



“BRAND LOYALTY AND POST-PURCHASE EXPERIENCE: A STUDY ON ROYAL ENFIELD CUSTOMERS IN NORTH INDIA”

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ABSTRACT :

This study explores the emotional, psychological, and behavioral dimensions that influence brand loyalty and post-purchase experiences among Royal Enfield motorcycle owners, specifically focusing on North India. Royal Enfield is not just a motorcycle brand; it has cultivated a symbolic identity and lifestyle that resonates deeply with its customers. Despite facing challenges such as inconsistent service experiences or mechanical issues, many customers remain loyal to the brand—indicating a powerful emotional connection that goes beyond the functional aspects of the product.

The research adopts a mixed-method approach, incorporating both primary data (through structured questionnaires and field surveys) and secondary data (from previous research studies, company reports, and market analyses). Through this, the study aims to identify and analyze the underlying drivers of customer loyalty such as perceived brand authenticity, quality of service, community-driven marketing, and nostalgic appeal associated with the brand's legacy.

The findings of the study indicate that storytelling around the brand's heritage, emotional narratives in advertisements, and social bonding through riding communities significantly contribute to repeat purchases and long-term commitment. Moreover, the unique sound and feel of the Royal Enfield bike, combined with the idea of ruggedness and adventure, help reinforce a sense of ownership pride.

This research contributes to the broader understanding of consumer-brand relationships in the Indian automobile sector. It offers valuable insights for marketers and brand strategists on how emotional branding and effective post-sale engagement can foster brand loyalty, even in highly competitive and service-sensitive markets.

Keywords :

Royal Enfield: This iconic motorcycle brand, originally British and now owned by India's Eicher Motors, represents more than just a vehicle—it signifies legacy, pride, and adventure. The brand's motorcycles, especially the Bullet, Classic, and Himalayan series, have become a symbol of rugged masculinity and freedom for Indian riders. In this study, Royal Enfield serves as the central subject, around which customer perceptions, loyalty, and post-purchase experiences are explored in depth.

Brand Loyalty: A crucial concept in marketing and consumer behavior, brand loyalty refers to a customer's consistent preference for a particular brand, often demonstrated through repeated purchases and advocacy. In the context of Royal Enfield, brand loyalty goes beyond satisfaction with the motorcycle; it includes emotional attachment, identity reinforcement, and participation in brand-related communities and events.

Post-Purchase Behaviour: This refers to the actions, feelings, and evaluations made by consumers after purchasing a product. It includes usage experience, satisfaction levels, complaint handling, service encounters, and word-of-mouth behavior. For Royal Enfield owners, post-purchase behavior is especially important due to the nature of the product, which requires periodic servicing, spare parts, and performance satisfaction.

Customer Satisfaction: Defined as the degree to which a product or service meets or exceeds customer expectations, this is a vital determinant of brand loyalty. This research examines how satisfied Royal Enfield customers are after their purchase—particularly with regard to riding experience, service support, and dealership behavior. Any dissatisfaction here can directly impact loyalty and retention.

Motorcycle Market: The two-wheeler segment in India is one of the largest in the world, with fierce competition among domestic and international brands. The Royal Enfield brand occupies a niche within this market, targeting consumers looking for mid-weight, retro-style motorcycles. Understanding its place in the broader motorcycle market helps contextualize its strengths, threats, and the challenges it faces from emerging competitors like Jawa, Yezdi, and international players like Harley-Davidson.

Consumer Insights: These are deep understandings derived from consumer behavior, preferences, and feedback that help businesses make strategic decisions. In this study, insights gathered from actual Royal Enfield customers offer a real-world view of what drives loyalty, what expectations are unmet, and how the brand can improve its offerings to enhance customer satisfaction and long-term engagement.

1. Introduction

Brand loyalty is one of the most important concepts in marketing and consumer behavior studies. It refers to the emotional attachment, trust, and repeated preference that a consumer develops towards a specific brand over time. Unlike simple customer satisfaction, brand loyalty often leads to repeat purchases, resistance to competitor offerings, and strong word-of-mouth promotion. It reflects a psychological commitment that influences a customer's buying decisions—even when faced with better or cheaper alternatives.

In the context of the Indian two-wheeler market, **Royal Enfield** has become an extraordinary case of brand loyalty. Originally a British company, Royal Enfield now operates under the Indian conglomerate Eicher Motors. Despite changing ownership and evolving market dynamics, the brand has retained its legacy, iconic design, and strong customer following. Its classic models like the **Bullet 350**, **Classic 350**, **Meteor**, and **Himalayan** continue to captivate Indian riders with their distinctive thumping engine sound, retro appeal, and promise of adventure.

