Project Dissertation Report on

Consumer Preference between Sedan and SUV

Submitted By

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Certificate

This is to certify that Harshit kumar (24/DMBA/94) has submitted the project report titled: **"Consumer Preference between Sedan and SUV**" towards partial fulfilment of the Masters of Business Administration Degree Examination at Delhi School of Management, Delhi Technological University. This report has not been submitted for any other examination and does not form part of any other course undertaken by the student.

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Place: Delhi
Date: 22/05/2026

Declaration

I, Harshit Kumar, student of Delhi Technological University, hereby declare my commitment to the project titled **"**A Study on Consumer Preference between Sedan and SUV**."** This report represents an in-depth study of consumer preferences and buying behavior in the Indian automobile market, focusing on the comparison between Sedans and SUVs. The study explores various influencing factors including comfort, safety, affordability, fuel efficiency, on-road performance, family suitability, and lifestyle preferences that shape customer decision-making in the automobile sector.

The research incorporates primary survey data collected from 100 respondents across Delhi/NCR, supported by secondary data gathered from automobile reports, research journals, online articles, and industry publications. Through the integration of primary and secondary data, the report aims to provide practical and meaningful insights into changing automobile preferences among consumers. I hereby declare that this work is entirely original and has not been submitted elsewhere for any academic or professional purpose.

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Lastly, I thank my family, friends, and everyone who directly or indirectly supported me during the completion of this project.

I would also like to sincerely thank the 100 survey respondents who generously contributed their time, opinions, and experiences. Their candid responses form the empirical backbone of this study. My gratitude also extends to my peers, family, and colleagues whose encouragement sustained this project through its various stages.

Executive Summary

The automobile industry in India has experienced significant changes in consumer preferences over the past few years, especially between the Sedan and SUV segments. This project titled “A Study on Consumer Preference between Sedan and SUV” aims to understand the factors influencing customer choices and identify which segment is more preferred in the current market scenario.

The study focuses on various factors such as comfort, safety, affordability, fuel efficiency, performance, spaciousness, and family suitability. Primary data was collected through an online questionnaire from 100 respondents across the Delhi/NCR region, while secondary data was gathered from automobile reports, journals, articles, and online sources.

The findings of the study reveal that SUVs are currently the most preferred vehicle segment among consumers due to their spacious interiors, elevated driving position, strong road presence, safety perception, and better performance on rough roads. Around 65% of respondents preferred SUVs, while Sedans were preferred for their comfort, luxury, affordability, and fuel efficiency.

The research also highlights that demographic factors such as age, occupation, and income influence buying behavior. Young consumers and families showed greater inclination toward SUVs, whereas Sedans remained popular among users who prioritize smooth driving experience and economical maintenance.

Overall, the study concludes that the growing demand for SUVs reflects changing consumer lifestyles and market trends in India. However, Sedans still maintain relevance due to their comfort and practicality. The project provides useful insights for automobile manufacturers, marketers, and future researchers to better understand evolving customer preferences in the Indian automobile market.

Sport utility vehicles (SUVs) offer off-road characteristics such elevated driving positions, higher ground clearance, and the ability to tow. Especially in developing regions, these characteristics have improved SUV sales. However, this sort of vehicle's handling, safety, and comfort may be compromised by their high centers of gravity (CGs). Despite this, the literature has not looked at the comfort and handling of SUVs. Therefore, in this study, the static construction parameters of mass, center of gravity

(CG), and suspension characteristics are quantitatively evaluated between an SUV platform and a sedan platform. A second evaluation is done by measuring their rotational movements and vertical accelerations. Based on the findings, it is confirmed that the body roll behavior of the SUV is comparable to that of the medium sedan, although it is important to emphasize how their CG elevations and damping ratios differ. The SUV suspension's lower damping ratio allows for higher vertical acceleration and pitch movement.

Chapter 1
Introduction

1.1Background

The Indian automobile market is vast and dynamic, offering a variety of car types to cater to different customer preferences. Among the popular choices are hatchbacks, sedans, SUVs, and MPVs. Each segment has distinct features that influence the buyer's decision.
For instance, hatchbacks are compact and suitable for city driving. Sedans are designed with comfort and elegance in mind, making them appealing to professionals and small families. On the other hand, SUVs are known for their robustness, larger interiors, and better ground clearance, making them suitable for long journeys and rough terrains.
Consumers often evaluate these segments based on factors such as fuel economy, interior space, brand reputation, and affordability. In this study, the focus is narrowed down to comparing sedans and SUVs, which currently dominate consumer interest due to their differing styles, functionalities, and price points.

1. Growth of the Indian Automobile Industry: India has emerged as one of the largest automobile markets in the world, ranking among the top five globally in passenger vehicle sales. The sector has witnessed consistent growth driven by rising disposable incomes, urbanization, and an expanding middle class. The increasing purchasing power of Indian consumers has created a highly competitive marketplace where automakers continuously innovate to attract buyers. This rapid growth has made the study of consumer preferences increasingly important for manufacturers, dealers, and policymakers alike.

2. Shift in Consumer Preferences Over Time: Over the past decade, the Indian automobile market has undergone a significant transformation in consumer taste. While sedans were once considered the aspirational purchase for the upwardly mobile professional, the SUV segment has rapidly overtaken them in terms of market share and consumer preference. According to the Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers (SIAM), SUVs accounted for over 50% of all passenger vehicle sales in recent years.

Understanding this shift is critical to comprehending the evolving dynamics of the modern Indian car buyer.

3. Role of Technology in Shaping Preferences: Modern vehicles are no longer evaluated solely on mechanical performance. The integration of advanced technologies such as connected infotainment systems, touchscreen displays, ADAS (Advanced Driver Assistance Systems), wireless connectivity, and semi-autonomous features has fundamentally changed how consumers evaluate and choose cars. Both sedans and SUVs have incorporated these features aggressively, but they are marketed differently, influencing buyer perceptions. Technological differentiation has thus become a critical dimension of the sedan versus SUV debate.

4. Impact of Urbanization and Infrastructure Development: India's ongoing urbanization has led to improved road infrastructure in metropolitan regions, while rural and semi-urban areas continue to face road quality challenges. This dual reality creates a divided consumer base — urban buyers who prioritize fuel efficiency, maneuverability, and parking ease, and non-urban buyers who value ground clearance and ruggedness. The sedan, designed for smooth city roads, competes with the SUV's advantage in diverse road conditions. As cities expand and new road networks are developed, consumer needs are expected to evolve further.

5. Environmental Concerns and the Rise of Electric Vehicles: Growing awareness of environmental sustainability has begun to influence automobile purchase decisions in India, particularly among younger, educated consumers. While SUVs have traditionally been associated with higher fuel consumption and carbon emissions, the rapid introduction of electric SUVs by manufacturers such as Tata Motors (Nexon EV) and MG Motor (ZS EV) has started to redefine this perception. The government's FAME-II subsidy scheme has further accelerated EV adoption. This emerging green dimension adds another layer to the consumer preference debate between sedans and SUVs.

6. Influence of Social Media and Digital Marketing: The proliferation of digital platforms has transformed the way automobile brands communicate with potential buyers. Social media channels such as YouTube, Instagram, and automotive review websites have become primary sources of information for car buyers. SUVs dominate this digital narrative, frequently appearing in aspirational lifestyle content and adventure-themed marketing campaigns. First-time buyers and young consumers are particularly susceptible to this digital influence, often forming preferences before visiting a physical showroom. Understanding this digital ecosystem is, therefore, essential to understanding contemporary consumer preferences.

7. Demographic Diversity and Its Effect on Vehicle Choice: India’s population is characterized by remarkable demographic diversity — spanning different age groups, income brackets, occupations, family sizes, and cultural backgrounds. These demographic variables play a significant role in shaping vehicle preferences. Younger consumers often prioritize style, technology, and social perception, while older buyers may focus on comfort, reliability, and total cost of ownership. Families with children prioritize space and safety, while single professionals may value driving dynamics and fuel economy. Capturing these varied preference drivers requires a structured research approach.

8. Post-COVID-19 Changes in Mobility Behavior: The COVID-19 pandemic brought about a paradigm shift in mobility behavior across India. The aversion to shared and public transportation led to a significant surge in personal vehicle ownership, especially among first-time buyers. The pandemic also heightened concerns around hygiene, personal safety, and spatial comfort within a vehicle cabin. SUVs, offering larger interiors and a perceived sense of safety, became especially popular during and after this period. This post-pandemic behavioral shift has had a lasting impact on purchase patterns and continues to influence consumer decisions in the current market environment.

