

# Driving Satisfaction Through Experiences: An Empirical Study of Experiential Marketing in the Automobile Industry

Cherry Patni\*  
Preeti Sharma\*\*

## Abstract

*The Automobile industry is increasingly adopting Experience-led marketing strategies to prioritise customer engagement and satisfaction. Experiential Marketing, which encompasses dimensions such as Sense, Feel, Think, Act and Relate, has now become a pivotal force in influencing the perception, satisfaction, and purchase behaviour of automobile customers. This study emphasised exploring the relation and impact between the Experiential marketing dimensions and customer satisfaction in the automobile industry, where satisfaction was analysed through product quality, service quality and value for money. A cross-sectional study has been conducted among 384 existing Indian automobile users of Rajasthan who have availed themselves of experiential marketing campaigns and strategies while purchasing the product. The data have been analysed using EFA, correlation, and Multiple linear regression to examine the influence of experiential marketing dimensions on customer satisfaction. The study confirms that sense, think, act and relate are the experiential marketing dimensions that positively influence customer satisfaction, while the Feel Experience Dimension is a weak Moderator for influencing customer satisfaction in the automobile industry. The analysis reveals that experiential touchpoints, such as interactive experience-based campaigns, test drives, emotional storytelling, customisation in products, and community events, have significantly influenced customer satisfaction. The study provides a comprehensive strategic framework for industry policymakers and market enthusiasts to integrate experiential intent into their customer satisfaction programs. It also contributes to academic fundamentals by validating the multi-dimensional impact of experiential marketing on customer satisfaction in a high involvement purchase context for automobile users.*

**Keywords:** automobile industry, customer satisfaction, customer engagement, experience-led-marketing.

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\* Research Scholar, Department of Management, IIS (Deemed to be) University, Jaipur, Ph. No.: 9529533301, Email Id: cherrypatni@iisuniv.ac.in

\*\* Assistant Professor (S.G), Department of Management, IIS (Deemed to be) University, Jaipur, Ph. No.: 8875003292, Email Id: preeti.sharma@iisuniv.ac.in

## 1. Introduction

The Global Automotive Industry is witnessing a paradigm shift, from conventional marketing models of product-centred and price-based competitiveness to experiential modern strategies that emphasise customer engagement and satisfaction. In today's pervasively networked marketplace and insightful consumer landscape, automobile brands are compelled to foster a deeper, more meaningful impact on the customer mind in a meaningful way.

Customer satisfaction is one of the important constructs in marketing research and practice, as it directly impacts loyalty, purchase behaviour, repurchase intention and positive word of mouth (Oliver, 1997). In the automotive industry, customer satisfaction is not driven solely by tangible cues such as product quality and features; it is also shaped by intangible experiences that enhance the perceived value of their money. For instance, personalised vehicle trials, showroom ambience, narrative branding and local engagement play a key role in shaping and assessing consumer contentment with a brand.

This study steps into the gap by exploring the relationship between experiential marketing and customer satisfaction in the automobile industry. It basically investigates five key dimensions of experiential marketing, like sense, feel, think, act, and relate, and their impact on customer satisfaction, measured mainly through product quality, service quality and value for money in the automobile industry.

## 2. Review of literature

### 2.1 Customer Satisfaction in the Automobile Industry

Customer satisfaction has long been recognised as the foundational step for marketing and consumer behaviour. At its core, it focuses on how well a service or product lives or surpasses the customer's expectations (Oliver, 1997). Both Tangible and intangible factors are considered important in influencing automobile customers, which makes marketing in this industry more complex. Tangible dimensions include (durability, design, performance).

On the other hand, intangible factors which include the quality of the services- how responsive and professional the staff are, whether the pricing feels valuable as per the product offered.

Zeithmal (1988) argued that the satisfaction of the customer is mainly linked with the perceived value, which is influenced by what the customer puts in time, effort, money and in return what they get, quality, benefits, memorable experiences. This equation has become even more critical in the automobile industry, where purchases are of high value as a long-term investment. Likewise, contemporary research further argues that the creation of perceived value is an experience that occurs during the interaction between customers and brands and thus supports the significance of engagement-based marketing strategies (Vargo and Lusch, 2004; Rather, 2020). Studies show that a satisfied car customer is more likely to repurchase the same brand, recommend it to others and stay loyal even when competitors are trying hard to influence the loyal ones (Anderson & Sullivan, 1993; Fornell, 1992). According to recent studies (Iglesias et al., 2019; Homburg, Jozić & Kuehnl, 2017; Rather, 2020) customer satisfaction do predicts the loyalty intentions, positive word of mouth and repurchase behaviour across industries with high involvement.

