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Customer Satisfaction and After Sales Service of Passenger Cars in Muscat City

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Abstract: Customer satisfaction is an inevitable business requirement for business sustainability. Customer satisfaction is a positive customer experience that reflects how goods or services are delivered with customer value that surpasses customer expectations. Customer satisfaction is important because it provides marketers with a marketing edge that they can use to manage and improve their businesses with. After sales service is a set of technical operations to monitor the vehicle put in place by the manufacturer to ensure that it is free from defects in the workmanship throughout the warranty period specified in the sales terms. Dissatisfied customers with after sales service may lose brand loyalty and consequently stop brand referrals. Therefore, it is a key concern for the automobile manufactures to ensure that their customers are satisfied with after sales service. Convenience sampling technique was used in the study to collect primary data from a sample of 100 Omani customers who used different brands of passenger cars. In addition to the primary data, secondary data were also used in the analysis process to arrive at its findings and conclusion.

KEYWORDS: Customer satisfaction, after sales service, passenger cars, Muscat city

I. BACKGROUND OF THE RESEARCH

The sultanate of Oman is a fast growing market for automobile products. Since the market size is huge, the significance of the quality of after sales service is also important. Since customer satisfaction is a key factor that determines sales volume of the automobile companies, studying of the same in the Omani market provide practical insights on how to improve customer satisfaction and the market share. Automobile industry is a fast booming business category in terms of its volume of production, sales and profit. After-sales-service is an integral part of the sales strategy of any consumer durable good. Some establishments may believe that their role ends as the commodity is sold. However, customers may need associated services after purchase, such as installation, training, maintenance or return of the defective ones. Most customers do not repeat purchases if they have bad experience. Quality of after sales service and its resultant customer satisfaction are considered to be one of the important factors that elevate a brand to top position.

Oman doesn't manufacture automobiles. 100 percent of the automobiles that are seen on the roads of Oman are imported from other countries. The major imports are from India, China, USA, Germany and Japan. All top automobile brands in the world are available in the Omani automobile market. After sales service aspect of business is a customer-pulling factor especially in the consumer durable market. Potential buyers keep high expectations with regard to variety of after sales service benefits and its quality delivery. The companies that meet or surpass the customer expectations in this regard conquer the market. Omani automobile market is not exceptional in the context. The present study helps understand the degree of customer satisfaction on after-sales-service and the areas where improvement is required to improve the quality of after sales service of automobile brands in Oman and thus the sales of the same.

Need for the study

Customer Satisfaction is the most important aspect of business. As the trend of retail market is changing these days dramatically and the business growth and development depend on customer satisfaction. Even though many studies were carried out on customer satisfaction on after-sales-service of passenger cars, such one was rare in the Omani context. The changing customer expectations in line with changing technologies demands the need for better



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understanding of the changing customer expectations of their tastes and preferences on after-sales-service of any consumer durable product. It is significant in the case of customer satisfaction on after-sales-service of passenger cars as the business competition in this sector is very high.

Research questions

1. How far the customers are satisfied on the after sales service of passenger cars in Muscat city?
2. What are the factors that are considered to be significant for customer satisfaction from customer perspective?
3. What is the level of customer satisfaction on employee behavior at the customer touch points?
4. What is the degree of customer willingness for customer referrals?
5. What is the degree of brand loyalty of customers as a resultant factor of customer satisfaction?

Research objectives

1. To find out the degree of customer satisfaction on after sales service of passenger cars in Muscat city
2. To find out the factors that are considered to be significant for customer satisfaction from customer perspective
3. To find out the level of customer satisfaction on employee behavior at the customer touch points
4. To find out the customer willingness for customer referrals
5. To find out brand loyalty of customers as a resultant factor of customer satisfaction

