

Customer Engagement on Presales and Postsales of Motorcycles

Diwakar Raj. S¹, Dr. Marie Johnson²

Abstract

The present study seeks to provide a valuable contribution with suggestions and conclusions on examining customer engagement on pre-sales and post-sales of motorbikes. The study aims to examine the factors which determine customer satisfaction in the pre and post-sales phase of vehicle. Further, the study examines how the attributes of pre-sales phase related to the post-sales phase of motorbikes. The study developed a theoretical scale to empirically validate the critical factors of pre and post-sales of motorbikes. The results of this study indicates that the dimensions of pre-sales have a significant effect on the dimensions of post-sales phase. The current paper highlights the necessity of improved performance in the pre-sale phase to achieve success. Finally, the study develops an empirical bridge to access customer engagement by analyzing the dimensions of pre and post-sales phases of motorbikes.

Keywords: *Customer Engagement, Pre-sale phase, Post-sale phase, Dimensions of pre-sale stage, Dimensions of post-sale stage, Motorbikes.*

1. Introduction

Customers are getting more and more difficult to please, therefore it's important to identify new channels of communication to better understand their wants and create goods that can compete in today's volatile marketplaces (Addis et al., 2001; Hamel et al., 1990). Customers are less reluctant to show commitment if they are not in some way compensated for it, so businesses that struggle to obtain and properly implement customer commitment often struggle to develop new products successfully. The customer engagement concept has long term behavioural impact on individuals (Bulbulia et al., 2011; Boyd et al., 2005). The engagement of customer on a public or common figure nurtures an identity sense and social belongingness. The sense in turn, develops into commitment towards a product or service which revolves around the individuals among their groups respectively. For instance, the display of loyalty and commitment by the sports fans for their favourite team or club can be observed through different forms of expression. Similarly, the present study emphasize on the customer engagement on motorbikes in India, in the context of pre and post-sales phases.

According to (Coutinho et al., 2018), “several articles globally, for instance, article on motorcycle club have increasingly reported news stories on the role of motorcycle clubs in improving the society and contributing to eliminating societal evils”. With respect to Motorcycle clubs in India it became necessary for the motorbike brands to motivate and encourage the customers in order to ensure customer commitment among the Indian bikers. The present study seeks to analyse the impact of pre and post-sales of motorbikes in India which affects the customer engagement towards the Indian motorbikes. Further,

¹ Research Scholar, Sathyabama Institute of Science and Technology, Rajiv Gandhi Road, Chennai

² Research Supervisor, Sathyabama Institute of Science and Technology, Rajiv Gandhi Road, Chennai

the findings of the study may provide contribution to the relevant firms as well as individuals in the aspects of implication of business managerial and performance of academics (Sumas et al., 2022).

The objectives of the study is two folded: (1) To examine the dimensions of pre-sales phase of motorbikes and its impact on customer engagement. (2) To evaluate the post-sale phase of motorbikes such as and its effect on customer engagement.

In light of these objectives, the study aims to develop an empirical investigation on customer engagement towards Indian motorbikes. The study incorporates the target audience of working adults in India, specifically the age of the respondents' ranges from 20 to 50. Moreover, the study examines the key factors of post and pre-sales phases with respect to customer engagement on two-wheelers. The study's findings can help the Indian motorbikes companies to develop effective strategies in order to attain loyal customers. The goals of this study centre on the investigation of each motorcycle phase's content as well as the connections between the crucial factors that distinguish the various phases in order to assess such elements and seek solutions to these problems. In keeping with those goals, the paper starts with a review of the motorbike buying phases suggested in the pertinent academic literature, which allows for the formulation of a proposal that acts as a guide for this task. The factors that are pertinent to each of the established phases must then be defined. This will set up the theoretical scale that will be used to determine the quality of each phase. The study is finished by defining the linkages between the variables that characterise each phase as well as their main strategic and operational consequences for companies selling two-wheelers in the Indian market. This is done after describing the main features of the fieldwork.

2. Review of Literature

Customer engagement is one of the most debated field in the literature of management. Customer interface and developing relationship with them during the creation of new solutions renders to improve the profitability of the firms through (Perks, 2004; Boaretto et al., 2007; Gentile et al., 2007; Sheth et al., 2002; Shah et al., 2006). This literature review section discusses the post and pre-sales phases of motorbikes and its impact on customer engagement.