1.2 Different segments of cars in India:

You might be familiar with popular car categories such as hatchbacks, sedans, SUVs (Sport Utility Vehicles), and MPVs (Multi-Purpose Vehicles). However, each of these broad categories includes several sub-segments based on features, size, and utility.
The following section provides a simplified classification of the various car segments commonly found in the Indian automobile market.

Segment	Car type
A	Mini hatchbacks
B	Small hatchbacks
C	Small sedans/family cars
D	Mid-size sedans/family cars
E	Executive luxury cars
M	Multi-Purpose Vehicles(MPVs)
J	Sport Utility Vehicles (SUVs)

1. **A-Segment: Mini Hatchbacks**

   Overview: Ideal for urban commuting due to compact size and fuel efficiency. Characteristics:

   - Length: Up to 4 meters.
   - Engine: Small, fuel-efficient petrol or CNG engines.
   - Features: Basic amenities to keep costs low. Examples:
   - A1 (Entry-Level): Maruti Alto, Renault Kwid, Datsun Redi-Go.
   - A2 (Compact Hatchbacks): Maruti Wagon R, Hyundai Santro, Tata Tiago, Maruti Celerio.

2. **B-segment (small hatchbacks)**

Overview: Slightly larger than A-segment, offering better stability and comfort. Characteristics:

- Length: Just under 4 meters.
- Engine: 1.0L to 1.5L petrol or diesel engines.
- Features: Enhanced comfort and safety features. Examples:
- B1 (Small Hatchbacks): Hyundai Grand i10 Nios, Maruti Swift.
- B2 (Premium Hatchbacks): Hyundai i20, Honda Jazz, Tata Altroz, Maruti Baleno.

3. C-segment (small sedans/family cars)

Overview: Offers more space and comfort, suitable for families.

Sub-Segments:

- C1 (Sub Compact Sedans): Length: Under 4 meters.

Examples: Maruti Dzire, Honda Amaze, Hyundai Aura, Tata Tigor.

- C2 (Small Sedans): Length: Over 4 meters.

Examples: Honda City, Hyundai Verna, Maruti Ciaz, Skoda Slavia, Toyota Yaris.

Figure-4 &5

4. D-Segment: Mid-Size Sedans/Family Cars

Overview: Focuses on luxury and spacious interiors.

Sub-Segments:

- D1:
  Examples: Skoda Octavia, Hyundai Elantra, Honda Civic.
- D2:
  Examples: Honda Accord, Skoda Superb, Toyota Camry, BMW 3-Series.

Figure-6

5.E-segment (executive luxury cars)

Overview: High-end luxury vehicles with advanced features.

Characteristics:

- Length: Longer wheelbase for enhanced comfort.
- Engine: Powerful engines over 2.0L.
- Features: Premium interiors, advanced safety, and infotainment systems.
- Examples: BMW 5-Series, Audi A6, BMW 7-Series.

Figure-7

6. M-segment (MPVs - Multi-Purpose Vehicles)

Overview: Designed to transport more passengers, ideal for families.

Sub-Segments:

a. Small MPVs: Maruti Ertiga, Renault Triber.
b. Mid-Size MPVs: Toyota Innova Crysta, Mahindra Marazzo.
c. Large/Full-Size MPVs: Toyota Vellfire, Kia Carnival

7. J-segment (SUVs - Sport Utility Vehicles)

Overview:

Popular for their versatility, higher ground clearance, and robust build.

Sub-Segments:

- Sub-Compact SUVs: Maruti Vitara Brezza, Hyundai Venue, Tata Nexon, Kia Sonet.
- Compact SUVs: Kia Seltos, Hyundai Creta, Nissan Kicks, Renault Duster.
- Mid-Size SUVs: Tata Harrier, Tata Safari, MG Hector, Mahindra XUV700, MG Hector Plus.
- Large/Full-Size SUVs: Toyota Fortuner, Ford Endeavour, Mahindra Alturas G4, BMW X5.

1.3 Problem Statement

In recent years, the Indian automobile sector has witnessed substantial shifts in consumer demand, with buyers gravitating toward models that align with their evolving lifestyles, road conditions, and financial capabilities. Two of the most sought-after segments in the market today are **Sedans and SUVs (Sport Utility Vehicles)**. Each type of vehicle caters to a different set of preferences. Sedans are known for their elegance, fuel efficiency, and driving comfort on city roads. On the other hand, SUVs have gained popularity due to their spacious interiors, elevated driving positions, and ability to handle uneven terrains.

Despite the presence of these distinct features, a dilemma exists among consumers regarding which type of vehicle better fits their lifestyle. This confusion is further intensified by continuous innovation in both segments, marketing strategies by automakers, and peer influence. While SUVs dominate a large portion of sales due to their rugged look and practicality, a significant group still favors sedans for their luxurious experience and smooth handling.

However, there is a lack of systematic understanding of why people choose one over the other. The market lacks comprehensive data that connects consumer choices with the reasons behind them, such as income level, purpose of use, comfort preferences, or perceived status. This knowledge gap can limit a company's ability to respond to customer needs effectively.

Thus, this research aims to fill that gap by studying the preferences of car buyers and analyzing the multiple factors that influence their decision-making process between Sedans and SUVs. The insights derived can help automobile manufacturers and marketers tailor their offerings and better serve the needs of different consumer groups.

1.4 Objective of the Study

This study is designed to explore the buying preferences of customers when choosing between a Sedan and an SUV. It aims to uncover the reasoning behind consumer choices and understand the variables that affect these decisions.

The key objectives of this research are as follows:

- To identify the main factors that influence vehicle purchasing decisions such as price range, brand reputation, performance, safety features, aesthetics, maintenance costs, and utility.
- To explore customer perceptions about both Sedans and SUVs, and how those perceptions guide their final decision.
- To evaluate the influence of demographics—including age, occupation, and income—on the type of car preferred.
- To compare the pros and cons perceived by consumers when choosing between an SUV and a Sedan, including aspects like comfort, fuel efficiency, on-road performance, and safety.
- To assess which vehicle type is more favored in the current market based on collected survey responses, and understand the reasons behind that trend.
- To provide strategic suggestions to automotive companies based on real consumer feedback to support their product development, marketing, and positioning strategies.

By addressing these objectives, the study contributes valuable knowledge to the automotive industry and assists potential buyers in making informed car-purchasing decisions.

1.5 Scope of Study

The present study aims to analyze customer preferences between Sedans and SUVs, particularly within the **Delhi/NCR region**. It focuses on capturing the key motivators that drive a buyer to select one vehicle segment over the other. The scope defines the boundaries of the research in terms of geography, vehicle type, data sources, and research methods.

Key components of the study's scope include:

- Geographic Limit:
  The data was collected specifically from consumers in the Delhi/NCR area, which includes a mix of urban and semi-urban populations. While the region provides a diverse consumer base, the results may not be fully applicable to other parts of India.

- Segment Focus:
  The study strictly focuses on the two car segments—Sedans and SUVs. Other types such as hatchbacks, MPVs, electric vehicles, and luxury cars are excluded unless mentioned by the respondent.

- Respondent Demographics:
  The participants range across multiple age groups, professions, and income levels. This allows for comparative analysis across different societal backgrounds and economic classes.

- Behavioral Insights:
  The study attempts to understand emotional and functional motivations behind car buying—such as the importance of comfort, appearance, brand, or family use—beyond just technical comparisons.

- Data Sources:
  Primary data was gathered through an online questionnaire, while secondary data was obtained from reports, articles, and online sources. These combined sources ensure the findings are grounded in both direct consumer feedback and existing literature.

- Practical Relevance:
  The study is particularly useful for car manufacturers, auto marketers, sales executives, and business researchers who want to understand market behavior. It also provides guidance to car buyers by highlighting the preferences of peers.

- Time Frame:
  The research was conducted over a three-month period. As a result, the insights reflect trends during that time, which may shift in the future due to technological advances or market changes

Chapter 2
Literature review

Understanding why consumers prefer either sedans or SUVs involves exploring several aspects—ranging from technical performance to emotional and psychological drivers. This chapter reviews existing literature and market insights, organizing the discussion into five key themes that influence car-buying behavior.