In today's market, which is driven by experience, customer satisfaction goes beyond the one-time purchase. The latest empirical studies also support the idea that the level of customer satisfaction in high-involvement industries is more and more determined by the mechanisms of experience and relationships instead of functional characteristics only. As an example, Becker and Jaakkola (2024) claim that it is a cumulative appraisal of experiences on a series of touchpoints and not a single service experience that generates satisfaction. Correspondingly, Homburg et al. (2024) also reveal that customer experience intensity is an important predictor of post-purchase satisfaction and advocacy in the markets of durable products. New results in the automotive retail setting also help to note that immersive showroom scenic setting and interactive engagement tools have a positive impact on satisfaction outcomes (Sharma and Rather, 2025; Gupta et al., 2024). These results underscore the rising centrality of experience-based

mechanisms in the predicting satisfaction in high value consumption contexts.

It's nowadays being shaped by how people feel valued by the brand, from the excitement of a test drive to the ambience of the showroom and the emotional storytelling built up with the brand and after sales services (Gupta & Kumar, 2022; Soltani, Movahedi & Najafi, 2025) These touchpoints are no longer optional but indeed a necessity for automobile brands to build long-term success and long-lasting relationships with customers.

## 2.2 Experiential Marketing

Experiential Marketing has gained a prominent place in the modern marketing paradigm as it plays the role of a transformative approach from contemporary marketing to beyond conventional practices. This change in transactional marketing towards experience marketing is in line with the Experience Economy concept that states that consumers are becoming more demanding in finding memorable and emotionally rich experiences (Pine and Gilmore, 1999; Brakus, Schmitt and Zarantonello, 2009).

Experiential Marketing is redefining its engagement with customers in automobile brands as intangible forces and experiences, moving beyond product specs and prices. This approach is more powerful in a highly involved industry where it needs to connect with people emotionally, socially and mentally.

Instead of focusing solely on rational decision making, this approach provides a vast impact on the consumer decision-making process and satisfaction as it engages consumers' emotional, sensory, cognitive, behavioural and social dimensions (Kotler, 2003; Iglesias et al., 2019; Khan and Rahman, 2016). Its relevance is increasing day by day, particularly in the automobile industry, where it influences lifestyle aspirations, identity expression and emotional connections with the brand.

Schmitt's (1999) Strategic Experiential Model offers a framework to understand this approach using 5 factors, namely "Sense, Feel, Think, Act and Relate". The recent literature defines experiential marketing as a tactical instrument of developing an immersive brand experience that creates perception,

engagement, and satisfaction (Lemon and Verhoef, 2016; Rather, 2020) The current literature has broadened experiential marketing beyond the sense-making to immersive and digitally facilitated engagement ecosystems. As an illustration, the latest research conducted by Lemon and Verhoeff (2024) points to the omnichannel experiential integration as a source of satisfaction and loyalty. The same way, in automobile retail, digital augmentation tools like augmented reality (AR) and virtual test-driving simulators have been demonstrated to play a critical role in augmenting the experiential content and customer reviews (Kumar and Polonsky, 2025). Moreover, the latest meta-analytic results prove that experiential marketing dimensions have a greater impact on satisfaction in general than conventional promotional strategies (Rather, 2024).

- a) **Sense:** Activating five senses through designs, sound spaces, interactive tools, fragrances, test drives, and showroom designs.
- b) **Feel:** Puts an emphasis on the creation of the emotional reaction based on the storytelling, the brand narratives, the aesthetic space, and the personalised communication. Affective attachment and brand intimacy are enhanced by emotional involvement (Brakus et al., 2009; Iglesias et al., 2019).
- c) **Think:** Promotes intellectual and cognitive functions, innovation, problem-solving, communication and technological development. Cognitive stimulation increases perceived competence and product evaluation (Hollebeek, Srivastava and Chen, 2019)
- d) **Act:** Encouraging customers to stimulate behavioural attention and participation through events, exhibitions, driving experiences, and customer-led testimonies that reflect brand value
- e) **Relate:** Building relationships with the customers through community programs, after-sales services, social media, and personalisation experiences that resonate with consumers' social identity.