Scope of the study

The study was carried out in Muscat city among Omani citizens who have bought and owned new cars from the leading car manufacturers having marketing and after sales service operations in Muscat city. The study mainly focuses on customer satisfaction and brand loyalty.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Customer satisfaction is the most important business expectation that can be leveraged over a period of time by increasing sales revenue (Suchanek & Kralova, 2023). Elgarhy and Alharethi (2025) state that customer satisfaction depends on the value delivered to customers. Previous researches reveal that getting a buyer is easy; but, retaining a buyer is tough. Retention of customers depends on how well the company is able to sustain its value delivery to them especially in the sector where after-sales-service becomes a major part of sales attraction. More over brand loyalty depends on customers' satisfaction on after-sales-service quality. Companies those are successful in delivering quality after-sales-service succeed in retaining its customers for long time and generating customer referrals. The present study throws light in to the factors that lead customers to be loyal to a particular brand. Teuku et al. (2025) categorically state that the main purpose of satisfying the existing customers of any business is to attract new customers. The satisfied customers become references to new customers. It is a chain of action and continues to happen till the time the brand is able to deliver its expected value.

Customer satisfaction: Customer satisfaction is one of the most critical issues concerning business organizations of all types. Business organizations try to give the best service to its customers and also look for the reason that can increase the satisfaction level (Long & Liu, 2024). Sah et al. (2025) state that there are certain factors that cause customer satisfaction. Those factors include friendly employees, knowledgeable employees, helpful employees, accuracy of billing, billing timeliness, competitive pricing, service quality, good value, billing clarity and quick service. Reynagonzález et al. (2025) define customer satisfaction as 'a short-term emotional reaction to a specific service performance'. Customers may be satisfied with a good or service, an experience, a purchase decision, a salesperson, store, service provider, or an attribute or any of these. Sivapitak and Sangpikul (2024) define satisfaction as 'a person's feeling of pleasure or disappointment resulting from comparing perceived performance in relation to expectations'. Gün and Söyük (2025) define 'customer satisfaction as the attitude resulting from what customers think should happen (expectations) interacting with what customers think did happen (performance perceptions)'. Customer satisfaction is the feelings of happiness a customer experiences when the product meets the expectations of the customer.

Customer willingness: Customer willingness in the context of the present study refers to customer willingness to refer other potential customers introducing them to the business. Xiao et al. (2024) state that the customers who are



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interested to buy a good or service of a company may be willing to refer other potential customers if the existing customer is satisfied. If the existing customer is not a satisfied customer, the existing customer is unlikely to make customer referrals (Yang et al., 2024). Therefore, the degree of customer willingness to refer other potential customers depends on the degree of customer satisfaction. Customer willingness to refer other potential customers depends on various factors like satisfaction on the product quality, service component attached to its delivery, pricing and brand reputation (Zhou & Qijun, 2024). Quality of the after sales service in the case of consumer durables or services determines customer willingness to customer referrals.

Customer referrals: Mirfakhraei et al. (2024) state that satisfied customers are the source of customer referrals. A satisfied customer can bring in many new customers to the business. The same way a customer who is dissatisfied can prevent potential customers from being customers to the business. Therefore, it is necessary for any business to ensure satisfaction to every customer it serves. Jiang et al. (2025) state that customer referral is widely used as one of the most effective marketing tools for faster conversion of a potential customer in to a satisfied customer. Customer referrals become a constant source of new business if a referred customer is satisfied and refers other potential customers, generates further leads and goes on and on. Senachai and Julagasigorn (2024) state that customer referrals are the most cost-effective marketing tool for new customer acquisition. Customer referrals are generally an untapped source for generating unlimited sales leads of potential customers. Customer referrals have dominant influence on potential customers (Elshaer et al., 2024). A substantial portion of customer value is constituted by customer referrals (Lydia & Omollo, 2024).

Brand loyalty: Brand loyalty refers to one's loyalty to a particular brand by making continuous purchase of the same brand without switching to competitors' brands (Khowjoy et al., 2023). Charukitpipat (2024) define brand loyalty as one's commitment towards a particular brand that in turn makes the customer repeatedly purchase the same brand. Nguyen and Dam (2024) state that brand loyalty is a positive consequence of product quality, service quality and customer satisfaction.