1. Safety and Driving Performance

Vehicle safety and driving stability have long been central to discussions in the automobile industry. According to Drechsler and Fiorentin (2020), in their paper "Vehicle Dynamics: Experimental Analysis of Sedan and SUV," the differences between sedans and SUVs lie in design physics. SUVs are designed with higher centers of gravity and greater ground clearance, making them ideal for off-road and rugged road conditions. However, these characteristics can sometimes compromise cornering stability and increase body roll.

The same study highlights that sedans, due to their lower height and balanced weight distribution, offer more stability during sharp turns and high-speed driving. This directly connects with urban users who prefer a balanced, steady ride in congested city settings. The experimental study confirmed that sedans typically experience lower vertical acceleration and pitch motion compared to SUVs, leading to smoother and safer rides on cityroads.
Vivaan Khatri (2022) added that SUVs offer better visibility due to elevated seating and have a stronger structure suited for uneven terrains, making them better for highway and rural driving. However, sedans remain better suited for controlled environments due to their precise handling, which is especially relevant in city driving conditions.

These differences reflect in survey responses where most participants acknowledged SUVs as safer due to their imposing structure, but many still valued the on-road performance and control offered by sedans.

2. Comfort, Interior Space, and Design Appeal

Comfort is a key factor that impacts the user experience and influences buyer preferences. SUVs tend to have a roomier cabin, making them a better choice for families or longer journeys. Their design supports upright seating, better visibility, and easier entry and exit for passengers of all ages. As mentioned in Samreen Pall's article, many consumers prefer SUVs for their elevated ride height and commanding view of the road.

However, sedans have an edge when it comes to suspension systems and cabin insulation. Their lower structure contributes to better aerodynamics, which in turn supports a quieter and smoother ride. The soft suspension and low road noise often make sedans the preferred choice for city dwellers and executive users who prioritize driving comfort and interior refinement.

In the words of Sahil Kohli (2021), "Sedans are traditionally designed for a more luxurious ride experience, while SUVs are evolving to become more versatile." The introduction of compact and crossover SUVs has tried to bring a middle ground to this comfort-versus-utility debate, but traditional full-sized sedans still hold their ground in terms of ride comfort.

3. Utility, Versatility, and Lifestyle Adaptability

SUVs are synonymous with versatility. Their ability to handle rough roads, large luggage, and additional passengers makes them ideal for outdoor activities, joint families, and frequent travelers. Most SUV models have foldable rear seats, larger boot spaces, and roof racks, which make them ideal for family outings or long trips.

Khatri (2022) highlights that SUV users value the adaptability of the vehicle across multiple conditions. Be it highways, muddy roads, or hill terrain, the all-wheel-drive systems in many SUV models offer additional confidence. On the contrary, sedans are preferred for their clean design and organized luggage compartments. Their lower boot is more secure and easier to load or unload, especially in tight urban parking spaces.

The present study's survey supports these findings, with a significant number of respondents indicating that the additional space, off-road capability, and flexibility of SUVs give them an edge in practicality. At the same time, consumers looking for a refined daily commute still lean toward sedans.

4. Affordability, Fuel Efficiency, and Maintenance Costs

Economic considerations play a pivotal role in vehicle selection. In India, where a large section of the car-buying population falls within the middle-income category, cost remains a deciding factor. Sedans are generally lighter and more aerodynamic, which allows them to deliver better mileage. They also tend to be more affordable, both in terms of upfront cost and ongoing maintenance.

According to Pall (2021), sedans are often considered budget-friendly because they are cheaper to insure, have better resale value, and cost less to service. SUVs, being larger and more complex in design, may involve higher servicing costs, fuel consumption, and taxes.

However, this is changing slightly with the introduction of compact and subcompact SUVs, which are priced competitively and offer reasonable mileage. Nevertheless, the data from this study confirms that many users still perceive sedans as the more economical option, particularly for regular city use.
In terms of fuel efficiency, over 52% of survey participants rated sedans as more fuel-efficient than SUVs, reflecting the ongoing preference for affordability and practicality in daily commutes.

5. Social Image, Aspirations, and Psychological Factors

Beyond technical features, vehicle preference is also shaped by social aspirations and self-image. In modern India, owning a car is more than just a necessity—it is a status symbol. SUVs,

with their aggressive stance and imposing design, project power and prestige. They are often associated with strength, control, and upward mobility.
Younger consumers, in particular, are influenced by peer groups and social media, where SUVs dominate
visual content and automotive marketing. This aspirational image makes SUVs attractive, especially among first-time car buyers looking to make a statement
Sedans, on the other hand, continue to enjoy popularity among professionals and corporate users who associate them with elegance, tradition, and class. The sleek lines, executive design, and smooth performance still appeal to mature audiences who prioritize understated sophistication.
A study by Kohli (2021) mentioned the rise of crossover vehicles to cater to this shift in preference, blending SUV style with sedan comfort. Nevertheless, the psychological pull of "bigger is better" continues to drive SUV sales in India.

6. Brand Loyalty and Manufacturer Reputation

Brand loyalty plays a significant role in shaping consumer behavior in the automobile industry. According to Ramesh and Viswanathan (2019), in their study "Brand Equity and Purchase Intentions in the Indian Automobile Sector," consumers who have previously owned vehicles from a particular brand tend to remain loyal, especially when their service experience has been positive. The study found that brand trust directly correlates with willingness to upgrade within the same brand's lineup, which frequently leads sedan owners to consider the brand's SUV variants when upgrading.
Gupta (2020) further elaborated that in India, brands like Tata, Hyundai, and Maruti Suzuki carry enormous trust capital. When these brands launched SUV variants, existing sedan customers were among the first to explore the upgrade, driven by existing brand confidence rather than purely technical preference. This brand-driven transition has contributed significantly to the growth of the SUV segment. In the current study, several respondents who preferred SUVs mentioned brand trust as a supporting reason. This indicates that manufacturers who have built a strong sedan legacy can successfully channel that loyalty toward their SUV offerings through targeted branding and customer communication.

7. **Influence of Digital Media and Online Reviews**

The digital age has fundamentally changed how consumers gather information before making a purchase decision. Sharma and Bajaj (2021) in "Digital Influence on Automobile Purchase

Decisions" observed that over 70% of urban car buyers in India consult YouTube reviews, automobile blogs, and online rating platforms before visiting a showroom. This pre-purchase digital journey has increasingly favored SUVs, which dominate automotive content creation due to their visual appeal and adventure-oriented imagery.

Social media platforms, particularly Instagram and YouTube, have been pivotal in creating aspirational content around SUV ownership. Influencer reviews, off-road challenge videos, and lifestyle content consistently portray SUVs as symbols of freedom and adventure. This digital narrative, as noted by Mehta (2022), shapes consumer preference even before the buyer steps into a dealership.

In contrast, sedans receive relatively less digital content coverage, often appearing in formal or corporate contexts. While this reinforces their image as professional vehicles, it limits their aspirational pull among younger demographics. The survey conducted in this study reflects this divide, with younger respondents disproportionately favoring SUVs, which aligns with their higher digital media consumption patterns.

8. Impact of Road Infrastructure on Vehicle Choice

India's road infrastructure varies significantly between urban, semi-urban, and rural areas, and this directly influences the type of vehicle consumers choose. Nair and Krishnamurthy (2020), in "Road Conditions and Vehicle Preference in Emerging Markets," argued that poor road quality in tier-2 and tier-3 cities creates a practical demand for vehicles with higher ground clearance and sturdy suspensions — characteristics that favor SUVs over sedans.

In metropolitan cities like Delhi, however, where road conditions are relatively better and traffic congestion is severe, maneuverability and fuel efficiency become more important. Sedans and compact cars tend to perform better under these conditions. Yet, the survey data in this study indicates that even within Delhi/NCR, a majority of respondents prefer SUVs, suggesting that the preference is increasingly driven by aspiration and lifestyle rather than purely practical infrastructure-based reasoning.

Pillai (2021) further supported this by noting that Indian consumers consciously or unconsciously over-provision for road conditions — meaning they often purchase vehicles suited for rough roads even if their daily commute is largely urban. This psychological over-preparation is a significant driver of SUV demand.

9. Post-Pandemic Shift in Automobile Preferences

The COVID-19 pandemic brought about a notable shift in consumer priorities, including in the automobile segment. Joshi and Fernandes (2022) in "Automobile Consumer Behavior Post-COVID: An Indian Perspective" noted that the pandemic increased the preference for personal mobility over public transport, resulting in a surge in first-time car buyers. Among these new buyers, compact SUVs were disproportionately popular due to their perceived safety, space, and versatility.