Royal Enfield's success is not solely attributed to technical specifications or pricing. Instead, it has cultivated an emotional brand identity built on nostalgia, freedom, masculinity, and rugged individualism. Community rides like "One Ride" and "Himalayan Odyssey" are not just promotional activities—they are lifestyle experiences that reinforce customer attachment. The company has created a sense of **belonging and pride** among its riders, who often see themselves as part of a larger brotherhood or biker tribe.

North India plays a particularly crucial role in this phenomenon. With its mix of urban consumers, youth subcultures, and challenging terrains such as the Himalayas, North India provides an ideal backdrop for Royal Enfield's rugged image. Many riders from this region associate the brand with power, personality, and adventure—values that align with their own aspirations. From weekend group rides in Punjab to solo expeditions in Ladakh, Royal Enfield motorcycles are deeply embedded in the region's riding culture.

This research aims to explore how Royal Enfield customers in North India experience the brand after purchase, and how that experience influences their long-term loyalty. The study specifically looks at emotional factors (such as brand attachment and identity), functional factors (such as performance and durability), and service-related factors (such as dealership behavior and service availability). It seeks to answer critical questions such as:

- Do customers remain loyal even when there are product or service issues?
- What motivates a customer to repurchase or recommend Royal Enfield?
- How do post-purchase experiences impact brand advocacy?

By examining these aspects, this research will contribute to a better understanding of brand loyalty as a multidimensional phenomenon, especially in the context of premium motorcycle brands in India. The findings will also offer strategic insights for companies seeking to build and sustain brand loyalty in highly competitive consumer markets.

2. Objectives of the Study

The primary aim of this research is to explore and evaluate the dynamics of brand loyalty and post-purchase customer experience among Royal Enfield customers in North India. In a competitive two-wheeler market where consumer choices are abundant, it is vital for any brand to understand not only why customers choose their product but also why they stay loyal after the purchase.

Royal Enfield is a brand that stands out for its iconic image, historical legacy, and cult following. However, it is also a brand that faces recurring criticism regarding post-sales service, availability of parts, and high maintenance costs. These conflicting consumer sentiments make it essential to study the factors that influence brand loyalty in a detailed and multi-dimensional way. This study is therefore guided by the following specific objectives:

1. To understand the main factors that contribute to brand loyalty among Royal Enfield customers in North India:
This objective focuses on identifying both tangible and intangible elements that influence customer loyalty. It includes examining how brand image, product design, performance, advertising, and emotional identity contribute to continued brand preference. The goal is to isolate the key drivers of loyalty that are unique to Royal Enfield's customer base.
2. To assess customer satisfaction with Royal Enfield's post-purchase service and engagement:
A major aspect of brand loyalty is the customer's ongoing interaction with the company after making a purchase. This includes dealership behavior, maintenance services, availability of spare parts, and the handling of customer complaints. This objective seeks to evaluate whether Royal Enfield meets customer expectations in these areas, and how such experiences affect repeat purchase decisions and overall satisfaction.
3. To identify emotional and psychological factors that shape the ownership experience:
Royal Enfield customers often develop a deep emotional connection with their motorcycles. They associate the bike with freedom, power, and personal identity. This objective aims to explore how emotions, nostalgia, and community participation influence the ownership journey and turn customers into long-term brand advocates. The emotional value attached to the brand is often what sustains loyalty even when functional expectations are not fully met.
4. To evaluate whether product quality, service, and community involvement contribute to repurchase intention:
This objective combines both rational and emotional decision-making aspects. While product quality and service efficiency are expected to influence satisfaction logically, community rides, brand clubs, and peer influence can also play a psychological role in driving repeat purchases. This section of the research will assess how these combined factors affect customers' willingness to continue buying or recommending Royal Enfield motorcycles.

3. Research Methodology

The success and accuracy of any research study depend significantly on the methodology adopted. For this study titled “*Brand Loyalty and Post-Purchase Experience: A Study on Royal Enfield Customers in North India*,” a descriptive research design was chosen. This method is best suited for understanding existing conditions, attitudes, opinions, and practices through the collection of factual data from a defined population.

The approach followed in this study is quantitative in nature, aiming to quantify customer experiences and loyalty patterns using structured data. The primary objective of employing a quantitative methodology was to ensure objectivity and to allow for statistical interpretation of trends and patterns observed among Royal Enfield customers.