Aftersales service: Caha et al. (2024) state that after sales service is an integral part of a product especially that is durable. Superior quality of after sales service results not only in customer retention but in bringing in new customers. González-Prida et al. (2025) define after sale service as "those activities taking place after the purchase of the product and devoted to supporting customers in the usage and disposal of the goods to make them loyal". According to Kotler (2002), "attracting a new customer is five times greater than the cost to keep a current customer happy". Sliž (2024) states that the term 'after-sales services' has been given two different perspectives in the literature. Dakić et al. (2024) refer that when referring to service providing companies, after-sales services are being treated as one among several supplementary service elements provided and when referring to tangible goods, they are mostly seen as operative activities of some or all members of the distribution chain.

Aftersales service and customer satisfaction: Arta et al. (2024) state that quality after sales service is an antecedent of customer satisfaction. In the case of electronic appliances, Oswaldo et al. (2025) found out that quality of after sales service affects customer satisfaction and the customer satisfaction in turn affects behavioral intentions of customers to repurchase the same product. The quality of after sales service positively affects the relationship between the customer and the business. Arta et al. (2024) further state that quality of after sales services especially in the case of consumer durables influences purchase decisions of customers. Therefore, it may be concluded that the quality of after sales service of any product, irrespective of the nature of the product, has a positive impact on customer satisfaction and the subsequent buying decisions.

Research gap

Review of literature shows that there is a rarity of research in the area of customer satisfaction on after sales service of passenger cars especially in the capital city of the Sultanate of Oman, Muscat. The detailed review of literature gives a clear picture of lacking similar studies in the past. Customer satisfaction on using many products across different business categories was subjected to studies in different time settings and in different geographical conditions. But a study on customer satisfaction on after sales service of passenger cars in Muscat city is the first of this kind. Therefore, the research gap is evident that there is a scope for such a study on finding out how customers are satisfied on the after sales service of passenger cars of different brands, different models and variants. The results of the study are expected to fill the existing research gap.



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III. RESEARCH METHODS

The study was carried out using descriptive research design. In descriptive research design, detailed information of the current state of a problem on hand is gathered to describe the characteristics of a population of study or phenomenon of the study.

Data collection: Data needed for the study were primary and secondary data. Primary data about the level of customer satisfaction on after sale service were collected from sample customers through closed-ended questionnaires. The questionnaire was developed after a comprehensive literature review related to effect of after sale service on customer satisfaction and loyalty applying Kano model and disconfirmation theory using Likert's scale rated from 1 to 5 (highly dissatisfied to highly satisfied). In the first phase of the study, interview was conducted to identify after sale services offered, to understand how it is offered and to identify challenges in implementing after sale service in selected automotive industry. In the second phase, results of the interview were used to further explore the level of customer satisfaction on after sale service of passenger cars. The data collected include detailed information on the customer satisfaction on the after sale service and brand loyalty of customers in the automotive industry. The primary data have been collected from 100 respondents. The responses were sought about how after sale service was offered, problems faced during the service, and the satisfaction of customers on the after sale services.

Primary data: The present study on the customer satisfaction on the after sale service and brand loyalty of the customers constitutes the customers of major automobile brands in Muscat city. Primary data were collected from a sample of 100 Omani customers who were in and around Muscat city. Primary data were collected circulating structured questionnaire and interviews. The selection of respondents was on random basis. Convenient random sampling was used in this regard. All the 100 distributed questionnaires could be collected back duly filled-in.

Ethical issues: The issue of ethics in research is one of the issues that becomes widely heard these days and falls within the scope of the concerns of research. In this regard, the researcher took extreme caution not to violate the ethical lines. Before choosing every respondent it was made absolutely clear to the respondent that the data collected from the respondent would be absolutely confidential and would be used only for academic purposes. The respondents gave their personal and scaled data on the assurance given to them in writing as a part of the questionnaire itself.