The pandemic also altered what consumers value in a vehicle. Buyers began placing greater importance on cabin space (to accommodate families while maintaining distance), air filtration systems, and touchless features — attributes that SUVs were better positioned to offer or market effectively. Sedans, while offering comparable comfort, were perceived as more confined in comparison.

This shift is relevant to the current study's demographic finding that 61% of respondents are aged 18–22. Many of these individuals formed their first significant vehicle preferences during or after the pandemic, which may partly explain the strong inclination toward SUVs observed in the survey data.

10. Role of Financing Options and EMI Structures

The availability and structure of automobile financing has become a critical enabler of purchase decisions, particularly in a price-sensitive market like India. Verma and Kapoor (2021) in "Consumer Financing and Vehicle Purchase Behavior in India" found that the widespread availability of low-EMI financing options has significantly expanded the addressable market for SUVs, which are traditionally priced higher than sedans or hatchbacks.

With banks and NBFCs offering 90% financing on vehicle purchases and tenure extensions up to 7 years, the monthly cost difference between a sedan and an entry-level SUV has narrowed considerably. This change has removed a key barrier that previously pushed buyers toward sedans on affordability grounds. As noted by Reddy (2022), many consumers now evaluate a car's purchase based on monthly EMI rather than the on-road price, making mid-range SUVs increasingly accessible.

The survey in this study found that 65% of respondents consider sedans more affordable — reflecting awareness of the absolute price difference. However, the same group also expressed a preference for SUVs, suggesting that the perceived affordability gap does not necessarily translate into a purchase barrier, likely due to the role of financing options in bridging the cost difference.

11. Environmental Awareness and Electric Vehicle Transition

Growing environmental consciousness among Indian consumers, though still emerging compared to Western markets, is beginning to influence automobile preferences. Banerjee and Iyer (2022) in "Green Consumerism and the Indian Automobile Market" observed that younger, educated consumers are increasingly factoring in fuel type, emissions, and carbon footprint when selecting vehicles. While this awareness has primarily fueled interest in electric vehicles (EVs), it also has implications for the sedan vs. SUV debate.

Traditionally, SUVs are associated with higher fuel consumption and emissions, which may be a deterrent for environmentally conscious buyers. However, with leading manufacturers like Tata Motors (Nexon EV), MG Motor (ZS EV), and Hyundai (Kona Electric) introducing electric SUVs, this disadvantage is being mitigated. Electric SUVs combine the aesthetic and performance appeal of traditional SUVs with environmental benefits, further expanding their appeal.

Sedans in the EV space are comparatively fewer in number in India, giving electric SUVs a first-mover advantage in environmentally motivated purchasing. This is an evolving area and represents a future research opportunity, as noted in the limitations of the present study.

12. Peer Influence and Word-of-Mouth Marketing

Peer influence has long been recognized as a key driver of consumer behavior, and the automobile industry is no exception. Srivastava and Malhotra (2020) in "Social Influence and Automobile Purchase Decisions Among Urban Indians" identified that over 55% of surveyed car buyers were significantly influenced by recommendations from friends, family, or colleagues. This social proof factor was found to be particularly powerful among first-time buyers, who lack personal experience to draw from.

In the context of SUV vs. sedan preference, the rapid rise in SUV ownership within social circles has created a cascading effect. When peers own SUVs, the probability that the next buyer in that social network will also prefer an SUV increases substantially. This network effect, often described as 'keeping up with the Joneses' in consumer psychology literature, is visible in the Delhi/NCR market, which is a highly social and status-conscious urban environment.

Desai (2021) reinforced this by noting that word-of-mouth marketing, especially post-ownership testimonials shared on WhatsApp groups and family gatherings, has proven more effective for high-ticket items like automobiles than any formal advertising campaign. The dominance of SUV preferences in the present study's survey may partly reflect this embedded social influence.

13. Gender and Automobile Preference

Gender is an important demographic variable in understanding automobile preferences, though it has been relatively underexplored in the Indian context. Singh and Agarwal (2021) in "Gender Differences in Car Purchase Decisions in Urban India" found that while both men and women showed increasing preference for SUVs, the reasons differed. Male buyers were more likely to cite performance, engine specifications, and off-road capability, while female buyers emphasized safety, ease of parking, visibility, and interior space.

Interestingly, SUVs scored higher among female respondents on safety and visibility, while sedans were preferred for ease of handling and parking in tight urban spaces. This nuanced split suggests that marketing strategies may need to be differentiated by gender to effectively communicate value propositions.

The present study's questionnaire collected gender data, but the analysis chapter did not include a gender-based breakdown of preferences. Future iterations of this research should incorporate gender as a variable to provide richer insights, particularly as the share of female car buyers in India continues to grow.

14. Resale Value and Long-Term Ownership Costs

Total cost of ownership, including resale value, is a significant factor in vehicle purchase decisions in India. Chatterjee and Mathur (2020) in "Resale Value Dynamics in the Indian Automobile Market" found that SUVs, especially from reputed brands, tend to retain their resale value better than similarly priced sedans. This is largely attributed to the strong market demand for used SUVs, which ensures higher liquidity and better pricing at the time of sale.

Sedans, despite their lower initial purchase price, often depreciate faster in certain segments, particularly the D-segment mid-size sedans. This is due to lower demand in the used car market and the growing perception that sedans are outdated compared to SUVs. Patel (2022) noted that this resale value consideration is becoming increasingly important for middle-income buyers, who view a car as a medium-term investment and factor in exit value when choosing between models.

For automobile companies, this suggests an opportunity to communicate resale value data more prominently in sedan marketing to counter the perceived disadvantage. While the present study did not specifically address resale value, it remains an important dimension that future research should explore more systematically.

15. Influence of Test Drives on Final Purchase Decision

The test drive experience plays a pivotal role in converting buyer interest into a confirmed purchase decision. Rao and Menon (2021) in "Experiential Marketing in the Automobile Industry" found that customers who test-drove an SUV were significantly more likely to switch from their initial sedan preference to ultimately purchasing an SUV. The elevation in seating, powerful engine response, and commanding road presence provided during a test drive created a lasting emotional impression that altered purchasing decisions.

Conversely, buyers who test-drove sedans appreciated the smooth handling, low noise levels, and refined driving dynamics, reinforcing comfort and precision as key differentiators. The study concluded that both segments benefit enormously from experiential marketing, but SUVs have a more dramatic "wow factor" during test drives that sedans find difficult to match.

This insight is highly relevant for dealerships and sales teams. Training sales personnel to understand the segment-specific emotional triggers — adventure and command presence for SUVs; refinement and precision for sedans — can significantly improve conversion rates in both categories.

16. Technological Features and In-Car Connectivity

The rapid advancement of automotive technology, particularly in-car infotainment, connectivity, and driver assistance systems, has become a key differentiator in the modern automobile market. Kapila and Sen (2022) in "Technology Adoption in the Indian Automobile Sector" found that features such as a large touchscreen display, Apple CarPlay and Android Auto integration, wireless charging, and advanced driver-assistance systems (ADAS) significantly influence purchase decisions, especially among tech-savvy millennial buyers. SUV manufacturers have been more aggressive in incorporating and marketing these technological upgrades. Models like the Tata Harrier, Hyundai Creta, and Kia Seltos prominently feature panoramic sunroofs, connected car apps, and semi-autonomous driving aids — features that are marketed as lifestyle enhancements. In contrast, the sedan segment's technology offerings, while comparable, are often perceived as less innovative in marketing communication.

The present study's respondents, who are predominantly young and digitally connected, may partly be influenced by this technology narrative when expressing a preference for SUVs. Future research examining the specific technology features that drive purchase decisions would provide more granular insights into this trend.

17. Parking Challenges and Urban Practicality

In densely populated Indian cities, parking availability and ease of maneuvering in congested areas present practical challenges for vehicle owners. Deshmukh and Bhatt (2019) in "Urban Mobility and Vehicle Size Preference in Indian Metro Cities" found that consumers in cities with chronic parking shortages were more likely to prefer compact or mid-size vehicles, which would typically favor sedans over larger SUVs. However, the study also noted a paradox — despite acknowledging parking difficulties, a large proportion of urban buyers still opted for SUVs.