Primary Data Collection:

The core data for this study was collected through a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire was carefully designed to cover a wide range of factors affecting both pre-purchase and post-purchase behavior. Key focus areas included:

- Customer demographics (age, location, profession)
- Purchase motivation (design, performance, community, etc.)
- Satisfaction with dealership experience
- Post-purchase service satisfaction
- Emotional and psychological connection with the brand
- Willingness to recommend or repurchase the motorcycle

The survey was administered to over 100 Royal Enfield customers living in different regions of North India, specifically targeting states such as Delhi, Haryana, Punjab, Himachal Pradesh, and Uttarakhand. These states were chosen because they represent a mix of urban, semi-urban, and mountainous regions—each having a unique customer segment and riding culture. These differences helped bring diversity and depth to the study’s findings.

The sampling method employed was convenience sampling. While this method does not allow for randomization, it is useful for exploratory studies where speed, availability, and accessibility of respondents are important. Although it introduces some sampling bias, convenience sampling was chosen due to the time and resource constraints typical of undergraduate research projects.

Data Analysis:

The responses collected through the questionnaire were systematically tabulated and organized using simple statistical tools. The data was presented using bar charts, pie diagrams, and tables for clarity and ease of understanding. These visual aids made it easier to interpret complex patterns and trends related to customer satisfaction and brand loyalty.

Secondary Data Sources:

In addition to primary data, this research also utilized a range of secondary sources to support and validate its findings. These included:

- Academic journals and marketing research articles on brand loyalty and consumer behavior
- Published case studies on Royal Enfield’s marketing strategies
- Industry reports from automotive research agencies
- Official data and brand communication from the Royal Enfield website
- News articles and expert interviews related to the company’s performance in North India

The combination of both primary and secondary data ensures a comprehensive understanding of the topic, enhancing the credibility and academic value

4. Literature Review

The concept of brand loyalty has been widely researched in the fields of marketing, consumer psychology, and brand management. It is understood not simply as repeat purchasing, but as a deep emotional and psychological connection that a consumer develops with a brand over time. Scholars and marketing theorists have long argued that loyalty is shaped by both rational factors—such as product quality, value for money, and service efficiency—and emotional factors—such as identity, nostalgia, trust, and brand love.

According to David A. Aaker (1996), a leading authority on brand equity, loyal customers are valuable not only because they buy repeatedly but because they are less price-sensitive, more willing to try new products, and often act as informal brand ambassadors. Aaker emphasizes that loyalty is largely emotional and is rooted in the customer’s perception of the brand’s identity, reliability, and performance over time.

Kevin Lane Keller (2008), another prominent marketing scholar, introduced the concept of Customer-Based Brand Equity (CBBE). He posits that strong brand equity is built when customers can recall and recognize the brand, hold favorable and strong associations, and experience resonance—meaning they feel a deep psychological bond with the brand. This resonance leads to active engagement and long-term loyalty, which is particularly relevant in the case of Royal Enfield.

In the Indian context, brand loyalty takes on a unique flavor. Unlike Western markets where utility and innovation often dominate, Indian consumers—especially in the automobile and lifestyle segments—are greatly influenced by heritage, emotional connect, and cultural relevance. Royal Enfield capitalizes on this by presenting itself not merely as a motorcycle company but as a way of life. Its branding emphasizes classic styling, retro appeal, and adventurous spirit. Campaigns like “Leave Every Place Better,” “Built Like a Gun,” and rides like “Himalayan Odyssey” promote a rugged, aspirational lifestyle that aligns with the values of its predominantly male, young, and middle-income customers.

Several previous studies also emphasize the importance of after-sales service, product reliability, and the strength of the dealer network in maintaining post-purchase satisfaction. In a competitive market, even the most emotionally appealing brands must offer consistent support, easy access to spare parts, and competent service personnel. This is an area where Royal Enfield has experienced both praise and criticism. While many customers appreciate the brand's mechanical simplicity and riding experience, others express dissatisfaction with high service costs, limited workshop availability in rural areas, and inconsistent service quality across dealerships.

Moreover, brand communities—a concept developed in marketing literature—play a significant role in fostering loyalty. Royal Enfield owners often participate in brand-sponsored and independent riding clubs, long-distance group rides, and community meetups. These social interactions reinforce a sense of belonging, transforming the motorcycle from a mere product into a shared identity. Literature suggests that such brand communities increase emotional engagement and contribute significantly to customer retention.

5. Data Analysis & Interpretation

The success of this research largely depends on the insights drawn from the primary data collected through a structured survey. A total of **100+ respondents**, all Royal Enfield motorcycle owners from various regions of **North India**—including Delhi, Haryana, Punjab, Himachal Pradesh, and Uttarakhand—were surveyed to understand their post-purchase experience and brand loyalty.