2.1. Pre-sales phase

“The initial stage is the pre-purchase phase, through which the customer navigates the website, makes a choice, takes a decision, makes the payment and is informed about delivery”, according to (Cao and Gruca, 2004). The major issues to be considered during this phase may include: selection of product (motorbike), information related to the product and its functioning. Prior to the purchase decision, the following dimensions of pre-sales phase (product enquiry, influencing customers through social media ads, and communicating the offers) enables the customer to be engaged on purchasing the motorbike (Alzola et al., 2009). In the pre-sales stage, customer do enquire the product features and specification by the information types available on the company's website which includes: “information about the prices to be paid, delivery charges, stock availability of product, delivery time and information about the products and services” (Mohanty et al., 2007).

The product information are required to communicated to the customers in the form of e-mail, text or WhatsApp message in order to state the quality, features and specifications, overall cost and delivery terms of the ordered product (Thomas et al., 2006; Collier and Bienstock, 2007; Kim et al., 2006; Kim and Lennon, 2004). Companies in the contemporary days utilizes social media platforms as an effective advertising strategy to engage customers towards their respective products and services. In order to engage the audience, social media influencers were predominantly used by the firms to make an

awareness among the customers about their products (Makrides et al., 2020). (Hermenda et al., 2019) suggested that social media influencers can engage the customers by expressing their experiences about the product usage as well as shares review about certain products (for instance, motorbikes).

Studies on social media influencers shows that followers of influencers with similar interests and desire found to be engaged with a specific product (Andreani et al., 2021). (Sudha et al., 2017) suggested that firms enhances social media advertising by utilizing social media influencers to engage the target audience with attractive brochures and creatives about their product and its features. (Alzola et al., 2009) hypothesized that “firms’ offer on products/services (motorbikes) results in the combined benefits attained by the customer against the economic costs of access to those benefits.” (Brynjolfsson and Smith, 2000) claimed that, costs involved in pre-sales stage may cover tariffs for distant delivery of products (motorbikes), taxes imposed on the product and packing costs. (Rosenoer et al., 2000) indicates that customer can access offers and other beneficial schemes over internet or physical medium without restrictions. This enables the firms the opportunity of engaging their target audience on their product, specifically during the pre-sales stage.

2.2. Post-sales phase

“This stage includes the dimensions comprising the customer’s engagement after closing the purchase stage of motorbikes” (Alzola et al., 2009). Number of studies have explored the necessity of post-sales phases to achieve a profit driven strategy (Cohen et al., 1997) and customer commitment towards the motorbikes (Cooper, 1995; Ehinlanwo et al., 1996; Seuring et al., 2002). Consumers in the present days demands more for “feelings, fun and emotions” rather than superior technology being implemented in the motorbikes (Lasalle et al., 2003). Emotional attachments towards the motorbikes develops a communication between the customer and firm by enabling interactions among the customers. Therefore, customer profiling creates value for the firm, specifically after sales phase (Alzola et al., 2009).

(Ahani et al., 2019) pointed out that customer review such as Google reviews or online reviews about the features of motorbikes can be marked as the personal opinion or preference about the performance and features of the purchased product. According to (Zhao et al., 2021) “customer ratings, which are usually marked with a star, are used to show ratings from customers for the product purchased as a whole”. During the purchasing process, online reviews from customers such as test drive feedback and delivery feedback on motorbikes have a significant influence on purchase decision making process (Rangsang et al., 2021).

Google reviews can be utilized by the customers as a ‘source of information’ on the products to be purchased (Pratminingsih et al., 2022). Not only the Google reviews but also customer ratings about after sales service and complaints resolutions acquired through online may positively affect the customer engagement on motorbikes (Nikunj et al., 2022). Customer engagement can be significantly influenced by the critical elements of after purchase phase such as delivery of vehicle without defects, test ride feedback about the motorbike, compliance related to vehicle delivery and payment procedures and information regarding the order status of vehicle (Rutner and Langley, 2000; Jackson et al., 1986; Ellram et al., 1999; Servera France’s et al., 2006; Kolesar and Galbraith, 2000; Xing and Grant, 2006). The following Table 1 discusses the dimensions of pre-sales and post-sales stages of motorbikes.