These dimensions not only contribute to satisfaction but also shape the perception of the consumers towards the brand (Gentile, Spiller, & Noci, 2007)

## 2.3 Linking Experiential Marketing and Customer Satisfaction

Although experiential marketing has been extensively explored in relation to experiential value (Holbrook, 2000; Wang & Lin, 2010), very few studies have been conducted to identify and assess the relationship between experiential marketing and customer satisfaction, especially in the automotive industry. However, theoretical and empirical studies point to a meaningful connection between the two, on the basis of Expectation-Confirmation Theory (Oliver, 1980) and Service-Dominant Logic (Vargo and Lusch, 2004). Positively stimulated experiences involving Sense, Feel, Think, Act and Relate reactions are likely to lead to an operation of perceived value and expectation fulfilment and, as a result, heighten satisfaction.

Recent empirical researches support the direct correlation between experiential marketing and customer satisfaction in high-involvement settings. In a study that is cross-industrial by Iglesias et al. (2024), relational and behavioural experiences were found to be important predictors of satisfaction and repurchase intentions. In the same vein, the studies carried out in the emerging economies show that the interaction mechanisms that mediate the linkage between brand interaction and satisfaction outcomes in the durable goods industries is the experiential engagement (Singh and Rather, 2025). These findings are modern, and they reinforce the theoretical justification of analyzing the experiential dimensions of the automotive industry. For instance, Sense experiences directly influence perception towards products and services, which indirectly impact customer satisfaction. Relate experiences build social identity and belongingness, which improves customer satisfaction in one way or the other. Think dimension experiences encourage a person's cognitive skills to consider the product, focus on innovation and customisation. Feel experiences create emotional bonds that may strengthen customer satisfaction with overall service and quality. Act experiences provide opportunities, promote engagement and trust through interactive trails and call to action events.

Thus, these dimensions can be conceptualised as the drivers of customer satisfaction, but how these impact the perception, service quality, product quality and value for money of automobile consumers also needs to be explored.

## 2.4 Research Gap

Even though the idea of experiential marketing has changed dramatically in the digital world, there is still no empirical data consolidation in the automotive industry. Recent research (Rather, 2024; Gupta et al., 2024; Singh and Rather, 2025) has mostly focused on hospitality, retail, or digital service platforms, but gave little focus to high-involvement durable products like automobiles. Furthermore, not many studies have been able to empirically test all the five dimensions of Strategic Experiential Modules of Schmitt in a single integrated regression framework. Empirical validation is limited in emerging economies such as India where experiential retail environments are fast changing due to digitalisation and the use of immersive technologies. As such, the work secures a current gap by analyzing the confluence of Sense, Feel, Think, Act, and Relate dimensions as a collective and individual factor on customer satisfaction in the Indian automobile industry. (Lemon and Verhoef, 2016; Lemon et. al. 2019; Homburg et al., 2017).

As the competition and changing expectations of consumers in the automotive industry grow and change, it becomes a strategic issue to know how the aspects of experiential marketing affect customer satisfaction. Thus, this research aims to close this gap by empirically examining the connection and influence of the Sense, Feel, Think, Act, and Relate experiential dimensions on Customer Satisfaction in the Indian automobile industry.

## 3. Conceptual Framework and Hypotheses

### a) Research Questions for the Study

- What are the key experiential marketing dimensions related to automobile customers?
- How do Sense, Feel, Think, Act and Relate dimensions influence to customer satisfaction individually?

- To what extent do the experiential marketing dimensions collectively explain variance in customer satisfaction in the automobile industry?
- Which Experiential dimension exerts the largest impact on customer satisfaction?

### 3.1 Objectives of the Study

1. To explore the key dimensions of experiential marketing relevant to the automobile industry.
2. To analyse the Individual effect of Sense, Feel, Think, Act and Relate on Customer Satisfaction.
3. To assess the collective impact of Experiential Marketing dimensions on Customer Satisfaction within the Automobile industry.
4. To provide relevant managerial insights for automobile brands seeking to enhance their customer satisfaction through experiential strategies.

### 3.2 Variables for the study

**Table 1**

*Variable studied for this research*

Independent Variable	Source	Dependent Variables	Source
Experiential Marketing Dimensions:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sense</li> <li>• Feel</li> <li>• Think</li> <li>• Act</li> <li>• Relate</li> </ul>	Schmitt's (1999) Strategic Experiential Model	Customer Satisfaction (Product Quality + Service Quality + Value for Money)	Garvin's Dimension of Product Quality, SERVQUAL Model, Customer Exchange Theory Zeithaml (1998)

### 3.3 Conceptual Framework

This research draws upon Schmitt's (1999) Strategic Experiential Marketing Models (SEMs) and their integration with Customer Satisfaction dimensions, like service quality (Bhowmick, A.,2023), Product

