



ORIGINAL RESEARCH PAPER

Commerce

CUSTOMERS' OPINION AND SATISFACTION TOWARDS AFTER SALES SERVICE OF MARUTI SUZUKI LIMITED – A STUDY IN ERODE CITY

KEY WORDS:

Reimbursement, Upgrade, Retention

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ABSTRACT

Customers are the assets of every business. Satisfying the customers with services and products is the most important landmark of any growing business. Customers are the major resource and main source for the success or failure of a venture. It is hard to please them, especially when people today have a lot of options available in the market for them. Choosing one out of all the available choices, it is a crucial job on the portion of the sales professionals to attract the customers and make them stick to their products or make them return to their organization. This job of creating attractive services for the customers to let them return and reuse the product of a company or organization which surely does profit to the service providers and satisfaction to the service receivers is what we call as After Sales Service. After sales service makes sure products and services meet or surpass the expectations of the customers. It is a crucial aspect of sales management and must not be ignored. It plays an important role in customer satisfaction and customer retention. It generates loyal customers. Customers start believing in the brand and get associated with the organization for a longer duration. They speak good about the organization and its products. A satisfied and happy customer brings more individuals and eventually more revenues for the organization. Sales professionals must try their level best to satisfy customers for them to come back again to their organization. After sales service plays a pivotal role in strengthening the bond between the organization and customers. Customers are the backbone of any business or organization. Hence, they shall always be provided with proper guidance and support to keep them happy. This paper deals with a research study of customers' opinion and satisfaction towards after sales service of maruti suzuki limited.

INTRODUCTION

The automobile industry is a wide range of companies and organizations involved in the design, development, manufacturing, marketing, and selling of motor vehicles, some of them are called automakers. It is one of the world's largest economic sectors by revenue. The automobile industry in India happens to be the ninth largest in the world following Japan, South Korea and Thailand. The Indian automobile industry includes two-wheelers, trucks, cars, buses and three-wheelers which play a crucial role in growth of the Indian economy. The country is expected to top the world in car volumes with approximately 611 million vehicles on the nation's roads by 2050. Starting from the era when there was too slim of a variety of cars available in Indian market, Indian automobile industry has come up a long way to have a diverse array of cars these days. There are a number of top automobile companies running their operations in India, which again have a range of models in different segments of cars. However, while looking for top 10 automobile companies in India, one name that would always lead the list is Maruti Suzuki India. Maruti Suzuki has consistently been the dominant leader in the Indian automobile industry. However, there are also other big names like Tata Motors, Mahindra and Mahindra, Hyundai Motors, Hindustan Motors etc. During its early days, the most of the Indian car auto manufacturers banked upon foreign technologies. But the scenario has changed over the years and currently, the Indian auto manufacturers are using their own technology. Due to the growing pace of Indian automobile market, a number of car manufacturers including the global leaders have locked their horns in the Indian auto market. Several Indian automobile manufacturers have spread their operations globally as well, asking for more investments in the Indian automobile sector by the MNCs.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

After sales service refers to various processes which ensure customers are satisfied with the products and services of the organization. It plays an important role in customer retention. It generates loyal customers and increases a brand value. Good after sales service influences the long term reputation of the firm and can influence future sales. The provision of after sales service varies in importance depending on the type of goods for eg. After sales service and extended warranties are important for goods like electrical goods and new cars. Hence, the company should identify and meet the

needs of the customer and ensure whether after sales service meet or surpass the expectations of the customers. In this context, it is necessary to study the customers' opinion and satisfaction towards after sales service. The main aspects of research are,

- What is the reason for choosing Maruti Suzuki Car?
- Are they satisfied with the after sales service of Maruti Suzuki Limited?
- What are the future expectations from Maruti Suzuki Limited?

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This study deals with the customers' opinion and satisfaction towards after sales services of Maruti Suzuki Limited. This study helps to identify the customers' requirement and the level of satisfaction towards after sales service. It helps for better decision making and modifications. The study is based on primary data. The primary data has been collected with a well structured questionnaire. On the basis of collected data, the main reasons for choosing maruti suzuki limited, duration of usage, level of customers' opinion, level of satisfaction and the problems faced by the customer towards after sales services of maruti suzuki limited are analysed.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The following are the objectives of the research study,

- To evaluate the customers' opinion towards after sales service of maruti suzuki limited.
- To analyse the problems faced by the customer regarding after sales service.
- To measure the level of satisfaction regarding after sales service of maruti suzuki limited.

PERIOD OF STUDY

The survey for collection of primary data was collected for three months. The study covers different areas in Erode city.

METHODOLOGY

I. SOURCE OF DATA

The study is based on both primary data and secondary data. The primary data has been collected through a well structured questionnaire. Required secondary data has been collected from various sources like Magazines, Books and Websites.

II. SAMPLE SIZE

The number of items selected from the population constitutes the sample size. 100 respondents are used for the study in Erode city.