Phase	Dimensions	Characteristics	References
Pre-sale stage	Product Information	Design, features and specifications.	Grabner-Krautter (2002), Belanger et al. (2002).
	Offer-value	Price discounts, gifts and vouchers.	Yang and Fang (2004), Yang et al. (2005)
	Advertisement	Social Media Influencers.	Kim and Stoel (2004a), Kim et al. (2006)
Post-sale stage	Customer Review	Customer handling against complaints, complaints resolution.	Cai and Jun (2003), Kim et al. (2006), Santos (2003).
	Customer Reference	Delivery feedback, test ride feedback.	Chen and Dubinsky (2003), Collier and Bienstock (2007)

Table 1: Dimensions of Pre and Post-sale phases

3. Research Methods

The data collection for this study has been done through online as well as offline survey among the people living in Tamil Nadu during September to December 2022. Through printed questionnaire, mailing, WhatsApp and social networks were used to collect data from the respondents in order to reduce distortions associated with the data collection procedures (Bechand et al., 2012; Dillman et al., 2014). The study's questionnaire incorporates two sections, the first section deals with the demographic details of respondents and the second one deals with the customer engagement questions on pre and post-sale phases of motorbikes. Further, the study incorporates 240 valid responses from the respondents. The study's sample were chosen with age ranges from 20 to 50 in order to investigate the customer engagement on pre and post-sales of motorbikes. The following Table 2 represents demographic details of the respondents chosen for this study.

Items	Category	Frequency (240)	N (%)
Gender	Male	138	57.50
	Female	102	42.50
Age	20–30	85	35.41
	31–40	106	44.17
	41–50	49	20.42
Marital Status	Unmarried	117	48.75
	Married	105	43.75
	Others	18	07.50
Educational Qualification	Higher Secondary or	67	27.92

	below	123	51.25
	Undergraduate	50	20.83
	Postgraduate		
Income Level	10,000 or below	34	14.17
	11,000 to 20,000	56	23.33
	21,000 to 30,000	102	42.50
	31,000 and above	48	20.00
Number of bikes owned	0	67	27.92
	1	114	47.50
	2	43	17.92
	3 or above	16	06.66

Table 2: Demographic profile of the respondents

4. Results

The measuring scale of the study was developed on the basis of existing literature on the area of interest. On applying factor analysis, the study obtained five factors (three factors of pre-sale stage and two factors of post-sale phase) which influence customer engagement on motorbikes. At first, confirmatory factor analysis was conducted to assess the dimensions of pre and post-sale stages. Furthermore, validity and reliability of the data were examined. In addition, a stage wise regression analysis was conducted to test the impact level of pre and post-sale dimensions on customer engagement. From the CFA (Confirmatory factor analysis), the factors were found to be satisfactory with acceptable index values. In the following Table 3, it has been observed that Cronbach's α value were found to lie between 0.816 to 0.855 for all five dimensions which shows that the internal consistency were acceptable. Moreover, the composite reliability values were ranges from 0.809 to 0.873 and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) were found to be higher than 0.5 (Anderson et al., 1988). The following Table 3 represents the CFA test results of this study.

Dimensions of Pre and Post-sale phase	Standardized Factor Loadings	t-value	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)	Composite Reliabilities	Cronbach's alpha value
Product Information	0.805	16.291	0.674	0.861	0.852
Offer-value	0.834	16.013	0.617	0.823	0.821
Advertisement	0.783	14.261	0.603	0.819	0.819
Customer Review	0.811	15.760	0.633	0.834	0.836
Customer Reference	0.754	14.023	0.619	0.829	0.821

Table 3: Confirmatory Factory Analysis Test Results

Through the following table 4, the study found that the square roots of AVE and correlation coefficients of factors provided the evidence for good discriminant validity. (Fornell et al., 1981) stated that "the AVE must exceed the corresponding correlation

estimate between the two factors (the square of their inter-correlations)". The results acquired from the following Table 4 represents the overall AVE square roots exceeded the correlation coefficients of the factors. For overall model estimation, maximum likelihood procedure was implemented next to the CFA test. Finally, from the following Table 4, it has been observed that the factors: product information, offer value, advertisement, customer review and customer reference have a significant impact on customer engagement on motorbikes.

Dimensions	Product Information	Offer value	Advertisement	Customer reviews	Customer reference
Product Information	0.785				
Offer value	0.263	0.777			
Advertisement	0.493	0.499	0.783		
Customer reviews	0.375	0.378	0.313	0.795	
Customer reference	0.217	0.297	0.218	0.3588	0.825

Table 4: AVE square roots and correlation coefficients of pre and post-sale dimensions.