Sampling: Sample design is a specific plan for obtaining a sample from a particular population under study. In the present study, sample was drawn from the area of Muscat city. A total of 100 Omani customers of different brands of passenger cars were conveniently chosen as sample. Convenience sampling is a nonrandom sampling where sample is chosen from a given population because of easy accessibility, easy availability, geographical proximity and willingness of participation (Etikan et al. 2016). Convenience sampling technique was used in the study to collect the primary data from the sample of Omani customers of passenger cars.

Questionnaire Design: The questionnaire for collecting the primary data from the Omani customers of passenger car brands on customer satisfaction on after sales service of passenger cars in Muscat city was designed with a simple composition of personal information of the customers and the scaled items. Personal information section included name (optional), age of the customers, gender and their education. Likert scaling was used to scale the statements given in the questionnaire. The 5-point Likert scale ranges from 1 as highly dissatisfied or strongly disagree to 5 as highly satisfied or strongly agree.

Study Area: Muscat Region: The present study was carried out in the city of Muscat. Muscat is the capital of the Sultanate of Oman. Muscat is the largest city in Oman as well with a total population of 1.28 million. The metropolitan area of Muscat extends to 3500 km². The region has six provinces.

Period of the Study: The period of the study was from February 2018 to May 2018. The data from the sample of Omani customers of passenger cars in Muscat city were collected during the period.

Secondary Data: In the present study, in addition to primary data, secondary data are also used to gather the required information. Books, journals, magazines and electronic sources have also been used.



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IV. DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS AND ANALYSIS

Customers' profile renders personal information of the customers of different automobile brands. It includes gender, age, education and ownership profile of customers. Understanding customers' profile helps interpret the analyzed data more comprehensively.

Gender Profile

Gender	Number of Customers	Percentage(%)
Male	40	40
Female	60	60
Total	100	100

Age Profile

Age	Number of Customers	Percentage (%)
18-25	35	35
26-35	33	33
36-45	24	24
46-55	4	4
Above 55	4	4
Total	100	100

Education Profile

Education	Number of Customers	Percentage (%)
High school	5	5
Diploma	40	40
Bachelors	45	45
Masters	10	10
Total	100	100

Brand Ownership

Brand	Percentage of ownership %	Ownership Ranking
BMW	5	6
Nissan	8	4
Volvo	3	7
Suzuki	4	6
Mercedes	12	2
Toyota	15	1
Dodge	7	5
Isuzu	7	5
GMC	9	3
Hyundai	7	5
Porsche	1	8
Ford	5	6
Mazda	7	5
Kia	5	6
Volkswagen	3	7
Chevrolet	1	8
Others	1	8
Total	100	-



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Customer satisfaction on after sales service: an analysis

Degree of customer satisfaction is accounted considering seven satisfaction components of after sales service of passenger cars. The seven perceived components are technical support, spare parts supply, Online (telephone) service, car washing, inspection, warranty and timely delivery. Customer satisfaction with each component is appropriately recorded.

Customer satisfaction on after sales service: an analysis

Perceived Response	%*				
	HD	D	NDNS	S	HS
	1	2	3	4	5
Customer Satisfaction with Technical Support	10	10	9	34	37
Customer Satisfaction with Spare Parts Supply	12	8	7	36	37
Customer Satisfaction with Online (telephone) Services	9	11	7	40	33
Customer Satisfaction with Car Washing	5	4	8	50	33
Customer Satisfaction with Inspection	5	3	4	56	32
Customer Satisfaction with Warranty	6	6	12	60	16
Customer Satisfaction with Timely Delivery	9	20	10	35	26

HD: Highly dissatisfied/D: Dissatisfied/NDNS: Neither dissatisfied nor satisfied/ HS: Highly satisfied

Factors influencing customer satisfaction on after sales service

Customer satisfaction on after sales service is influenced by many factors of after sales service of passenger cars. The important factors that have impact on customer satisfaction are the quality of the technical support given by the technicians or engineers, quality of the spare parts supplied, its availability and cost, quality of the online services, quality of car washing, effective inspection, warranty and customer-friendly claim settlement system and timely delivery of the automobile after its service.