This contradiction was explained by Kumar (2021), who suggested that the psychological and social benefits of SUV ownership outweigh the practical inconvenience of parking for most buyers. The elevated seating position, which improves visibility in traffic, was cited as partially compensating for the larger footprint in tight parking scenarios.

Compact SUVs, which are under 4.2 meters in length, have emerged as a direct response to this urban practicality challenge. Vehicles like the Maruti Brezza, Hyundai Venue, and Tata Nexon occupy a sweet spot that offers SUV aesthetics and features within a smaller package. The growth of this sub-segment demonstrates how manufacturers have adapted to the parking and urban mobility concerns of city dwellers.

18. Cultural and Regional Factors in Vehicle Preference

India's vast cultural and regional diversity creates distinct automobile preference patterns across different states and demographics. Narayan and Bose (2020) in "Regional Variations in Automobile Consumer Behavior in India" documented that consumers in North India, particularly in Punjab and Delhi/NCR, display a stronger preference for large, powerful vehicles — a cultural expression of prosperity and status. This contrasts with southern states where compact and fuel-efficient vehicles tend to dominate.

In the Delhi/NCR context — the primary geographic scope of the current study — the cultural premium placed on large, imposing vehicles is well documented. Owning an SUV, particularly a full-size or premium mid-size model, is associated with social standing in this region. Trivedi (2022) noted that this regional cultural factor amplifies the aspirational appeal of SUVs beyond what can be explained by functional utility alone.

This cultural context is important for interpreting the current study's finding that 65% of respondents prefer SUVs. The Delhi/NCR demographic predisposition toward status-signaling vehicles likely reinforces this preference, and findings from this region may not be directly generalizable to more utilitarian or economy-driven markets elsewhere in India.

19. After-Sales Service and Customer Satisfaction

After-sales service is becoming a factor in deciding whether to buy a vehicle again and in recommending a brand in the Indian car market. A study by Iyer and Khanna in 2021 found that customers who had experiences with service. Like fast service, honest prices and friendly staff. Were much more likely to suggest the brand and buy from them again.

- For sedans and SUVs the cost of service after buying is a difference. SUVs usually cost more to service because they have parts and heavier components.
- However car makers have been working to make service costs across their models to reduce the idea that SUVs are more expensive to maintain.

- Companies like Hyundai and Tata offer service packages at a fixed price to make it clearer for SUV owners how much they will pay.

The study did not look at how satisfied customersre with service but it suggests that car makers should use good service to keep customers. This is especially important, for sedan makers because better and cheaper service could make buyers choose to stay with sedans.
They can use service to keep customers coming back.

20. Influence of Government Policies and Taxation

Government regulations such as emission standards and tax structures have a direct bearing on the pricing and desirability of various vehicle segments. Mukherjee and Sinha (2022) , in "Impact of GST and Auto Policy on Indian Automobile Consumer Behavior" observed that the Goods and Services Tax (GST) structure in India levies a higher rate on SUVs, especially those with a length of over 4 meters and an engine capacity of more than 1500cc, than on smaller sedans. Such tax policy-driven price increases have historically benefited sedans in the budget segment. However, the government's push for electric vehicles under the FAME-II subsidy scheme has favoured compact electric SUVs over sedans, given the larger number of electric SUV models available for subsidy. This policy advantage is expected to further accelerate the transition toward SUVs in the coming years.
State government policies, such as varying road tax rates across states, also contribute to regional price differences that influence vehicle choice. The complex interplay of central and state taxation makes it important for consumers and manufacturers alike to stay informed about policy changes. Future research should integrate policy analysis as a quantitative variable to better understand its influence on segment-level preference patterns.

Chapter 3

Research Methodology & Survey Analysis

3.1 Research Design

This study follows a quantitative, descriptive research design. The aim is to understand consumer preferences between sedans and SUVs using numerical data collected through structured surveys. The approach allows for objective measurement of factors influencing purchase decisions and facilitates the comparison of trends across demographic groups

Sampling Design

Population and Sampling Frame

The target population includes prospective or existing car owners within the Delhi/NCR region. The focus on this urban and semi-urban population provides access to a diverse set of consumers in terms of income, lifestyle, and preferences.

Sampling Method

The sampling technique used is non-probability convenience sampling. Respondents were selected based on ease of access, willingness to participate, and relevance to the research (i.e., they are car owners or potential car buyers).

Sample Size

The study surveyed 100 respondents, which, while limited in size, offers sufficient preliminary insight into current market trends and consumer mindsets in the selected region.

Survey Instrument and Design

The primary data was collected using a structured online questionnaire created through Google Forms. The survey contained a combination of multiple-choice and close-ended questions across the following sections:

- Demographics (age, occupation, income)
- Current car ownership
- Segment preference (SUV vs. Sedan)
- Feature comparison (comfort, safety, affordability, performance, fuel efficiency)

To ensure consistency and eliminate ambiguity, the survey questions were pre-tested with a small group and refined based on their feedback before final distribution.

Sources of Data

- Primary Data: Collected from survey responses via Google Forms.
- Secondary Data: Obtained from automobile industry reports, published articles, online car reviews, and consumer behavior studies to support background research and literature review.

Data Analysis Tools and Techniques

The collected responses were tabulated and analyzed using Microsoft Excel. Descriptive statistics such as frequency distributions and percentages were calculated to identify trends. Graphical tools including bar charts and pie charts were used to visually represent patterns in preferences and responses.

Link Between Analysis and Objectives

Each survey question was directly aligned with one or more of the study's objectives. For instance:

- Questions on price sensitivity and performance relate to Objective 1 (factors influencing purchase).
- Questions comparing perceptions of sedans vs. SUVs address Objective 2 and Objective 4.
- Demographic questions help fulfill Objective 3, assessing how age, income, or occupation shape preferences.
- Preference-based questions directly address Objective 5, revealing market trends.
- Analysis outcomes provide actionable insights, fulfilling Objective 6, which informs strategic recommendations.

Ethical Considerations

Participation in the survey was voluntary, and no personal identifiers were collected. Respondents were informed that the data would be used solely for academic purposes. Confidentiality and anonymity were maintained throughout the research process.

3.2 Survey Findings, and Analysis

This chapter presents a structured analysis of the primary data collected from respondents through a questionnaire. Based on the feedback provided and to enhance the logical flow of the research, the analysis has been grouped into three thematic categories: Demographic Distribution, Ownership Trends and Preferences, and Feature-Based Comparison. Each group includes relevant questions supported by diagrams, charts, and interpretations, which are preserved in their original format.

Group 1: Demographic Distribution

This group includes the analysis of respondents' background characteristics such as age, occupation, and income. These variables help in profiling the target audience and provide essential context for interpreting preferences.

Ques1. Age

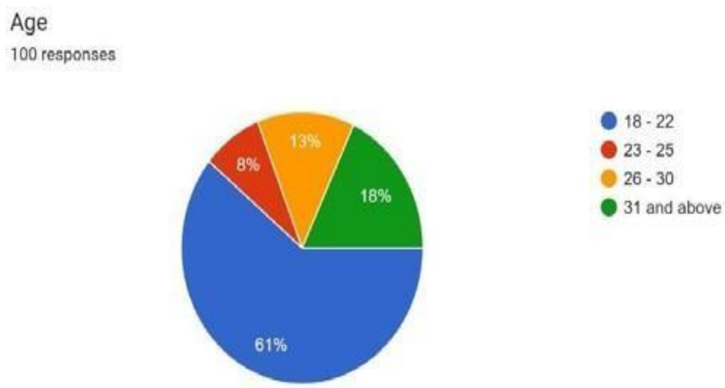

Figure-15

S.No.	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
1	18 -22	61	61%
2	23 – 25	08	8%
3	26 – 30	13	13%
4	30 and above	18	18%
	Total	100	100%

Table-2

Interpretation – the above description shows that 61% people are aged between 18 to 22, 8% people are aged between 23 to 25, 13% people are aged between 26 to 30 and the rest 18% are 31 and above

Ques2. What is your occupation?

