



Factors Affecting Changing Trends From Sedan To Compact SUV With Reference To Added Safety Feature, Mechanical Changes And Stylish Look Of The Vehicle

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Abstract

A light truck-like vehicle used for personal transportation, sports utility vehicles (SUVs) are renowned for their toughness and aggressive styling. Sport utility vehicles (SUVs) emerged as the automobile market sector with the fastest global growth during the 1990s. Compared to standard passenger automobiles, SUVs are heavier and bulkier. SUVs will seriously hurt passengers in other cars when they collide with them on the highway due to their greater height and weight. Compared to other passenger vehicles, SUVs are more likely to roll over, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). Indians enjoy SUVs in a similar way to Americans, despite their propensity to roll over. SUVs are becoming more popular in the Indian automobile industry. They will hold the position that is the most prominent among the others, Paper examines the factors affecting changing trends from sedan to SUV with reference to added safety feature, mechanical changes and stylish look of the vehicle

Key Words: *Sedan, SUV, Traffic, Vehicles, Factors, Automobiles.*

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Introduction:

Indian SUV market

The Indian SUV market has seen significant growth and development over the past few years. Several reasons that have contributed to the rise of SUVs in India, making them one of the most popular vehicle segments in the country. Here are some key points about the Indian SUV market:

Compact SUVs, such as the Maruti Suzuki Vitara Brezza, Hyundai Venue, and Kia Sonet, dominate the market. They are popular due to their size, practicality, and affordability.

Mid-size SUVs like the Hyundai Creta, Kia Seltos, and Tata Harrier offer a balance between size, features, and price. Larger SUVs like the Toyota Fortuner, Ford Endeavour, and Mahindra Alturas G4 cater to consumers looking for more space, power, and off-road capabilities.

Urban and Rural Appeal for SUVs and are popular both in urban areas for their style and features and in rural areas due to their robustness and ability to handle rough terrains.

Diesel SUVs are preferred in India due to their higher fuel efficiency and torque, making them suitable for long drives and off-road adventures. Intense Competition: Many international and domestic car manufacturers compete in the Indian SUV market, leading to continuous innovation and improvement in features. SUVs are equipped with advanced features like touchscreen infotainment systems, smartphone integration, advanced safety features, and connected car technology.

Safety Focus: SUVs often come with advanced safety features such as multiple airbags, ABS, EBD, traction control, and more, making them a safer choice for families. Many SUVs offer luxurious interiors, spacious cabins, and premium materials, providing a comfortable driving experience. With growing environmental concerns, there is a rising interest in electric SUVs. Several automakers are working on introducing electric SUV models in the Indian market to cater to eco-conscious consumer, The Indian government has been promoting electric vehicles through various incentives, tax benefits, and subsidies, encouraging the adoption of electric SUVs.

The lack of charging infrastructure for electric SUVs remains a challenge for their widespread adoption. Economic fluctuations, fuel prices, and changes in government policies can impact the SUV market in India. Connected Cars: The integration of advanced connectivity features and IoT (Internet of Things) technology is becoming more prevalent in SUVs.

While still in the early stages, the development of autonomous driving technology is a future trend that could impact the SUV market in India.

The Indian SUV market continues to evolve, driven by consumer preferences, technological advancements, and environmental considerations. As the market matures, it is expected to see even more diverse SUV offerings and a greater focus on sustainable and connected technologies.

Several factors influence the shift from sedans to compact SUVs in the Indian market. Here are some key factors:

Road Conditions- Poor Roads: In many parts of India, especially in rural areas, the roads are not well-maintained. Compact SUVs offer higher ground clearance, making them suitable for these road conditions compared to sedans.

Perception of Safety: Height and Visibility: SUVs provide a higher driving position, which many people perceive as safer because it offers better visibility of the road.

Robustness: SUVs are often perceived as sturdier and more robust, which is appealing to Indian consumers, especially for long journeys.

Practicality-Space: Compact SUVs generally offer more cargo space and passenger room than sedans, making them practical for families and road trips.