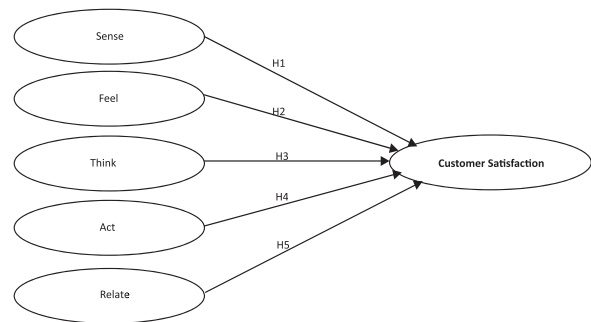
Quality (Bagul, A., & Mahajan, S.,2023) and value for money (Zeithaml, V. A.,1988).

By aligning the five key dimensions of Experiential Marketing Sense, Feel, Think, Act, and Relate, and three important factors of customer satisfaction, the relationship between the two has been analysed to evaluate customer preferences and their impact on how brand experiences shape consumer satisfaction.

The conceptual Model is illustrated below:

**Figure 1**

*Conceptual Model for the Study*



*Source: Developed by the authors based on the literature review*

Experiential marketing is operationalised through the five experiential marketing dimensions of Schmitt's (1999). Customer satisfaction in this context has been analysed by taking the average, considering three main factors from reviewing the relevant papers:

**Product Quality :** (Bhowmick, A.,2023) "This review highlights how product features such as durability, design, and performance significantly influence customer satisfaction, especially in high-involvement purchases like automobiles

**Service Quality:** (Bagul, A., & Mahajan, S.,2023). "The paper reviews multiple service quality models (e.g., SERVQUAL) and emphasises dimensions like responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and reliability as critical to customer satisfaction."

**Value for money:** Zeithaml (1998) defines perceived value as the consumer's overall assessment of the utility of a product based on what is received versus what is given, laying the foundation for the "value for money" construct in satisfaction research."

### 3.4 Hypothesis Development

- H1: Sense has a significant positive impact on Customer Satisfaction
- H2: Feel has a significant positive impact on Customer Satisfaction
- H3: Think has a significant positive impact on Customer Satisfaction
- H4: Act has a significant positive impact on Customer Satisfaction
- H5: Relate has a significant positive impact on Customer Satisfaction

## 4. Research Methodology

### 4.1 Research Design

The present research is based on a cross-sectional, quantitative research design which is used in the study to investigate the connection between experiential marketing dimensions and customer satisfaction in the automobile industry. It used an approach that was hypothetico-deductive because the study is based on the theoretical frameworks that already exist, and it attempts to test the predetermined hypotheses in an empirical manner (Jankowicz, 2005). Since the constructs were well conceptualised and operationalised with the validated scales of the literature conducted by others before, an explanatory research design was considered to be suitable in assessing the causal relationships among measurable variables (Malhotra, 2004).

### 4.2 Questionnaire Design

#### Survey instrument design

This study has adopted a structured questionnaire for analysing the relationship between experiential marketing and customer satisfaction in a two-section format - each comprising relevant information to capture demographic and construct-specific responses aligned with research objectives.

#### Section A Respondent's profile

This section focused on basic demographics of respondents to have a proper idea about them by asking their gender, age, employment status,

occupation and to check if they are existing automobile users or not.

#### Section B Construct Assessment

Likert scale-based statements have been framed based on 5 scale of strongly agree to strongly disagree to check their agreement towards the statement

- Experiential marketing dimensions (Independent Variable)
- Customer Satisfaction (dependent Variable)

### 4.3 Sampling design

This study targeted automobile users in Jaipur, India. Having the scenario of a lack of respondents, judgmental sampling has been used as per the recommendation by Burn and Bush (2003). Participants were selected based on their consent and are active automobile users from Rajasthan metro cities like Jaipur, Udaipur, Kota and Ajmer to ensure the relevance of the study.

The sample size of 384 respondents was used as per the suggestion made by Krejcie and Morgan (1970), the sample size table, which demonstrates that 384 is an adequate sample for large populations above 10000. Sample size has been determined based on the population level, precision level(3.5%) and confidence level (95%). For this study, 400 questionnaires were distributed to gather the data, out of which 390 questionnaires were returned by active automobile users, and 384 respondents' data were found useful for further research. A pilot study was conducted using 50 automobile respondents to check the feasibility and validity of the questionnaire relevant to the study.

### 4.4 Data Collection

The data were collected by a self-administered survey questionnaire by distributing it at automobile showrooms, service centres, and automobile expos to gather their insights and reviews based on the experiences they had gone through their whole pre- and post-purchase journey. Respondents were well-informed, data was collected keeping in mind the voluntary participation, and anonymity. It took 8-10 minutes for each survey.