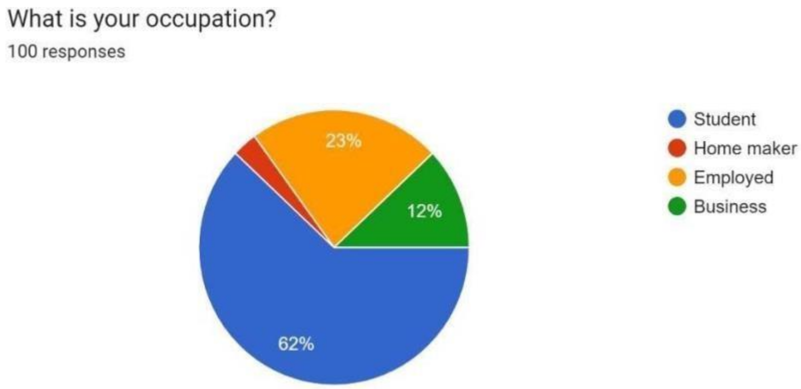

Figure-16

S.No.	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
1	Student	62	62%
2	Home maker	03	3%
3	Employed	23	23%
4	Business	12	12%
	Total	100	100%

Table-3

Interpretation – the above description shows that 62% people are students, 3% are home makers, 23% are employed and rest 12% own a business

Ques3. What is your annual income?

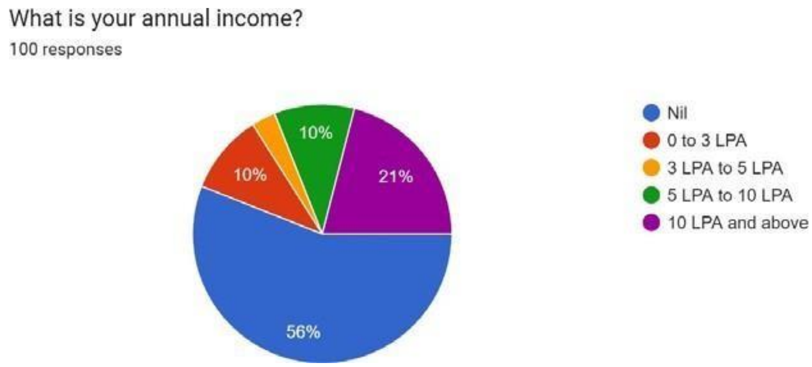

Figure-17

S.No.	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
1	Nil	56	56%
2	0 to 3LPA	10	10%
3	3LPA to 5LPA	03	3%
4	5LPA to 10LPA	10	10%
5	10LPA & above	21	21%
	Total	100	100%

Table-4

Interpretation – the above description shows that 56% people have no income, 10% earns between 0 to 3 LPA, 3% earns between 3 LPA to 5 LPA, 10% earns between 5 LPA to 10 LPA and the rest 21% earns 10 LPA or above.

Results

The results indicate that the majority of respondents are young (aged 18–22), primarily students, and mostly have no annual income. This suggests a sample consisting largely of aspiring car buyers or opinion influencers rather than active buyers.

Group 2: Ownership Trends and Consumer Preferences

This group evaluates what respondents currently own and what they prefer, offering insights into market trends and future demand for sedans or SUVs.

Ques4. Which segment of car do you own right now?

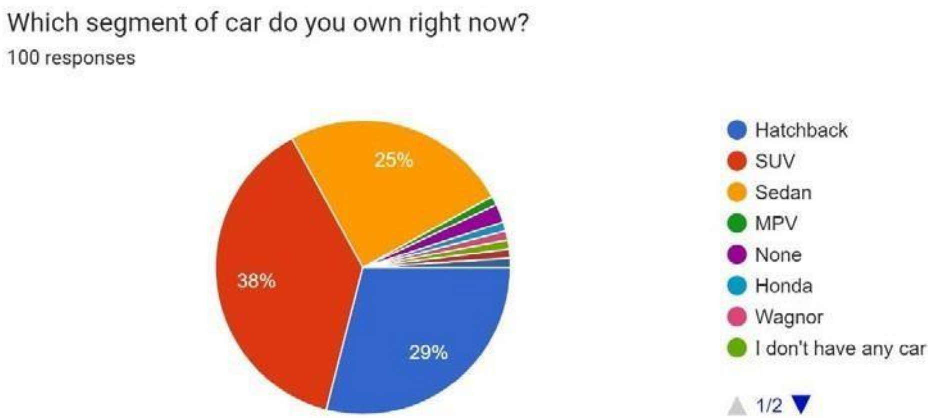

Figure-18

S.No.	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
1	Hatchback	29	29%
2	SUV	38	38%
3	Sedan	25	25%
4	MPV	01	1%
5	None	03	3%
6	Other	04	4%
	Total	100	100%

Table-5

Interpretation – the data given above shows that 29% people own a hatchback, 38% owns SUV, 25% owns Sedan, 3% does not own a car and rest 4% have chosen other.

Ques5. Which segment of car do you prefer?

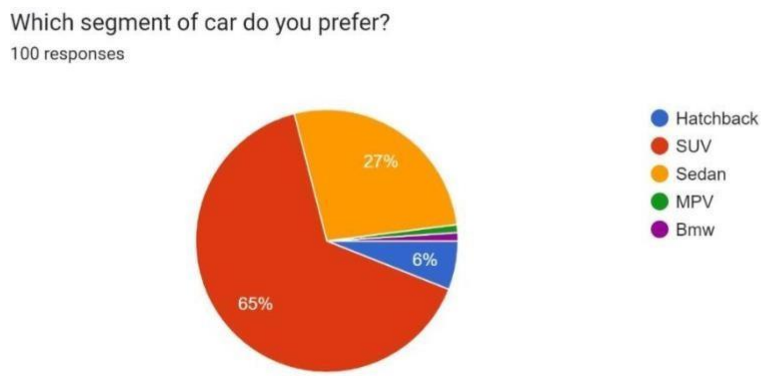

Figure-19

S.No.	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
1	Hatchback	06	6%
2	SUV	65	65%
3	Sedan	27	27%
4	MPV	01	1%
5	Other	01	1%
	Total	100	100%

Table-6

Interpretation – the data given above shows that 6% people prefer a hatchback, 65% prefers an SUV, 27% prefers a sedan, 1% prefer an MPV and the rest 1% prefer a different segment of car.

<u>Results</u>

The findings reflect a strong inclination toward SUVs, with 38% already owning one and

65% expressing a preference to own one in the future. This demonstrates growing popularity of SUVs despite a proportion of consumers currently owning hatchbacks or sedans.

Group 3: Feature-Based Comparison

This group explores how respondents compare SUVs and sedans across key features like comfort, safety, affordability, performance, and family suitability. These variables are crucial in the final decision-making process.

Ques6. Which car segment is more comfortable?

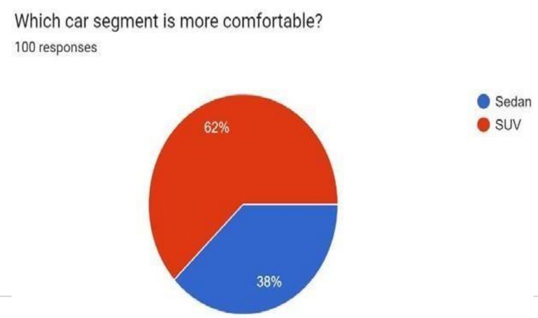

Figure-20

S.No.	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
1	Sedan	38	38%
2	SUV	62	62%
	Total	100	100%

Table-7

Interpretation – the above description shows that 38% people say that a sedan is comfortable whereas 62% people say that an SUV is more comfortable.

Ques7. Which segment of car has good on road performance?

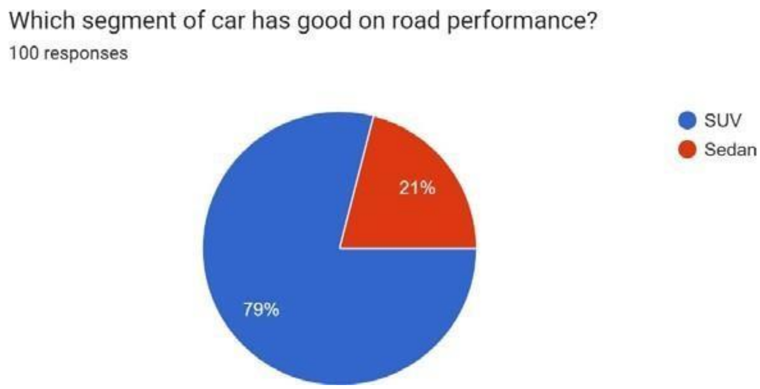

Figure-21

S.No.	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
1	SUV	79	79%
2	Sedan	21	21%
	Total	100	100%

Table-8

Interpretation – the above data shows that 79% people say that an SUV has a good on road performance whereas 21% people say that sedan has a good on road performance.