5. Conclusion and Discussion

First, the study's findings demonstrated that the five characteristics had a favourable impact on consumer involvement (Pan et al., 2016). It has been suggested that the five characteristics and their impact on consumer engagement which results in brand loyalty for a particular motorcycle are strong and consistent. These characteristics' beneficial effects demonstrated that the respondents were highly committed to the pre- and post-sale phases of the motorcycle sales process. According to the findings, the majority of clients are eager to devote their time and emotions to motorbikes both before and after the transaction. Moreover, the study's findings provided certain recommendations and implications to have further understanding about customer engagement on pre and post-sales stages of motorbikes. Since the study is limited to a single state in India (Tamil Nadu), the findings may not be generalized throughout entire population of the nation. The dimensions of pre and post-sale phases have a significant impact on customer engagement on motorbikes. The study also suggests that the managers to incorporate these factors in the pre and post-sale stages in order to enhance the relationship between the customer and the firm.

References

- Addis, M. and Holbrook, M.B. (2001), "On the conceptual link between mass customisation and experiential consumption: an explosion of subjectivity", *Journal of Consumer Behaviour*, Vol. 1 No. 1, pp. 50-66.
- Ahani, A., Nilashi, M., Yadegaridehkordi, E., Sanzogni, L., Tarik, A.R., Knox, K., Samad, S., et al., Revealing customers' satisfaction and preferences through online review analysis: The

- case of Canary Islands hotels, *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, Elsevier Ltd, vol. 51, , pp. 331–343, 2019.
- Anderson, J. C., & Gerbing, D. W. (1988). Structural equation modelling in practice: A review and recommended two-step approach. *Psychological Bulletin*, 103(3), 411–423.
- Bachand-Marleau, J., Lee, B. H., & El-Geneidy, A. M. (2012). Better understanding of factors influencing likelihood of using shared bicycle systems and frequency of use. *Transportation Research Record*, 2314(1), 66–71.
- Boaretto, A., Noci, G. and Pini, F.M. (2007), “Marketing reloaded: Leve e strumenti per la co-creazione di esperienze multicanale”, *Il Sole 24 Ore*, Milan.
- Boyd, R., & Richerson, P. (2005). Solving the puzzle of human cooperation. *Evolution and Culture*, S. Levinson ed.
- Bulbulia, J., & Sosis, R. (2011). Signalling theory and the evolution of religious cooperation. *Religion*, 41(3), 363-388.
- Cao, Y. and Gruca, T.S. (2004), “The influence of pre- and post-purchase service on prices in the online book market”, *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, Vol. 18 No. 4, pp. 51-62.
- Collier, J.E. and Bienstock, C.C. (2007), “Measuring service quality in e-retailing”, *Journal of Service Research*, Vol. 8 No. 3, pp. 260-75.
- Cooper, R. and Slagmulder, R. (1999), *Supply Chain Development for the Lean Enterprise: Interorganizational Cost Management*, Productivity Press, Portland, OR.
- Coutinho, M. A., de Mesquita, J. M. C., & de Muyllder, C. F. (2018). Ultimate loyalty: A case study of Harley-Davidson clients. *Revista Pensamento Contemporâneo em Administração*, 12(3), 143-154.
- Dillman, D. A., Smyth, J. D., & Christian, L. M. (2014). *Internet, phone, mail, and mixedmode surveys: The tailored design method*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Ehinlanwo, O.O. and Zairi, M. (1996), “Best practice in the car after-sales service: an empirical study of Ford, Toyota, Nissan and Fiat in Germany – Part 1”, *Business Process Re-engineering & Management Journal*, Vol. 2 No. 2.
- Ellram, L.M., La Londe, B.J. and Weber, M.M. (1999), “Retail logistics”, *International Journal of Physical Distribution & Logistics*, Vol. 29 Nos 7/8, pp. 477-94.
- Fornell, C., & Larcker, D. F. (1981). Evaluating structural equation models with unobservable variables and measurement error. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 18(1), 39–50.
- Gentile, C., Spiller, N. and Noci, G. (2007), “How to sustain the customer experience: an overview of experience components that co-create value with the customer”, *European Management Journal*, Vol. 25 No. 5, pp. 395-410.
- Hamel, G. and Prahalad, C.K. (1990), *Competing for the Future*, Business School Press, Boston, MA.
- Jackson, D.W., Keith, J.E. and Burdick, R.K. (1986), “Examining the relative importance of physical distribution service elements”, *Journal of Business Logistics*, Vol. 7 No. 2, pp. 14-32.
- Kim, M. and Lennon, S.J. (2004), “Consumer response to product unavailability in online shopping”, paper presented at the International Textiles and Apparel Association Annual Meeting, Portland, OR.
- Kim, M., Kim, J.H. and Lennon, S.J. (2006), “Online service attributes available on apparel retail web sites: an E-S-QUAL approach”, *Managing Service Quality*, Vol. 16 No. 1, pp. 51-77.
- Kolesar, M.B. and Galbraith, R.W. (2000), “A services-marketing perspective on e-retailing: implications for e-retailers and directions for further research”, *Internet Research: Electronic Networking Applications and Policy*, Vol. 10 No. 5, pp. 424-38.
- Lucr´a Melia´n Alzola and Vı´ctor Padro´n Robaina. (2009). The impact of pre-sale and post-sale factors on online purchasing satisfaction: a survey. *International Journal of Quality & Reliability Management* Vol. 27 No. 2, 2010 pp. 121-137.