## 4.5 Data Analysis

Data has been analysed using SPSS version 26.0. The following tests were employed to get the results of our objectives:

- **Descriptive Analysis:** To summarise the characteristics of the respondents based on their demographic section
- **Reliability analysis:** To assess the internal consistency, Cronbach's alpha was used. A value above 0.60 has been considered acceptable for this study and analysis of the objectives (Hair et al., 2006).
- **Validity analysis:** Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) with principal component axis analysis and VARIMAX rotation was used. Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) and Bartlett's test of sphericity were used to assess sampling adequacy.
- **Correlation Analysis:** To know the direction of the relation between the dependent and independent variables.
- **Regression Analysis:** Using multiple Regression analysis, hypothesis testing was done to explore and determine the influence of experiential marketing dimensions on customer satisfaction.
- **Common method bias** was assessed using Harman's single-factor test, which is widely applied in behavioural research to detect potential common method variance. The results indicated that a single factor did not account for the majority of the variance, and no dominant factor emerged. This confirms that common method bias is unlikely to pose a significant threat to the validity of the findings.

## 5. Results

### 5.1 Respondents' demographic profile

A total of 384 respondents were considered for this analysis. The respondents' demographics are summarised in tabular format below:

**Table 2**

*Respondents' demographic profile*

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	180	46.9%
	Female	204	53.1%
Age	Below 25 years	127	33.3%
	25–35 years	176	46.7%
	36–45 years	50	13.3%
	Above 45 years	31	6.7%
Education	Undergraduate	168	43.3%
	Postgraduate	139	36.7%
	Doctoral/ Professional	77	20.0%
Occupation	Students	96	25%
	Working Professionals	173	45.05%
	Business Owners	115	29.95%

*Source: Primary data calculated by the author's*

The demographic of the respondents indicates the variability and diverse sampling, which strengthens the generalisability of the findings.

### 5.2 Reliability and Validity Analysis

**Table 3**

*KMO Result*

<b>Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.</b>	.850
<b>Approx. Chi-Square</b>	781.670
<b>df</b>	171
<b>Sig.</b>	.000

*Source: Computed by Author's using SPSS*

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy: is .850, which indicated strong adequacy

**Bartlett's Test of Sphericity:**  $\chi^2 = 1450.32$ ,  $df = 210$ ,  $p < 0.001$  (significant)

All factor loadings exceeded 0.50, confirming convergent validity. Items loaded distinctly on their respective constructs, supporting discriminant validity.

**Table 4**  
*Factors Identified by Principal Component Analysis (PCA)*

Factor Name	Construct Items (Automobile Context)	Factor Loading	Eigen value	%Variance	Cronbach's Alpha
<b>Sense</b>	My visual senses are stimulated by the car's attractive design.	0.755	3.120	18.25%	0.664
	The interior components (steering, seats) have a high-end feel to them.	0.682			
	Both the overall acoustics and the engine sound are pleasant.	0.645			
	The atmosphere of the showroom was very stimulating.	0.610			
<b>Feel</b>	Driving this car gives me a sense of joy and freedom.	0.745	1.350	7.89%	0.628
	Interactions with the service team made me feel valued.	0.690			
	I feel emotionally attached to the brand experience.	0.625			
<b>Think</b>	The car's cutting-edge technology boosts my curiosity.	0.732	2.045	11.95%	0.691
	I'm curious to find out more about the navigation and safety features.	0.710			
	This brand's engineering originality inspires me.	0.655			
<b>Act</b>	I'm encouraged to go on more road excursions and drives because of the car.	0.715	1.620	16.47%	0.633
	Participating in the brand's test drives was an engaging action.	0.688			
	The vehicle's features fit well with my physical activities.	0.612			
<b>Relate</b>	I am a part of a particular social group since I own this car.	0.765	1.880	21.99%	0.672
	This car is a reflection of my social standing and way of life.	0.724			
	I feel like I belong in the brand community	0.630			
<b>Customer Satisfaction</b>	I am satisfied with my decision to purchase this car.	0.795	1.210	27.07%	0.718
	I am satisfied with the features offered by the product	0.689			
	I am satisfied with the overall quality offered by the product	0.699			
	I am satisfied with the services offered by the brand	0.789			
	The vehicle provides excellent value for the time I spent on analysis	0.760			
	The overall performance of the automobile met my initial expectations.	0.735			
	The benefits I receive from this automobile justify the price I paid.	0.689			
	Overall, my experience with this automobile was satisfactory	0.645			
	I feel confident that choosing this automobile was the right decision	0.684			
I would like to recommend this brand to others	0.762				