Versatility: SUVs often have features like roof rails and larger trunks, making them more versatile for carrying sports equipment, luggage, or other bulky items.

Fuel Efficiency: Improvement in SUV Fuel Efficiency: Many compact SUV models are now designed to be more fuel-efficient, narrowing the gap between sedans and SUVs in terms of mileage.

Status Symbol: Changing Perceptions: SUVs are increasingly becoming a status symbol in India, signifying success and lifestyle. This shift in perception makes people prefer SUVs over sedans.

Price Difference: Competitive Pricing: With growing competition, the prices of compact SUVs have become more competitive, making them affordable for a larger segment of the population.

Towing Capacity: Towing Needs: Some SUVs offer towing capabilities, which is beneficial for people who need to tow trailers or caravans, a common practice during vacations.

Marketing and Advertising: Promotion: Effective marketing strategies and advertising campaigns by SUV manufacturers can create a desire among consumers to own an SUV.

Perceived Comfort: Suspension: SUVs often have better suspension systems, providing a more comfortable ride, especially on rough roads.

Resale Value: Predicted Resale Value: SUVs tend to have higher resale values compared to sedans, making them an attractive choice for buyers who plan to upgrade their vehicles in the future.

Customization Options: Aftermarket Accessories: SUVs offer more options for aftermarket customization, allowing buyers to personalize their vehicles according to their preferences.

Perception of Luxury: Luxurious Features: Many SUV models come with luxurious features, making them attractive to buyers who want a combination of utility and luxury.

Government Regulations: Taxation: In some regions, there might be differences in taxation for sedans and SUVs, influencing the buying decision.

Technological Advancements: Advanced Features: SUVs often come equipped with the latest technology and safety features, appealing to tech-savvy consumers.

The combination of these factors has led to the growing preference for compact SUVs over sedans in the Indian market. Consumer preferences, road conditions, and economic factors continue to shape this trend.

Buying Process of Customer

The idea that commercial transactions are straightforward affairs in which customers simply show interest in something, purchase it, and then depart is widespread. What is truly happening is greatly oversimplified by this. Entrepreneurs and business majors have spent decades planning out and taking advantage of every stage of a customer's purchasing process in order to better draw in and keep their company. Customers go through three sequential processes when expressing interest in making a purchase, and many business owners are ignorant of the best ways to approach each of these stages. The best way to take advantage of each phase will be different because each one represents a distinct level in their mental development. What then are the three stages of the Awareness, interest, and purchasing are these three stages. When they initially learn about the good or service you are providing, this is known as the awareness phase. When a customer expresses interest in your goods by asking specific questions about it, for instance, they are demonstrating that they may wish to purchase it. During this stage, targeted sales pitches are frequently made. Last but not least, the buying stage is when they decide to buy from you after making their final assessment. Gaining an understanding of how to cater to each phase's requirements can help you increase sales and win consumers for life.

The Three stages are 1. Awareness 2, Consideration and 3. Purchase.

Review of Literature:

In his article "Consumer Preference of Cars in Lucknow District" published in 2017's IJRMS, Vol. 7, Aravind Khurana explained how marketing, consumer behavior, and car preference study determines purchase of car. In order to better understand why people prefer cars, it is important to concentrate on an industry where brands, product knowledge, and service have all played significant roles. Arjun Rampal (2017) conducted a study titled "Consumer Preference of International branded Cars over Indian Cars" to ascertain whether consumers prefer global brands to local or national ones. Consumers evaluate things using both intrinsic and extrinsic information cues. If a customer is happy with a product, he will repurchase it, grow devoted, and eventually form a bond with the brand. There are several things that affect what consumers buy. Amita Girdhar, Suman Ghalawat, C. Kavitha¹⁰ they work in Consumer beliefs which act as a barrier and also an advantage to a marketer. Selecting an option to give concession or neglecting the customer belief toward a distinct product or assistance during crafting and evolve any strategy narrow the chance of triumph of a movement. Schiffman and

