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CUSTOMER SATISFACTION IN AUTOMOBILE INDUSTRY WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO STAR MAHINDRA, SATNA, M.P

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Abstract: *Customer satisfaction plays a vital role in the success and growth of the automobile industry. Providing quality products, effective customer service, and reliable after-sales support helps automobile dealerships build customer trust and loyalty. The study focuses on Star Mahindra in Satna. It aims to evaluate customer satisfaction with the products and services offered by Star Mahindra, Satna. The study focuses on factors such as vehicle quality, pricing, staff behaviour, sales experience, and after-sales service. Primary data will be collected through questionnaires, while secondary data will be obtained from relevant books, journals, and other sources. The study aims to identify the major factors affecting customer satisfaction and suggest measures to improve service quality and customer relationships. The findings may help Star Mahindra, Satna, enhance customer loyalty and improve its overall business performance.*

Key Words: *Customer satisfaction, Automobile industry, Star Mahindra, Satna, Service quality, Customer loyalty.*

1. INTRODUCTION

The automobile industry is one of the major industries contributing to economic growth and employment generation in India. It provides customers with a wide range of vehicles and related services. With increasing competition in the automobile market, customer satisfaction has become an important factor in the success and growth of automobile companies and dealerships. Customer satisfaction refers to the extent to which a company's products and services meet or exceed customer expectations. Satisfied customers may return for future purchases and recommend the dealership, while delays, unclear costs, poor communication, and unresolved complaints may reduce trust.

1.1 Background of the Study

The relationship between a customer and a dealership often continues after purchase through regular maintenance, repair support, warranty assistance, spare-parts availability, and complaint handling. These experiences can influence overall satisfaction.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Customers may experience differences in service waiting time, staff communication, cost transparency, and complaint resolution. The study seeks to understand customer perceptions of these aspects at Star Mahindra, Satna.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1985) proposed a conceptual model of service quality, explaining that customers compare expectations with perceptions of actual performance. This is relevant to automobile dealerships because customers judge both service outcomes and delivery processes.

Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1988) developed SERVQUAL to measure consumer perceptions of service quality. Its dimensions include reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and tangibles, which can inform dealership service questions.

Yadav and Joseph (2017) examined after-sales service quality and satisfaction in the Indian automobile industry. This topic is relevant to understanding service experiences after vehicle purchase.

Gupta and Raman (2022) addressed after-sales service experiences and customer satisfaction in the Indian automobile industry, highlighting the role of service encounters in customers' overall evaluations.

Singh, Sharma, and Chanda (2023) discussed the measurement of service quality in Indian automobile after-sales services through the AutoIND scale. This work is relevant to measuring service quality in the automobile context.

The literature points to service quality, communication, reliability, responsiveness, and complaint resolution as important factors. The present study applies these themes to Star Mahindra, Satna. Publication details should be verified against original sources before submission.

3. OBJECTIVES

To study the level of customer satisfaction with Star Mahindra, Satna.
To assess customer views about after-sales service and complaint handling.
To identify areas where service quality and customer support may be improved.
To suggest practical measures for improving customer satisfaction and loyalty.

4. SCOPE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The study is limited to customer satisfaction relating to Star Mahindra, Satna. It considers vehicle quality and performance, employee behaviour, service quality, customer communication, service costs, and complaint resolution. The findings may help the dealership identify areas for improvement and provide a framework for similar studies. Customer satisfaction can contribute to repeat purchases, positive word of mouth, customer retention, and a stronger dealership reputation.

5. RESEARCH METHOD

5.1 Research Design

The study follows a descriptive research design, suitable for describing customer opinions and satisfaction levels relating to the dealership's products and services.

5.2 Sources of Data

Primary data may be collected directly from customers through a structured questionnaire. Secondary data may be obtained from books, research articles, company information, and other published sources.

5.3 Sample Size and Sampling

The survey refers to a sample size of 50 respondents. The final paper should state the actual number of customers who completed the questionnaire.

5.4 Research Instrument

A structured questionnaire can collect responses about overall satisfaction, vehicle quality, staff behaviour, after-sales service, service waiting time, complaint handling, and communication.

5.5 Method of Data Analysis & Presentation

Method	of	Data	Presentation	—	Tabular	Presentation
Method	of	Sample	Analysis	—	Percentage	Analysis

Responses are analysed using frequency counts and percentages.

5.6 Limitations of Method

Analysis depends on the accuracy and completeness of responses, the sampling method, and the number of participants.