Demographics of Respondents:

A large proportion of the respondents (nearly 68%) belonged to the **25–40 age group**, representing young professionals, entrepreneurs, and adventure-seeking individuals. This reflects that Royal Enfield is most popular among the youth and middle-aged customers who not only seek transportation but also a brand that matches their lifestyle and aspirations. The remaining participants included college students, older adults (40+), and a few first-time vehicle owners.

Key Purchase Motivations:

The survey revealed that **78% of respondents** chose Royal Enfield primarily because of its **brand reputation, emotional value, and heritage identity**. This data reinforces the conclusion that the brand's long-standing image, nostalgic branding, and iconic status play a central role in the decision-making process.

Interestingly, **64% of respondents** highlighted **engine sound, ride comfort, and road presence** as major reasons behind their purchase. Many customers associate Royal Enfield with a sense of power, prestige, and individuality. The riding experience—particularly during long-distance travel or hill rides—was frequently mentioned as a core reason behind choosing the brand over others like Jawa, Bajaj, or Harley-Davidson.

Post-Purchase Service Experience:

A critical aspect of brand loyalty is the customer's experience **after the purchase**, especially with service and maintenance. In this study, only **55% of customers** reported complete satisfaction with Royal Enfield's **after-sales service**. This statistic reveals that there is a clear gap between expectations and service delivery.

Major concerns raised by the respondents included:

- **Lack of genuine spare parts** in rural or semi-urban regions
- **High maintenance and service costs** at authorized service centers
- **Long waiting periods** at workshops, leading to customer frustration
- **Inconsistent service quality** across dealerships

Such issues, if left unaddressed, can damage the brand's reputation and push customers toward competitors with better service networks.

Brand Advocacy and Loyalty Indicators:

Despite the concerns with after-sales service, a notable **81% of respondents** indicated that they would **still recommend Royal Enfield** to their friends or family. This strong brand advocacy highlights the power of emotional loyalty and the perceived prestige associated with owning a Royal Enfield motorcycle.

It shows that for many consumers, minor service-related inconveniences are outweighed by the satisfaction they derive from the brand's image, community, and riding experience. Their connection with the brand is not purely transactional—it is **emotional, symbolic, and aspirational**.

Visual Representation & Charts:

To provide a clearer understanding of consumer opinions and trends, data collected from the surveys has been organized into **bar charts, pie diagrams, and response tables**. These visuals offer a detailed breakdown of satisfaction levels, service feedback, and loyalty indicators. All charts and data tables are included in the **Annexure section** of this report for reference.

Interpretation Summary:

The analysis shows a clear duality in customer sentiment—**high emotional attachment to the brand** on one hand, and **service-related dissatisfaction** on the other. While the product performance and emotional branding work strongly in Royal Enfield's favor, operational shortcomings in the post-sale

phase need immediate attention to sustain long-term customer loyalty.

6. Key Findings

Based on a thorough analysis of both primary and secondary data, several critical insights have emerged regarding the factors that drive **brand loyalty** and shape the **post-purchase experience** of Royal Enfield customers in **North India**. These findings highlight the unique consumer-brand relationship that Royal Enfield has cultivated over the years and also point to areas that need strategic improvement.

1. Emotional Connection:

One of the most significant findings of the study is the **strong emotional bond** that customers share with the Royal Enfield brand. Unlike many other two-wheeler companies, Royal Enfield has successfully positioned itself not merely as a vehicle manufacturer, but as a **symbol of lifestyle and personality**. Customers, particularly in North India, associate the brand with traits like masculinity, freedom, ruggedness, and pride.

This emotional connection is often built through brand storytelling, nostalgia, and a shared riding culture. Whether it's the thumping sound of the Bullet or the sense of brotherhood in community rides, these experiences create lasting memories. Many owners regard their bike as a **companion** rather than just a machine, reinforcing emotional loyalty even in the face of occasional product or service shortcomings.

2. Product Appeal:

Another key reason behind customer satisfaction and loyalty is the **unique product appeal** of Royal Enfield motorcycles. Riders reported that the **design, engine performance, sound, and comfort during long rides** were standout features. The classic retro aesthetics combined with powerful torque make these bikes ideal for both city roads and hilly terrains.

Especially in regions like Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand, where rugged roads are common, customers found Royal Enfield motorcycles to be reliable and stable. This practical advantage, coupled with emotional appeal, strengthens the brand's perceived value and desirability in the minds of consumers.