Source: Computed by Author's using SPSS

In the current research, some of the constructs have Cronbach alpha values ranging between 0.60 and 0.70. Even though 0.70 is widely quoted as a consistent value of what researchers call an acceptable internal consistency level, modern methodology literature stresses that such a level cannot be used strictly in both exploratory and behavioural studies. Hair et al. (2019) accept that reliability coefficients of 0.60 or higher can be regarded as sufficient in the exploratory research or they are measured with a small number of items. On the same note, Taber (2018) warns against the use of 0.70 criterion as a universal standard because Cronbach alpha depends on the length of the scale used and the complexity of the dimensions and not just on the quality of measurement. Since the dimensions of experiential marketing like Sense, Feel, Think, Act and Relate reflect perceptual phenomenon of varying intensities of consumer experience, moderate estimates of internal consistency are theoretically plausible and methodologically valid.

Besides, Cronbach alpha makes assumptions of tau-equivalence and may understate reliability where items have heterogeneous factor loadings, which is an inherent feature of multidimensional experiential constructs (Dunn, Baguley and Brunsden, 2014). This paper has had few indicators of each construct measured, and all the loadings of the factors were greater than the recommended loadings of 0.50 in this study, which contributed to construct validity. More importantly, moderate reliability produces less inflated relationship estimates and more conservative parameter estimates in general (Hair et al., 2019), which implies that the high-value regression estimates in question are not artificially boosted by measurement error. Thus, the reliability coefficients obtained do not affect the strength of the results and align with the modern methodological principles in behavioural studies.

### 5.3 Correlation Matrix Analysis

**Table 5**

*Correlation Matrix between Six Variables of the Study*

Variables	Customer satisfaction	Sense	Feel	Think	Act	Relate
Customer Satisfaction	1					
Sense	0.472	1				
Feel	0.153	0.366	1			
Think	0.413	0.244	0.236	1		
Act	0.512	0.236	0.533	0.489	1	
Relate	0.564	0.512	0.258	0.269	0.587	1

Relate dimension of Experiential Marketing ( $r = 0.564$ ) shows the strongest correlation with customer satisfaction, with Sense, Think and Act simultaneously providing a moderate positive correlation, while Feel dimension ( $r = 0.153$ ) shows a weak correlation with customer satisfaction

### 5.4 Multiple regression analysis

Multiple regression analysis was conducted to test the hypotheses. The dependent variable was Customer Satisfaction (measured through product quality, service quality, and value for money), and the independent variables were the five experiential marketing dimensions.

#### Regression Assumption Testing

Before carrying out multiple regression analysis, some of the important statistical assumptions were analyzed to guarantee the strength of the model. The Multicollinearity was measured with Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) and all the VIF scores were less than the recommended 5, meaning that there was no multicollinearity issue. Durbin-Watson value was in the range of acceptable values (1.5-2.5) which verified that errors were independent. The homoscedasticity and linearity were checked by using residual normal plots, and the

normality of residual values was checked by using the histogram and normal probability plot. These diagnostics prove that the regression model is in compliance with the main parametrical conditions and justifies the validity of the coefficients calculated.

**Table 6**

*Regression Results (n = 384)*

Independent Variable	B (Unstandardized)	Std. Error	Beta (Standardised)	t-value	Sig. (p)
Constant	12.452	2.115	–	5.89	0.000
Sense	0.218	0.108	0.106	2.01	0.046
Feel	0.185	0.097	0.088	1.91	0.058
Think	0.202	0.101	0.092	2.00	0.047
Act	0.227	0.099	0.115	2.29	0.024
Relate	0.241	0.112	0.121	2.15	0.033