III. SAMPLE DESIGN

For the purpose of research, convenient sampling technique is adopted in selecting the respondents in Erode city. The respondents are distributed with well structured questionnaire.

IV. STATISTICAL TOOLS

The following statistical tools are used in the study for the purpose of analysis.

- Simple percentage analysis
- Weighted average ranking analysis
- Chi-square test

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The major limitations of the study is that,

1. The study is restricted to Erode city with due constrains of time and cost.
2. The correctness of information depends upon the data given by the respondents according to their perception, knowledge and feeling.
3. The sample size was limited to 100 respondents.
4. The period of study is limited to three months.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

TABLE NO: 1

PROFILE OF THE RESPONDENTS

FACTOR		PERCENTAGE
Model of Maruti Suzuki Car	Swift/ Swift Dzire	34
	Celerio	12
	Alto kio	16
	Baleno	11
	Others	27
Reasons for Choosing Maruti Suzuki Car	Brand image	24
	Price	17
	Mileage	23
	Appearance	4
	Easy Maintenance & After Sales Service	32
Information Source about Maruti Suzuki Car	Advertisement	18
	Friends/ relatives	52
	Dealers	14
	Internet	16
Duration of Owning Maruti Suzuki Car	Below 2 years	34
	2-4 years	50
	Above 4 years	16
Recommendation of Maruti Suzuki to Friends / Relatives	Recommended	78
	Not Recommended	22
	Recommended	22
Future Expectation from Maruti Suzuki	Low Service Cost	34
	Better warranty policies	38
	Best offers	24
	Others	4

Source: Survey Data

From this study, it is concluded that,

- Majority (34%) of the respondents have swift/ swift Dzire model car.
- Easy maintenance & after sales service is the main reason for choosing maruti suzuki car.
- Majority (52%) of the respondents know about maruti suzuki car through friends/relatives.
- Majority (50%) of the respondents are owning maruti suzuki car for a period of 2-4 years.
- As high as (78%) of the respondents recommended

maruti suzuki to their friends/relatives.

- Majority (38%) of the respondents expect better warranty policies from maruti suzuki limited.

TABLENO:2

RANKING THE SERVICES PROVIDED BY MARUTI SUZUKI

Services	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total	Rank
Periodic Maintenance Service	120	126	66	50	48	18	28	14	470	III
Warranty Policies	112	77	66	85	56	45	30	3	474	II
Spare Parts	120	105	48	45	80	33	16	14	461	IV
Modification & Upgrade/ Repair Service	128	49	84	75	36	39	28	12	451	V
Personnel Training	56	70	114	45	64	33	30	13	425	VII
Free Service	144	98	72	45	44	64	18	11	496	I
Advice on Usage	24	98	66	110	24	45	28	15	410	VIII
Free Vehicle Pick up & drop	96	77	84	45	48	39	22	18	429	VI

From the above table no.2, it is clear that majority of the respondents gave first rank for free service, followed by second, third, fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh and eighth for warranty policies, periodic maintenance service, spare parts, modification & upgrade /repair service, free vehicle pick up & drop, personnel training and advice on usage. Thus, Free Service is the main service provided by Maruti Suzuki.

LEVEL OF OPINION OF THE RESPONDENTS

In order to find out the level of opinion, the factors towards after sales service of Maruti Suzuki Limited such as follow up, response time for customer queries, attention given to minor complaints, ease of contacting the service department to make an appointment and renew Maruti insurance policy are taken into consideration. Out of 100 respondents, 21% of the respondents have low level of opinion, 57% of the respondents have medium level of opinion and remaining 22% of the respondents have high level of opinion. To analyze the association between independent variables and level of opinion, the following null hypothesis has been framed.

Ho:

There is no significant association between various independent variables [gender, age, educational qualification, occupational status, family monthly income, marital status, no. of members in the respondent's family and area of residence] of the respondents and their level of opinion towards after sales service of Maruti Suzuki Limited. This hypothesis has been tested using chi-square test.

TABLE NO. 3

ASSOCIATION BETWEEN DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES AND LEVEL OF OPINION

Factor	Degrees of freedom	Calculated Value	Table Value at 5% level	Ho: Accepted/ Rejected
Gender	2	1.174	5.991	Accepted
Age	4	7.73	9.488	Accepted
Educational Qualification	4	8.68	9.488	Accepted
Occupational Status	4	7.02	9.488	Accepted
Monthly Family Income	4	12.01	9.488	Rejected
Marital Status	2	8.16	5.991	Rejected
No. of members in the family	4	8.53	9.488	Accepted
Area of Residence	4	10.57	9.488	Rejected

Source: Survey Data

- The chi-square test results have shown that demographic factors like gender, age, educational qualification, occupational status and no. of members in the respondent's family have not significantly influence the level of opinion of the respondents' towards after sales

service of Maruti Suzuki Limited.

