand Loyalty

Loyalty Level	Frequency	Percentage
Very Loyal (Always use the same brand)	53	51.50%
Somewhat Loyal (Mostly use the same brand)	38	36.90%
Not Loyal (Switch brands frequently)	12	11.70%
Total	103	100%

Findings

1. From table no. 1, The majority of respondents (61.2%) are in the 18-25 age group, with a noticeable decline in participation as age increases. The 46+ age group has the least representation at 1%, indicating that younger consumers dominate the survey.

2. From table no. 2, Most respondents are students (51.5%), followed by working professionals (40.8%). There is a minimal presence of business owners (4.9%) and retirees (2%), while only 0.8% are employed in private jobs, suggesting the survey is focused on younger and working individuals.
3. From table no. 3, The majority of respondents (51.5%) earn between ₹25,000-₹50,000 per month, with 36.9% earning less than ₹25,000. Only 10.7% earn between ₹50,000-₹1,00,000, and a small percentage (1%) earn more than ₹1,00,000, indicating a predominantly lower to middle-income group.
4. From table no. 4, A large portion of respondents (75.7%) own two-wheelers, highlighting their popularity. Cars are the second most common vehicle owned (15.5%), while SUVs (7.8%) and trucks/heavy vehicles (1%) are less common, indicating a preference for smaller, more affordable vehicles.
5. From table no. 5, A majority of respondents (45.6%) change their engine oil every 3 months, while 38.8% follow a 6-month schedule. A smaller percentage (14.6%) change their oil annually, and only 1% change it every 2 months, reflecting varied maintenance habits among consumers.
6. From table no. 6, Most respondents (47.6%) prefer purchasing engine oil from authorized service centres, indicating trust in official outlets. Local mechanics are the second most popular choice (31.1%), while online platforms (10.7%) and retail stores (8.7%) are less preferred.
7. From table no. 7, Recommendations from mechanics are the most influential source of information (60.2%), followed by suggestions from friends and family (43.7%) and online reviews (37.9%). Social media and advertisements also play a role (36.9%), with personal experience being less influential (19.4%).
8. From table no. 8, Synthetic engine oil is preferred by the majority (54.4%), followed by semi-synthetic oil (27.2%). A smaller group (13.6%) still prefers mineral oil, likely due to cost or tradition. 4.9% are unsure about their preference, suggesting a need for consumer education.
9. From table no. 9, Castrol is the leading engine oil brand (52.4%), followed by Shell (22.3%). Mobil (9.7%), Total (8.7%), and Indian Oil (4.9%) also have notable shares, while Bullet and Idemitsu have niche followings with only 1% each.
10. From table no. 10, The primary factors influencing engine oil purchases are quality and durability (68%), followed by price (53.4%) and brand reputation (47.6%). Recommendations from mechanics also impact decisions (45.6%), while promotions and discounts play a minimal role (11.7%).
11. From table no. 11, A majority of respondents (51.5%) are very loyal to their engine oil brand, always choosing the same brand. 36.9% are somewhat loyal but occasionally switch brands, while 11.7% are not loyal and frequently change brands based on factors like price or availability.

Conclusion

The study reveals key insights into the engine oil purchasing behaviour of consumers. The majority of respondents are young (18-25 years), predominantly students and working professionals, and belong to lower to middle-income groups. This demographic is highly price-sensitive, which plays a crucial role in their purchasing decisions. Two-wheelers dominate vehicle ownership, further emphasizing the preference for affordable and practical products.

Brand loyalty is strong among consumers, with Castrol leading the market, but there is still room for other brands to compete, especially if they focus on product quality, durability, and competitive pricing. Most consumers prioritize the performance of the oil, especially synthetic oils, and trust recommendations from mechanics and personal experience. The data indicates that authorized service centres and local mechanics are the primary purchase channels, showcasing a strong preference for trusted and familiar sources over online or retail stores.

Consumers are also increasingly conscious of sustainability, with eco-friendly engine oils gaining traction, especially among urban buyers. Price remains an important factor, but it does not overshadow the desire for high-quality, durable products. Brand reputation and recommendations from trusted sources further influence their choices.

In conclusion, engine oil brands should focus on maintaining high product quality, fostering brand loyalty, and addressing the price sensitivity of consumers. They should also consider the growing demand for sustainable products and emphasize transparency and education around oil types to better cater to informed consumers.

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Referred Books

- Consumer Behaviour by Michael R. Solomon:

Provides a comprehensive overview of consumer behaviour theories and concepts.

https://books.google.com/books/about/Consumer_Behavior_Buying_Having_and_Being.html?id=Ob4oEAAAQBAJ

- Influencer: The Psychology of Persuasion by Robert Cialdini:

Explores the psychological principles that influence decision-making and persuasion.

<https://books.google.com/books/about/Influence.html?id=5dfv0HJ1TEoC>

- Predictably Irrational: The Hidden Forces That Shape Our Decisions by Dan Ariely:

Reveals how irrational and emotional factors often drive our choices.

https://books.google.com/books/about/Predictably_Irrational.html?id=lwKRgkLNgXsC