Factors Influencing Customer Satisfaction on After Sales Service

Factors	Rank of Significance - Overall Analysis							Total
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Technical support	20	30	13	17	12	2	6	100
Spare parts supply	12	9	12	16	19	15	17	100
Online (Telephone) service	14	10	15	15	19	13	14	100
Car washing	13	14	12	15	15	13	18	100
Inspection	10	11	18	13	12	20	16	100
Warranty	15	9	19	13	11	16	17	100
Timely delivery	16	17	11	11	12	21	12	100
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	700

Customer satisfaction on employee behavior at customer touch points

Employee behavior influences customer satisfaction. Positive employee behavior at various customer touch points satisfies the customer and develops brand loyalty. In automobile industry customers expect quality after sales service in terms of employee behavior at various customer touch points. The customer touch points are the employee behavior of service engineer, cashier and receptionist.

Customer satisfaction on employee behavior at customer touch points



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Perceived response	%					Scale score
	HD 1	D 2	NDNS 3	S 4	HS 5	
Customer Satisfaction with Service Engineer Behavior	20	14	10	30	26	100
Customer Satisfaction with Cashier Behavior	15	12	13	20	40	100
Customer Satisfaction with Receptionist Behavior	10	10	18	32	30	100
Mean of the scale score						100

Customer willingness for customer referrals

Customer willingness for customer referrals depends on customer satisfaction. Those customers who are satisfied on several factors, which are associated with their buying and post-buying experience, become usually willing to give references of potential buyers.

Customer willingness for customer referrals

Perceived response	Percentage (%)
Strongly disagree	2
Disagree	5
Never disagree nor agree	7
Agree	66
Strongly agree	20
Total	100

Brand loyalty of customers as a resultant factor of customer satisfaction

Constant customer satisfaction results in brand loyalty. Brand loyalty makes the customer stick to continuous use of the brand in the future as well. It improves sales. The present study shows that brand loyalty has three components. They are customers' commitment to brand for their future use, positive communication about the brand and it's after sales service quality to friends and relatives and customer preference to the brand they currently use.

Brand loyalty of customers as a resultant factor of customer satisfaction

Perceived response	%					Scale score
	SD 1	D 2	NDNA 3	A 4	SA 5	
Brand Commitment to Future Use	4	3	20	38	35	100
Positive Communication of the Brand to Friends and Relatives	20	15	12	23	30	100
Customer Preference to the Present Brand for the Future Buy	22	2	10	26	40	100
Mean of the scale score						100

V. FINDINGS



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Majority of the customers are satisfied with after sale service of passenger cars in Muscat city. On an average of 75 percent of the total customers are satisfied. After sales service is constituted by the components of technical support, spare parts supply, online service, car washing, inspections, warranty and timely delivery. Technical support was ranked first as the major factor that is relatively significant for customer satisfaction followed by timely delivery (ranked second) and warranty (ranked third). An average of 56 percent of the total customers is satisfied with the overall behavior of service engineer, cashier and receptionist. Majority of the customers (86 percent of the total customers) are willing to give customer referrals. Majority of the customers (64 percent) have brand loyalty as a resultant factor of customer satisfaction.

Research implications

The study was conducted in Muscat city. The study may be conducted in other cities of the Sultanate of Oman not only in the same business and product categories but in different categories as well.

VI. CONCLUSION

The study was carried out to find out the customer satisfaction on after sales service of passenger cars in Muscat city. Primary and secondary sources of data were used. The study was conducted on 100 sample customers of various passenger car brands using structured questionnaires. The collected data were analyzed using simple frequencies and percentage methods. The findings are encouraging that majority of the customers are satisfied with the overall quality of after sales service provided by their respective car companies. The recommendations given may be useful to further improve the quality of after sales service of passenger cars in Muscat city to have their customers more satisfied and the business more improved.

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