- The chi-square test results have shown that demographic factors like family monthly income, marital status and area of residence have significantly influence the level of opinion of the respondents' towards after sales service of Maruti Suzuki Limited.

**TABLE NO: 4
PROBLEMS FACED BY THE RESPONDENTS REGARDING AFTER SALES SERVICE**

Weighted Score Point(W)		6	5	4	3	2	1	Total Score (ΣWX)	Weighted Average Score	Rank
Rank		I	II	III	IV	V	VI			
Expensive Service Charge	X	14	13	15	21	22	15	331	15.76	VI
	WX	84	65	60	63	44	15			
Not paying attention	X	13	17	19	21	15	15	347	16.52	III
	WX	78	85	76	63	30	15			
Long repair time	X	26	11	17	17	12	17	371	17.66	I
	WX	156	55	68	51	24	17			
Poor knowledge of mechanic	X	15	19	16	15	16	19	345	16.42	V
	WX	90	95	64	45	32	19			
Delay in Warranty replacement	X	14	24	18	14	16	14	364	17.33	II
	WX	84	120	72	42	32	14			
After service defect	X	18	18	14	12	19	19	347	16.52	III
	WX	108	90	56	36	38	19			

Source: Survey Data

above table no. 4 reveals that out of the various problems the long repair time is given first rank with weighted average score 17.66 and second rank is given to delay in warranty replacement with weighted average score of 17.33, it is followed by not paying attention and after service defect whose weighted average score of 16.52 and secure third rank. The poor knowledge of mechanic is given fifth rank with weighted average score of 16.42 and the sixth rank is given to expensive service charges with weighted average score of 15.76 respectively. Hence, long repair time is the main problem faced by the respondents regarding after sales service of Maruti Suzuki Limited.

Gender	2	3.33	5.991	Accepted
Age	4	6.752	9.488	Accepted
Educational Qualification	4	6.91	9.488	Accepted
Occupational Status	4	10.41	9.488	Rejected
Monthly Family Income	4	15.46	9.488	Rejected
Marital Status	2	2.577	5.991	Accepted
No. of members in the family	4	13.97	9.488	Rejected
Area of Residence	4	19.89	9.488	Rejected

LEVEL OF SATISFACTION OF THE RESPONDENTS

In order to find out the level of satisfaction, the factors towards after sales service of Maruti Suzuki Limited such as service charge, timely delivery after service, warranties, complaint handling, quick reimbursement in case of damage, staff service, availability of spare parts, service quality and no. of service stations are taken into consideration. Out of 100 respondents, 17% of the respondents have low level of satisfaction, 62% of the respondents have medium level of satisfaction and remaining 21% of the respondents have high level of satisfaction. To analyze the association between independent variables and level of satisfaction, the following null hypothesis has been framed.

Ho:

There is no significant association between various independent variables [gender, age, educational qualification, occupational status, family monthly income, marital status, no. of members in the respondent's family and area of residence] of the respondents and their level of satisfaction towards after sales service of Maruti Suzuki Limited. This hypothesis has been tested using chi-square test.

**TABLE NO. 5
ASSOCIATION BETWEEN DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES AND LEVEL OF SATISFACTION**

Factor	Degrees of freedom	Calculated Value	Table Value at 5% level	Ho: Accepted/ Rejected
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Source: Survey Data

- The chi-square test results have shown that demographic factors like gender, age, educational qualification and marital status have not significantly influence the level of satisfaction of the respondents' towards after sales service of Maruti Suzuki Limited.
- The chi-square test results have shown that demographic factors occupational status, family monthly income, no. of members in the respondent's family and area of residence have significantly influence the level of satisfaction of the respondents' towards after sales service of Maruti Suzuki Limited.

SUGGESTIONS

- The sample respondents have given least rank for advice on usage regarding service provided by maruti suzuki limited. Hence, the company has to provide more guidance on usage and maintenance of car.
- The sample respondents have medium level of opinion towards after sales service of maruti suzuki limited. The dealers may give more response and attention towards their queries/complaints to increase their opinion level.
- Long repair time is the main problem faced by the respondents regarding after sales service. Hence, the company should try to deliver the car as earlier as possible after the repair work.
- The sample respondents have medium level of satisfaction towards after sales service of maruti suzuki limited. Hence, the company should collect feedback from the customers and further steps must be taken to

fulfill the customers expectations and thereby increase the level of satisfaction.

- Most of respondents expect better warranty policies, low service cost, quick reimbursement in case of damage and more no. of service stations. The company must take immediate steps to increase satisfaction level and to retain customers in future.

CONCLUSION

Maruti Suzuki is the major player in the car segment. The Maruti Suzuki cars are the best and fast moving brands. Now a days, the demand for the cars by customer shows an increasing trend, the authorized dealers of the Maruti Suzuki companies have initiated many steps to increase the sales. At the same time they expected better warranty policies, low cost, easy replacement and best offers etc., if the company fulfills their needs and expectation they can increase the sales and retain them in future.

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