Ques8. What is the advantage of SUV over a Sedan?

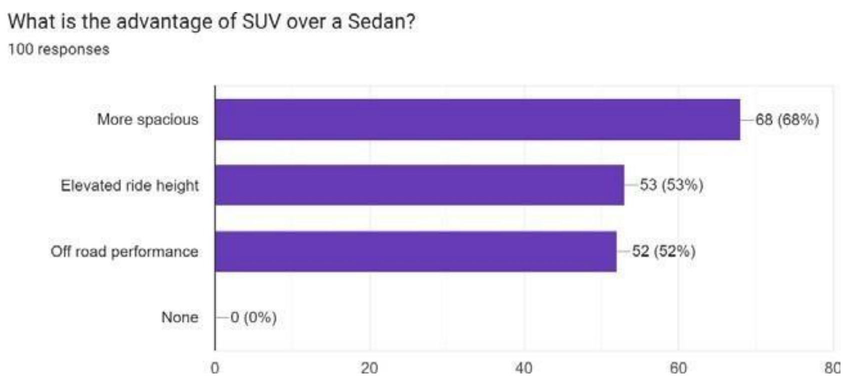

Figure-22

Interpretation – the above graph shows that 68 people say that an SUV is more spacious, 58 people like that an SUV offers elevated ride height and 52 people like the off-road performance that an SUV provides.

Ques9 . What is the advantage of Sedan over a SUV?

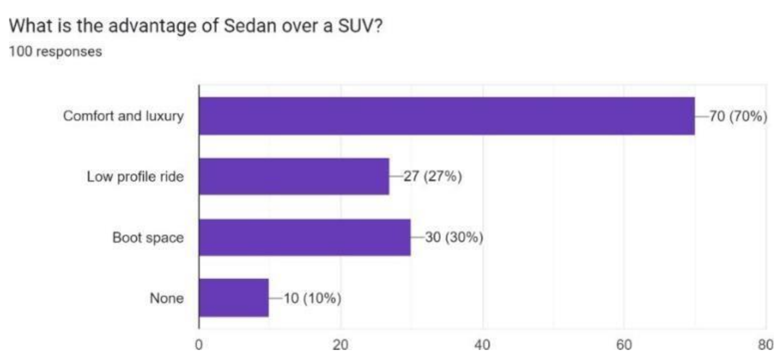

Figure-23

Interpretation – the above graph shows that 70 people say that a Sedan provides better comfort and luxury than an SUV, 27 people like the low-profile driving experience of a sedan and 30 people like the larger boot space that a Sedan provides.

Ques10. Which car segment is better for a family?

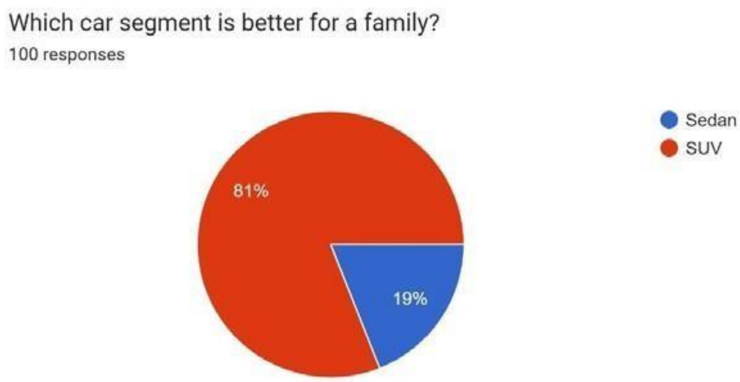

Figure-24

S.No.	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
1	Sedan	19	19%
2	SUV	81	81%
	Total	100	100%

Table-9

Interpretation – the data given above shows that 19% of people say that Sedan is better segment for a family whereas 81% people say that SUV is a better option for a family while considering a car.

Ques11. Which car segment is more affordable?

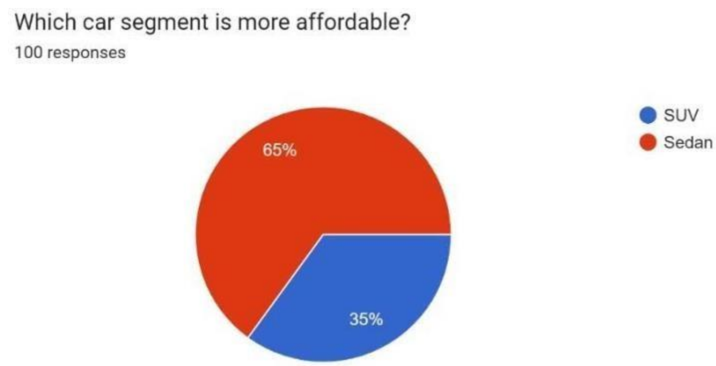

Figure-25

S.No.	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
1	SUV	35	35%
2	Sedan	65	65%
	Total	100	100%

Table-10

Interpretation – the data given above shows that 35% people say that an SUV is more affordable than a Sedan whereas 65% of people say that a sedan is more affordable than an SUV.

Ques12. Which car segment is safer in an accident?

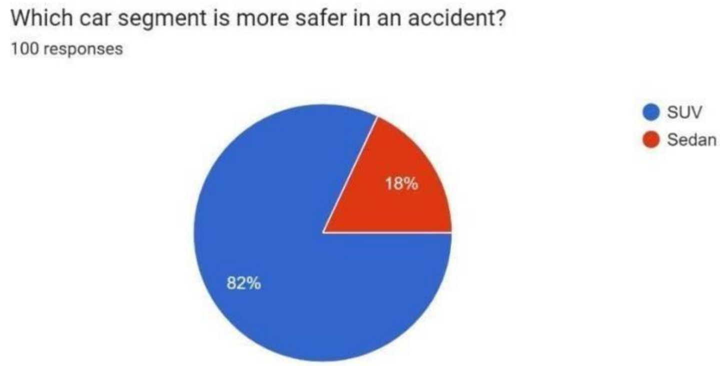

Figure-26

S.No.	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
1	SUV	82	82%
2	Sedan	18	18%
	Total	100	100%

Table-11

Interpretation – the above data shows that 82% of people say that an SUV is safer than a Sedan in an accident whereas 18% people say that a Sedan is more safer than SUV in an accident.

Ques13. Which car segment provides better fuel efficiency?

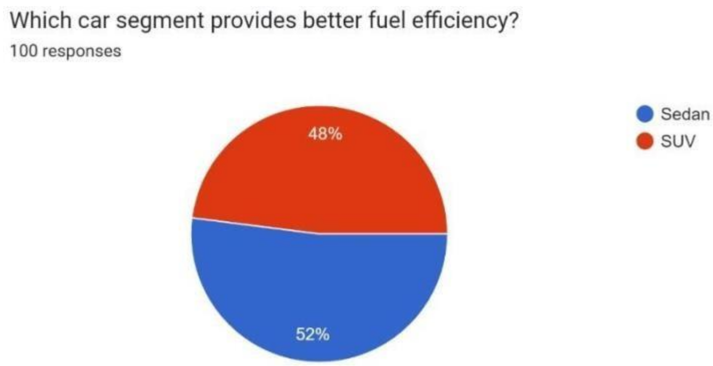

Figure-17

S.No.	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
1	Sedan	52	52%
2	SUV	48	48%
	Total	100	100%

Table-12

Interpretation – the above data shows that 52% people think that a Sedan car provides better fuel efficiency than an SUV whereas 48% people think that an SUV provides better fuel efficiency.

Results

The responses highlight that consumers associate SUVs with safety, family practicality, and off-road performance, while sedans are seen as more economical and comfortable for regular commuting. These perceptions align closely with the insights drawn from the literature review. This organized structure ensures that the data analysis chapter not only conveys clear findings but also supports better comprehension by avoiding repetition and enhancing thematic clarity.

Chapter 4

Case Studies on A Study of Consumer Vehicle Preference

1. INTRODUCTION

Over the past fifteen years, the global automotive market has undergone one of its most consequential structural shifts: the dramatic migration of consumer preference from traditional sedans toward Sport Utility Vehicles (SUVs) and crossovers. In 2010, SUVs accounted for roughly 20% of new vehicle sales globally; by 2024, that figure had climbed to nearly 58%, fundamentally reshaping product portfolios at every major automaker.