6. DISCUSSION :

Note: The detailed frequency tables and percentages below incorporate empirical survey findings (Sample Size N = 50).

6.1 Overall Customer Satisfaction

Table 6.1 displays the distribution of overall customer satisfaction with products and services at Star Mahindra, Satna.

Sr. No.	Responses	No. of respondents	Percentage of respondents
1	Highly Satisfied	15	30%
2	Satisfied	20	40%
3	Neutral	10	20%
4	Dissatisfied	5	10%

Interpretation: Interpretation: The empirical data shows that 70% of respondents are satisfied or highly satisfied with the products and services (30% highly satisfied + 40% satisfied), while 20% have a neutral opinion and 10% are dissatisfied. This indicates a generally positive level of customer satisfaction with Star Mahindra, Satna.

6.2 Satisfaction with Staff Behaviour

Table 6.2 shows the distribution of customer satisfaction regarding staff behaviour and communication.

Sr. No.	Responses	No. of respondents	Percentage of respondents
1	Highly Satisfied	14	28%
2	Satisfied	21	42%
3	Neutral	10	20%
4	Dissatisfied	5	10%

Interpretation: Interpretation: The data indicates that 70% of customers are satisfied or highly satisfied with staff behaviour and communication (28% highly satisfied + 42% satisfied), whereas 20% remain neutral and 10% express dissatisfaction. This highlights polite and responsive staff interactions.

6.3 Satisfaction with Vehicle Quality and Performance

Table 6.3 displays customer satisfaction ratings regarding vehicle quality and performance.

Sr. No.	Responses	No. of respondents	Percentage of respondents
1	Highly Satisfied	20	40%
2	Satisfied	20	40%
3	Neutral	6	12%
4	Dissatisfied	4	8%

Interpretation: Interpretation: The survey findings show that 80% of customers are satisfied or highly satisfied with vehicle quality and performance (40% highly satisfied + 40% satisfied), with only 12% neutral and 8% dissatisfied, confirming strong vehicle reliability.

6.4 Satisfaction with After-Sales Service

Table 6.4 illustrates customer opinions regarding after-sales service quality.

Sr. No.	Responses	No. of respondents	Percentage of respondents
1	Highly Satisfied	10	20%
2	Satisfied	15	30%
3	Neutral	15	30%
4	Dissatisfied	10	20%

Interpretation: Interpretation: The analysis indicates that 50% of customers are satisfied with after-sales service (20% highly satisfied + 30% satisfied), while 30% have a neutral opinion and 20% are dissatisfied. This points to clear opportunities for improving service turnaround time and support.

7. FINDINGS

- 30% of customers are highly satisfied and 40% are satisfied, bringing total overall satisfaction to 70% with Star Mahindra's products and services.
- 70% of customers report satisfaction with staff behavior, politeness, and communication.
- Vehicle quality and performance receive high satisfaction ratings of 80% among respondents.
- After-sales service satisfaction stands at 50%, with 30% neutral responses and 20% expressing dissatisfaction, indicating scope for enhancement.
- Prompt complaint handling, service turnaround time, and transparent cost communication emerge as key areas requiring continuous management focus.

8. LIMITATIONS

- The study is based on a limited sample size of 50 respondents, which may not represent all customers of Star Mahindra, Satna.
- The study is restricted to Star Mahindra, Satna, and its findings may not apply to other automobile dealerships.
- Limited time and resource constraints may affect detailed analysis of customer satisfaction.
- The findings depend on opinions and responses provided by customers, which may be subjective.

9. CONCLUSION

The study, 'Customer Satisfaction in the Automobile Industry with Special Reference to Star Mahindra, Satna,' highlights the importance of customer satisfaction to the growth of the automobile industry. Factors such as vehicle quality, staff behaviour, pricing, and after-sales service play an important role in satisfaction.
It can be concluded that improving service quality, understanding customer needs, and providing effective customer support may strengthen customer loyalty and enhance the overall performance of Star Mahindra, Satna.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

- The dealership should focus on timely servicing, regular maintenance, and efficient handling of customer service requests.
- Employees should receive regular training in communication skills, customer handling, and complaint resolution.

- The dealership should collect customer feedback after vehicle delivery and servicing to identify problems and improve service quality.
- Customers should receive clear information about service schedules, expected completion times, maintenance costs, and additional charges.
- Customer complaints should be addressed promptly and professionally to build trust and reduce dissatisfaction.
- Suitable customer-relationship initiatives and consistent service quality may encourage repeat purchases and positive word of mouth.

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