3. Service Challenges:

Despite the strong emotional and product-based appeal, the research also revealed clear **gaps in the post-purchase service experience**, particularly in **Tier-2 and Tier-3 cities**. Many respondents reported issues such as:

- Limited number of authorized service centers in smaller towns
- Long waiting periods for servicing
- High cost of maintenance
- Inconsistent availability of spare parts

These challenges have the potential to damage customer trust, especially among new buyers or those not fully emotionally invested in the brand. This highlights the need for Royal Enfield to **expand its service network**, standardize quality across dealerships, and improve customer care touchpoints in semi-urban and rural areas.

4. Loyalty Intent:

A particularly interesting finding is that despite these service-related grievances, a majority of customers **still intend to repurchase** Royal Enfield or recommend it to others. This proves that brand loyalty in this case is not based solely on functional satisfaction, but is **strongly influenced by emotional identity and brand perception**.

This kind of loyalty—rooted in community, pride, and symbolic value—can be very powerful, but it also comes with risks. If functional dissatisfaction grows too large, even the most loyal customers may reconsider their choices. Hence, while Royal Enfield currently enjoys a **high degree of brand advocacy**, it must take proactive steps to safeguard this by improving service experiences and addressing customer pain points.

Overall Insight:

The findings suggest that **brand loyalty towards Royal Enfield is a blend of emotional attachment and experiential satisfaction**. The motorcycle is more than just a mode of transport; it's a statement of identity. However, to sustain and grow this loyalty—especially in new and underserved markets—the company must address service inefficiencies and strengthen its post-sale engagement strategies.

7. Conclusion & Suggestions

The present research study provides valuable insights into the nature of **brand loyalty and post-purchase experiences** among Royal Enfield customers in **North India**. The findings reveal a strong and emotionally rooted bond that exists between the brand and its customer base. This loyalty is not merely the result of product satisfaction—it is deeply tied to **brand identity, lifestyle aspirations, cultural pride**, and the **legacy** that Royal Enfield has carefully nurtured over decades.

Customers across North Indian states such as Punjab, Delhi, Himachal Pradesh, and Uttarakhand view Royal Enfield as more than just a motorcycle. It is a **symbol of masculinity, freedom, pride, and adventure**. From long rides across mountains to participating in brand-sponsored community rides,

Royal Enfield ownership has become an expression of personality and social identity. This emotional resonance plays a significant role in influencing repurchase intention, word-of-mouth recommendations, and customer advocacy.

However, the study also brings to light several areas where **improvements are necessary**. A notable portion of respondents raised concerns about **after-sales service**, particularly in **Tier-2 and Tier-3 towns**. Problems such as **unavailability of genuine spare parts**, **long service delays**, **high maintenance costs**, and **lack of professional service personnel** were frequently mentioned. These functional limitations can potentially damage the brand's credibility and weaken customer satisfaction in the long term.

In order to maintain and expand its position as a **leader in the premium motorcycle segment**, Royal Enfield needs to adopt a **balanced strategy**—one that continues to build emotional value while also ensuring operational efficiency. Based on the insights drawn from the study, the following **strategic suggestions** are proposed:

✔ **1. Expand and Standardize Service Centers Across Geographies:**

Royal Enfield should invest in widening its **authorized service network**, especially in under-served rural and semi-urban areas. This includes not just adding more service points, but also **training mechanics**, standardizing service quality, and ensuring a **consistent customer experience** across all centers.

✔ **2. Digital Tracking Systems for Service and Spare Parts:**

To address customer frustration over delays and part shortages, the company can introduce a **digital platform** that allows customers to track service progress, check availability of parts, and book appointments. This would improve transparency, reduce waiting time, and enhance trust.

✔ **3. Launch a Loyalty Rewards Program:**

Royal Enfield can initiate a structured **customer loyalty program** that rewards users for participating in brand events, providing feedback, referring others, or completing a certain number of kilometers. This kind of engagement boosts brand connection and creates an incentive for continued relationship.

✔ **4. Leverage Community Rides and Digital Storytelling:**

Community rides have proven to be a powerful tool for emotional bonding. Royal Enfield should continue to **expand its riding events**, both offline and virtually. In addition, the brand should use **social media**, **customer stories**, and **ride journals** to further strengthen its identity and sense of community.

Final Thoughts:

Royal Enfield stands at a unique intersection of tradition and modernity. It has a loyal customer base that values the brand not just for its products but for what it represents. However, emotional loyalty can only carry a brand so far—**functional satisfaction and customer service** are equally important to sustain that loyalty in the long term.

By aligning its **service infrastructure** with the emotional strength of its brand, Royal Enfield can transform loyal customers into **lifelong brand advocates**. This will not only strengthen its leadership in India but also enhance its appeal in global markets, as the brand continues to evolve as a symbol of legacy, freedom, and unmatched riding experience.