*Source: Computed by Author's using SPSS*

**Model Summary:**

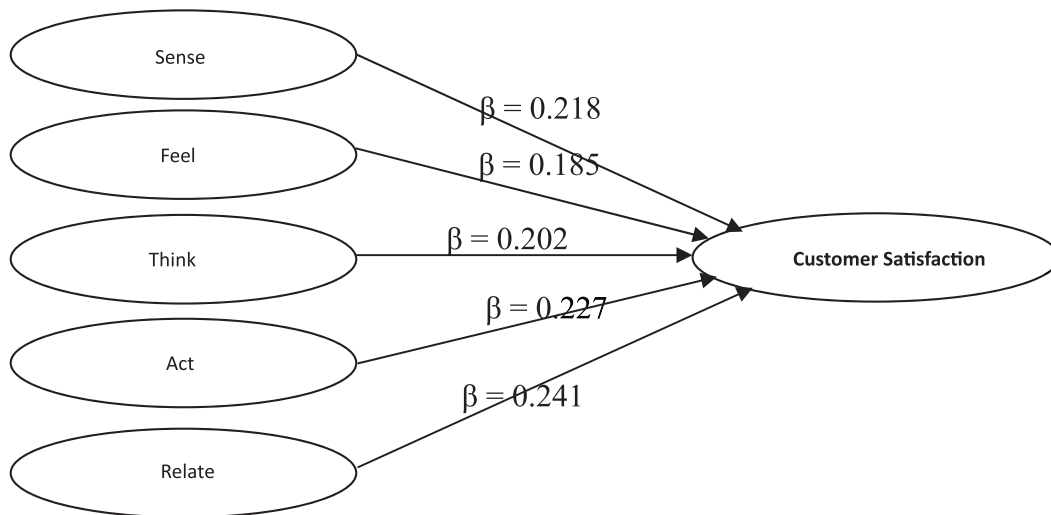
- Adjusted R<sup>2</sup> = 0.512
- F-statistic = 79.4, p < 0.001

This indicates that experiential marketing dimensions collectively explain **51.2% of the variance in customer satisfaction** in the automobile industry.

**5.5 Diagrammatic Representation of the Model Results**

**Figure 2**

*Empirical Model of Experiential Marketing and Customer Satisfaction (n = 384)*



## 6. Discussion

The empirical results of the study show that **Sense, Think, Act and Relate Experiences** have a significant positive impact on Customer satisfaction ( $p < 0.05$ ) in the automobile industry. These findings reinforce the framework of experiential marketing proposed by Schmitt (1999), which explains the Sense, Feel, Think, Act and Relate as the key drivers of increasing consumer interaction. In addition to validating the experiential models of Schmitt, the results broaden the current customer experience research by showing that dimensions of experience are not equally applicable in high-involvement durable goods market in terms of satisfying customer outcomes. Compared to the previous research which was done in hospitality and retail settings where emotional experience usually comes out as a significant predictor, the current results indicate that the Relate and Act dimensions have a better accounts of the automobile industry. It means that community belongingness and active involvement can be more important than simply affective reactions as far as high-investment purchases are concerned and influence on satisfaction assessment. The results confirm that four out of five experiential marketing strategies highlight the growing importance of experience-led marketing strategies in high involvement purchases like automobiles, where holistic consumption experience matters.

The significant impact of Sense experiences suggests that showroom atmosphere, quality of sound, and tactile engagements during the purchase journey create immediate impressions on the customer. Prior research also supports this finding that this dimension have impact on perception and satisfaction value on customers in the high-end product category

The Think dimension also creates a significant impact on customer satisfaction, which indicates that customers feel more satisfied when a brand engages them with their cognitive institutions. Similar findings align with earlier studies, which support that customer engagement enhances perception, thereby satisfaction as well (Schmitt, 1999; Lemon & Verhoef, 2016)

Similarly, Act and Relate Dimension shows the highest impact on customer satisfaction level. Among

the predictors, Relate ( $\beta = 0.121$ ) and Act ( $\beta = 0.115$ ) have the strongest standardised effects, suggesting that social connection and active engagement experiences are particularly influential in shaping satisfaction. So we can say that these dimensions have a significant positive impact on driving customer satisfaction in the Automobile Industry

In contrast, Feel Dimension is positively correlated ( $\beta = 0.088$ ), but its p-value (0.058) is above the conventional threshold of 0.05, which means the H2 hypothesis is statistically not supported, as it does not make such a significant impact based on 384 respondents on customer satisfaction in the Automobile industry. This result indicates that Feel Dimension (Emotional experiences) drive the perception of the customer, but may not independently drive satisfaction in the automobile industry.