- Mohanty, R.P., Seth, D. and Mukadam, S. (2007), "Quality dimensions of e-commerce and their implications", *Total Quality Management & Business Excellence*, Vol. 18 No. 3, pp. 219-47.
- Nikunj Kumar Jain, Alok Kumar Singh, Kapil Kaushik (2020), "evaluating service quality in automobile maintenance and repair industry" *Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics*, ISSN: 1355-5855, Vol 32, No. 1
- Page-Thomas, K., Moss, G., Chelly, D. and Yabin, S. (2006), "The provision of delivery information online: a missed opportunity", *International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management*, Vol. 34 Nos 4/5, pp. 258-77.
- Pan, L., Lin, B. S., & Wang, K. X. (2016). An exploration of the influence factors on tourism experience memory: A research based on tourism in China. *Tourism Tribune*, 1, 49–56.
- Perks, H. (2004), "Exploring processes of resource exchange and co-creation in strategic partnering for new product development", *International Journal of Innovation Management*, Vol. 8 No. 1, pp. 37-61.
- Pratminingsih, S.A., Pramita, N.C. and Bahri, S., The effect of reference group , online review and product return, vol. 23, no. 1, pp. 3399–3408, 2022.
- Rangsang, R.A. and Millayani, H., The effect of online consumer review on customer purchase, *E-Proceeding of Management*, vol. 8, no. 6, pp. 8501–8513, 2021.
- Rarung, J., Lumanauw, B. and Mandagie, Y., J . K . Rarung ., B . Lumanauw ., Y . Mandagie Pengaruh online customer review , online customer rating , dan customer trust terhadap customer purchase decision fcoffee & roastery manado effect of online customer review , online customer rating , and cust, *Jurnal EMBA: Jurnal Riset Ekonomi, Manajemen, Bisnis Dan Akuntansi*, vol. 10, no. 1, pp. 891–899, 2022.
- Rutner, S.M. and Langley, C.J. (2000), "Logistics value: definition, process and measurement", *International Journal of Logistics Management*, Vol. 1 No. 2, pp. 73-82.
- Shah, D., Rust, R.T., Parasuraman, A., Staelin, R. and Day, G.S. (2006), "The path to customer-centricity", *Journal of Service Research*, Vol. 9 No. 2, pp. 113-24.
- Sheth, J., Sisodia, R.S. and Sharma, A. (2002), "The antecedents and consequences of customer-centric marketing", *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, Vol. 28 No. 1, pp. 55-66.
- Servera France's, D., Fuentes Blanco, M., Gil Saura, I. and Berenguer Contri', G. (2006), "La calidad del servicio logístico y su influencia en la lealtad. Un análisis del papel de las TIC", paper presented at the XVI Congreso Nacional de ACEDE, Valencia, September.
- Seuring, S. and Goldbach, M. (2002), *Cost Management in Supply Chain*, Physica-Verlag, Heidelberg.
- Sumas Wongsunopparat, Kanokwan Klinpong. (2022). The Impact of Brand Factor, Customer Factor, and Product Factor on Brand Loyalty Towards Motorbike Brands in Bangkok, Thailand. *Journal of Economics, Finance and Management Studies*. ISSN (print): 2644-0490, ISSN (online): 2644-0504.
- Xing, Y. and Grant, D.G. (2006), "Developing a framework for measuring physical distribution service quality of multi-channel and 'pure player' internet retailers", *International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management*, Vol. 34 Nos 4/5, pp. 278-89.
- Zhao, Y., Powell-Palm, M.J., Wang, J., Bilbao-Sainz, C., McHugh, T. and Rubinsky, B., Analysis of global energy savings in the frozen food industry made possible by transitioning from conventional isobaric freezing to isochoric freezing, *Renewable and Sustainable Energy Reviews*, Elsevier Ltd, vol. 151, no. March, p. 111621, 2021.