Yet consumer preference in the automotive sector is rarely monolithic. While headline numbers favour the SUV, meaningful segments of buyers continue to choose sedans — often citing economics, driving dynamics, and environmental consciousness as decisive factors. Understanding *why* consumers choose one over the other, and what trade-offs they consciously accept, is of strategic value to manufacturers, dealers, policymakers, and urban planners a like.

"The choice between a sedan and an SUV is no longer simply a practical one — it is a statement of identity, lifestyle, and values."

This case study was commissioned to provide an evidence-based understanding of the factors shaping consumer preference between sedans and SUVs across three major markets: the United States, Western Europe, and the Asia-Pacific region. By combining quantitative survey data with qualitative consumer interviews and secondary market research, the study aims to surface both the rational and emotional dimensions of the purchase decision.

2. DATA COLLECTION

This study employed a mixed-methods research design, integrating primary data collected directly from consumers with secondary data drawn from established automotive market research bodies. This triangulated approach allows findings to be both statistically robust and contextually rich.

- **Consumer Survey**
  Online structured questionnaire administered to 2,400 car owners or intenders (800 per region: USA, Western Europe, Asia-Pacific). Conducted Q1–Q2 2024. Respondents aged 22–65, having purchased or intending to purchase a vehicle within 18 months.

- **In-Depth Interviews**
  Semi-structured telephone interviews with 48 participants (16 per region), stratified by vehicle type, income, and family status. Interviews averaged 35 minutes and were thematically coded using NVivo software.

- **Market Intelligence Reports**
  J.D. Power Vehicle Dependability & Appeal Studies (2020–2024), IHS Markit Global Vehicle Registration Data, and McKinsey & Company's Future of Mobility consumer surveys were used to contextualise primary findings.

- **Peer-Reviewed Literature**
  Fourteen academic studies on automotive consumer behaviour, hedonic vs. utilitarian purchase motivations, and the role of identity in vehicle selection were reviewed. Sources drawn from the Journal of Consumer Research and Transportation Research Part A.

Data Collection Approach — Four Phases:

- **Instrument Design & Pilot Testing**
  Survey questions were developed from a review of existing automotive preference literature. A 60-person pilot test was conducted to assess clarity and remove ambiguous items. Cronbach's alpha of 0.83 confirmed internal consistency across the preference scale.

- **Sampling & Recruitment**
  Respondents were recruited via an online panel provider (Qualtrics Research Panel) using quota sampling to ensure representativeness by age, gender, income, and geography. Interlocking quotas controlled for overrepresentation of any demographic cell.

- **Survey Administration**
  The questionnaire covered 42 items across six constructs: purchase motivation, lifestyle fit, economic sensitivity, brand perception, environmental attitude, and demographic background. Average completion time was 18 minutes. Response data was cleaned for straight-lining and

speeding before analysis.

- **Qualitative Coding & Integration**
  Interview transcripts were coded inductively using thematic analysis. Emergent themes were then mapped back to survey constructs to explain statistical patterns with consumer-voiced reasoning, ensuring a coherent mixed-methods narrative.

Chapter 5:
Conclusion & Findings

Conclusion

The survey indicates that a significant number of people own a car, from various segments such as Hatchback, Sedan, SUV and many others. The automobile industry is growing with many new technological innovations and it considers the manufacturing of cars according to the need of their potential customers. In India, the SUV segment is in excess demand nowadays because of its off-road performance, elevated ride height, space and comfort and safety features. In the past 10 years the sedan segment was in great demand but nowadays the consumer has shifted their preference to the SUV segment according to the market trend and the additional features that it provides like all wheel drive, more powerful engine, etc. The people who love low profile ride still go for sedans, also this segment provides luxurious interior and a great comfort experience to their owners and provide a great boot space which can be an essential factor for the ones who carry a lot of luggage in their daily use. Also, people like hatchback segment for city use as there is a huge possibility that you might stuck in traffic in urban area, so a car which is smaller than 4 meters is easy to drive and reduces the hectic of driving from small roads and traffic area. As per the survey the SUV segment is selling out a lot as the people are attracted to big shaped vehicles, with powerful engine and a car which provides additional safety features.

Findings

The findings of the study are mentioned below:

- 29% people own a Hatchback, 38% people own an SUV, 25% people own a Sedan, 1% own an MPV, 4% other segment of cars and the rest 3% does not have a car.

- 65% of people prefer an SUV segment car, 27% of people prefer a Sedan segment car whereas 6% of people prefer a Hatchback and the rest prefer other segment of cars.

- 62% of people say that an SUV is comfortable whereas 38% people say that a sedan is more comfortable.

- 79% people say that an SUV has a good on road performance whereas 21% people say that sedan has a good on road performance.

- 68 people say that an SUV is more spacious, 58 people like that an SUV offers elevated ride height and 52 people like the off-road performance that an SUV provides.

- 70 people say that a Sedan provides better comfort and luxury than an SUV, 27 people like the low-profile driving experience of a sedan and 30 people like the larger boot space that a Sedan provides.

- 19% of people say that Sedan is better segment for a family whereas 81% people say that SUV is a better option for a family while considering a car.

- 65% of people say that a sedan is more affordable than an SUV whereas 35% people say that an SUV is more affordable than a Sedan.

- 82% of people say that an SUV is safer than a Sedan in an accident whereas 18%

people say that a Sedan is more safer than SUV in an accident.

- 52% people think that a Sedan car provides better fuel efficiency than an SUV whereas 48% people think that an SUV provides better fuel efficiency.

Limitations

- This research is of an academic nature and does not meet the standards of professional or industry-sponsored research. It was conducted for academic purposes as part of a curriculum requirement.
- The duration allocated for carrying out this study was limited to three months, which restricted the depth and scope of analysis that could be undertaken within such a short timeframe.
- The sources available for data collection were constrained. Primary data was collected mainly through a structured questionnaire, and secondary data was gathered from limited online platforms and existing literature. Other comprehensive tools like in-depth interviews or field observations were not feasible.
- The total number of respondents surveyed was restricted to just 100 individuals. This relatively small sample size limits the generalizability and reliability of the findings across larger or more diverse populations.

Suggestions

- Based on the insights obtained from the survey, it is evident that a growing number of consumers currently show a preference for SUVs. However, the Sedan segment continues to maintain relevance due to its offerings in terms of driving comfort, a refined ride experience, greater boot space, and premium aesthetics. Manufacturers should not disregard this segment and instead explore how it can be made more competitive.

- The geographical scope of this research was confined to the Delhi/NCR region. Future studies should expand the research to include participants from various states across India. This broader outreach would capture regional preferences, cultural differences, and local market conditions, leading to more comprehensive insights.

- The sample size used in the current study was relatively small, which may not fully reflect the diversity of consumer opinions in the entire market. Increasing the number of respondents in future research would provide more accurate and statistically significant results.

- Time constraints significantly impacted the research process. With a longer duration for data collection, analysis, and validation, future studies could delve deeper into consumer psychology, emerging trends, and conduct more robust comparative analyses.

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ANNEXURE

Questionnaire:

1. Name*
2. Age*
    - 18-22
    - 23-25
    - 26-30
    - 31 and above
3. Gender*
    - Male
    - Female
    - Prefer not to say
4. What is your occupation?*
    - Student
    - Home maker
    - Employed
    - Business
5. What is your annual income?*
    - Nil
    - 0 to 3LPA
    - 3LPA to 5LPA
    - 5LPA to 10LPA
    - 10LPA and above
6. Which segment of car do you own right now?*
    - Hatchback
    - SUV
    - Sedan
    - MPV
    - Other

7. Which segment of car do you prefer?*
    - Hatchback
    - SUV
    - Sedan
    - MPV
    - Other
8. Which car segment is more comfortable?*
    - Sedan
    - SUV
9. Which segment of car has good on road performance?*
    - SUV
    - Sedan
10. What is the advantage of SUV over a Sedan?*
    - More spacious
    - Elevated ride height
    - Off road performance
    - None
11. What is the advantage of Sedan over a SUV?*
    - Comfort and luxury
    - Low profile ride
    - Boot space
    - None
12. Which car segment is better for a family?*
    - Sedan
    - SUV
13. Which car segment is more affordable?*
    - SUV
    - Sedan
14. Which car segment is more safer in an accident?*

- SUV
- Sedan

15. Which car segment provides better fuel efficiency?*

- Sedan
- SUV