On further analysis, the model gives an output of a strong and meaningful proportion of explanatory variance in customer satisfaction with Adjusted  $R^2 = 0.512$  and F-statistic = 79.4,  $p < 0.001$ . This proves that experiential marketing dimensions collectively explain 51.2% of the variance in customer satisfaction in the automobile industry. Methodological study supports that such variances are meaningful to prove the impact on consumer and marketing studies with relation to perceptual and satisfaction variables (Hair et al., 2019). The results indicate that H1, H3, H4, and H5 are supported out of 5 hypotheses for the study, proving a significant positive impact on customer satisfaction in the Automobile Industry. Experiential marketing dimensions collectively matter, but Feel Experience dimension requires further investigation—perhaps with a larger sample size or refined measurement, as emotional responses may vary with cultural and product-based differences with context (Pine & Gilmore, 1999; Lemon & Verhoef, 2016)

## 7. Contribution to Literature and Industry

The findings of the study provided a range of actionable insights for managers and policymakers in the automobile industry. The study demonstrates the influence of experiential marketing dimension on customer satisfaction in the Automobile industry, or we can say, on the satisfaction level of Automobile

Users. The insights can be broadly applied to the following areas:

Automobile Firms should prioritise “Relate” Experience with Relational Engagement programs to foster a sense of relationship, belonging and community engagement among customers. Firms can focus on owner meetups, Loyalty programs and digital communities where people can share experiences and feedback, which is an effective engagement program to engage and satisfy customers in the automobile industry.

Dealerships and showrooms should focus on “Sense” Experience Sensory touchpoints to deliver a multisensory experience, including good atmosphere, sounds, visuals, scents inside the showroom, and tactile product instruction. Immersive test drives and memorable experiences, Quality music and personalised demonstrations can influence their senses in a positive way. These sensory experiences enhance the appeal towards the product.

Marketing Campaigns should focus on stimulating the “Think” Experience by focusing on **Cognitive Engagement** of customers through emphasising the innovative and safety features, sustainability enhancements of the product. Marketers should use interactive digital tools, such as augmented reality and Virtual reality, to encourage customers to elevate the benefits of products offered. This will help to build a competitive image of the brand in customers’ minds.

Industry specialists, Chief Marketing Officers and policymakers should focus on experiential marketing campaigns as their core strategic framework to build a chain of satisfied customers and make them loyal for life. They should frame training modules that focus on experiences rather than transactions, ensuring smooth touch points and memorable experiences for the customers.

Strategically, the results indicate that automobile companies need to invest more in Relate dimension of Experiential Marketing through engagement platforms and interactive participation programs as opposed to major concentration on emotional advertising appeals. Since Relate and Act dimensions have stronger beta coefficients, experiential budgets

can deliver greater returns when channelled in the ownership communities, loyalty programs, immersive test-driving, and after-sales relationship management systems. Such a transition is capable of improving customer lifetime value and competitive advantage in ever-saturated car markets.

## 8. Conclusion and Recommendations

This research suggests that there should be the implementation of Experiential marketing techniques based on experiences that significantly influence customer satisfaction within the automobile sector. The findings reveal that initiatives focused on relationships, emotions, thoughts, and actions substantially enhance customer happiness. While emotion-based activities (feel) may not seem statistically significant, they still hold practical value. Together, these five components account for 51.2% of the variance in customer satisfaction, underscoring the importance of incorporating practical methods into marketing and service strategies.

This study highlights that fostering community connections (relationship-building) and promoting customer engagement (action) are the most impactful factors. This suggests that car dealerships should prioritise initiatives that cultivate a community feeling and increase customer participation. Sense and Think also contribute to satisfaction by providing memorable and intellectually engaging interactions. Although there is room for enhancement, using emotional narratives remains valuable when combined with other practical elements.

This research gives useful ideas for companies by helping them to assist in making plans that consider what customers want and make them more satisfied. When it comes to learning, it shows how marketing experiences in the real world affect various situations where people have to really think about what they buy, helping people better understand ideas and how they are used every day.

To get a better sense of how Experiential marketing makes a difference, further research should focus on other industries, expand their geographic area of research and use ways of watching things for a long time, and find better ways of checking progress. Because of this, those who study and apply

marketing tactics in the automobile industry related to experiential marketing would gain a complete idea of how good experiences make customers stay loyal and happy for a long time.

## 9. Limitations and future scope of the study

Despite offering valuable managerial and theoretical insights, this study has certain limitations that need to be addressed in future research. Firstly, the study is based on cross-sectional data only, which captures customer perception at a single point in time; future researchers could adopt longitudinal research. Secondly, the study focuses only on Indian automobile consumers, which may limit the generalizability of results to all industries on a global scale. The sample size and scope of the study were limited to a few cities in Rajasthan, India. Further research should increase the scope and focus on unexplored industries like education, healthcare, etc. Third, the research relies only on self-reported data; there may be a chance of subjective bias, and future research could adapt a mixed method integrating qualitative research as well for better insights. Fourth, this study uses EFA, correlation and multiple linear regression for the study as they were suitable according to the objectives of the study. Finally, the non-significant impact of emotional experience on customer satisfaction needs a deeper exploration by examining indirect effects using different variables and methods.

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