Kanuklapplication of consumer behaviour is indicating that how an individual customer frames the predilection to invest their income, time, endeavour on their respective product or services. Consumer behaviour illustrates that the process consists of problem identification, information search and evaluating of alternatives and then purchase so that to satisfy their wants and needs

Objectives of the study:

- 1.To understand upcoming models of automobiles under different brand
2. To study preferences of people while buying car (Hatch back, Sedan, SUV)
- 3.To analyse factors affecting shift of preferences from sedan to compact SUV

Hypothesis:

Stylish look of a compact SUV has no relation with positive buying behaviour of customer for compact SUV cars

Methodology of the study:

Survey of consumers was conducted, a sample size of 750 male and female above age 35 and employed (Private and public sector) were taken for consideration. sample having average package of around 7 to 8 lakhs were selected for the purpose of study. Aim behind the study was to understand preference of middle class employed people towards buying cars. Primary data was collected with the help of structured questionnaire with Likert scale and interviews of showroom employees and owners selling cars were conducted with sample size of 28 number. Chi Square test was applied for hypothesis testing and validity and reliability was tested. Cronback alpha was used for reliability testing. Pilot study was conducted with sample size of 250 number. Study was conducted in Mumbai city.10 compact SUV car features were study and compared with Sedan cars. Three features Safety features, Stylish features, Mechanical features were considered for the purpose of study. Few cars taken for the purpose of study were Tata Nexon,Kia Sonet, MG Hector, Hyundai Alcazar, Mahindra XUV700, Tata safari, Tata Harrier, MG Astor.

Data Analysis

Pilot Reliability for Customer Response Data (250)

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of items
0.831	6

Reliability for final Data of Customers Response (750)

Reliability Statistics

Safety Features added	Stylish Feature	Mechanical features
Adaptive Cruise Control	Sunroof	Power
Autonomous Emergency Braking	Music System	Torque
Airbags	Interior	Fuel Efficiency
Brake Sway Control	Touchscreen Infotainment System	Transmission
Seatbelt Reminder	Paint	Mileage
High Speed Alert	Alloy Wheel	
Rear Parking Sensors		
ISOFIX Child Seat Mounts		
Anti-Lock Braking System		
Electronic Brakeforce Distribution (EBD)		

Cronbach's Alpha	N of items
0.842	6

Hypothesis:

Ho: Stylish look of a compact SUV has no relation with positive buying behaviour of customer for compact SUV cars

H1: Stylish look of a compact SUV has a relation with positive buying behaviour of customer for compact SUV cars.

Statistical Test Used Chi Square

Chi Square Test	Chi Square	Df
Preference to Compact SUV has increased due to its attractive look	2235.854a	2
Wide range of colours are available in compact SUV over Sedan (eg Fearless Purple)	2042.523b	4
Sunroof is attractive feature in compact SUV	2128.723b	4
Technologically advanced features like touch screen is also one of the reason contributing to purchase of compact SUV	1883.584b	4
Alloy wheel attracts the attention buyers opting for compact SUV	1947.1687b	4
Interior of Compact SUV is well designed converting consideration stage of buyer behaviour to decision	2007.501b	4
Music System fitted in Compact SUV contributes to positive buying of cars	2235.844b	4

P values = .000 sample size 750

As all P Values = .000 which are less than smallest significance value ($\alpha = 0.05$). Hence, the researcher rejects the Null Hypothesis (H₀) and accepts Alternate Hypothesis (H₁). Therefore Stylish look of a compact SUV has a relation with positive buying behaviour of customer for compact SUV cars.

Conclusion:

Researcher concludes that Compact SUV have won the hearts of people by its look majorly apart from several other reasons. technological advanced features in interior, vibrant colours along with its fancy adjectives, a feel of travelling in big and lavish car, status symbol all contributes to converting consideration to decision journey of buying behaviour .

It is also preferred because of its dominating road presence, high ground clearance, India roads with potholes, speed breakers etc makes SUV a choice car. Affordability is one of the major

reasons contributing to craze of SUV. However, considering mechanical features of an ideal car then sedan is still a choice offering fuel efficiency torque, transmission etc.

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