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## RESEARCH ARTICLE

### DIP-STICK SURVEY: TIPPER TRUCKS CUSTOMER'S SATISFACTION IN WESTERN MAHARASHTRA, INDIA

<sup>1,\*</sup>Vijay Burkule and <sup>2</sup>Dr. Prakash H. Karmadkar

<sup>1</sup>Student, Savitribai Phule Pune University, Pune, India

<sup>2</sup>Research Guide and HOD, PE Society's IMCD Research Center Nigdi, Pune-44, India

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##### \*Corresponding author:

Vijay Burkule.

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#### ABSTRACT

Tipper is a truck application which is mainly used for construction activity, sand and stone carrying purpose across country and they are used for off road applications. In Maharashtra, western part is rich in terms of water availability because of flowing river and sand rich riverbeds, so sand is available. Secondly there are stone ores near Satara, Kolhapur, and Sangli region. Road construction is in full swing so stone crush is required and it is provided with the help of Tipper trucks which have got good gradability. These twin tyre vehicles bring material to customer from stone crush factories.

## INTRODUCTION

Tata Motors, Mahindra and Eicher make tippers are used in the region. Single owner come driver as well as owners of 4-5 tippers are there who have kept drivers on monthly wages. Dip stick study was done to understand what customer like and unlike so rate scale method is used to understand quick feedback. Tippers are always more costly than regular trucks. If assured business is there, then only customer buy those. Tippers are multipurpose vehicles, they can be used as truck also. Because of their high ground clearance, they can be taken into river beds. These are overloaded and abused by customers.

#### Objective of study

- To understand driving pattern and applications.
- To understand Purchase motivators for Tippers as these are costlier than regular trucks.
- To know features which are liked by tipper customers.
- To know which company is satisfying Tipper customers most.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Rating scale method is used for dip stick study. Feature list, price list and specification was displayed at the location of interaction.

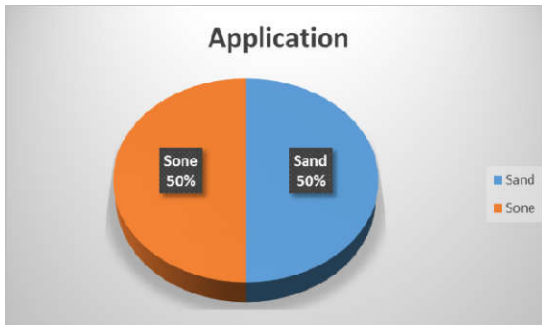
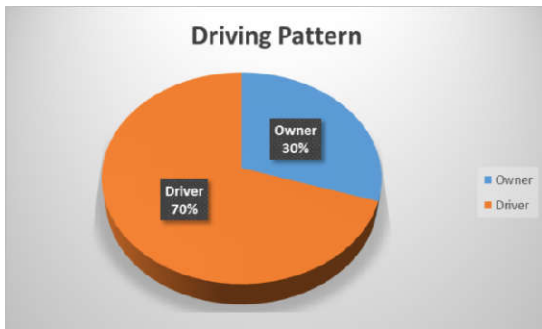
These studies are very quick and easy to conclude. Very less time is given to customer and first thought is captured.

#### Various types of study and survey are conducted by OEM's as:

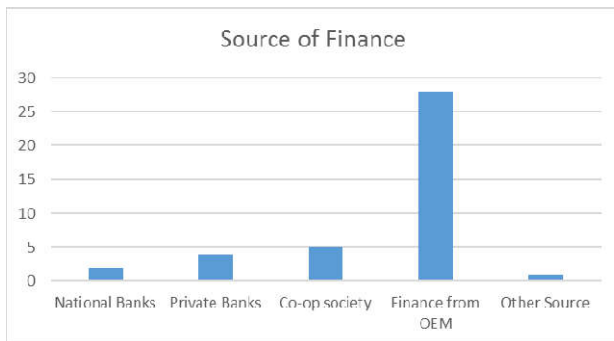
- Dip stick survey- it is a quick interview of customer on rating scale without giving much time to think and top of mind, thoughts are captured.
- Quality Function deployment-A group of people do detail survey with reference to detailed questionnaire in various geographies. Psychological, technical aspect is attached to this.
- Specific study –It is conducted mostly for issues in the product. Pros & cons and root cause analysis is studied on the job with customer. Eg. Warranty issues. We have used dip stick survey method for our study.

**Area of study:** Area of study was restricted to Western Maharashtra and the main cities where tippers are sold in maximum numbers-Satara, Sangli, Kolhapur, Islampur, Miraj and Karhad.

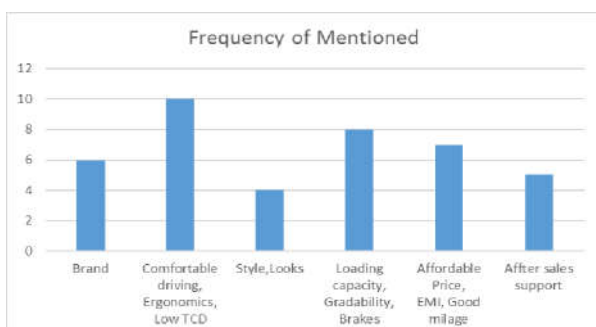
**Sample size:** 40# Customers interviewed were having all three brands of tipper trucks or either of them. The feedback shared by them was investigated and analysis is done. These tipper trucks are mostly driven by drivers and only 30% owners who are drivers also.



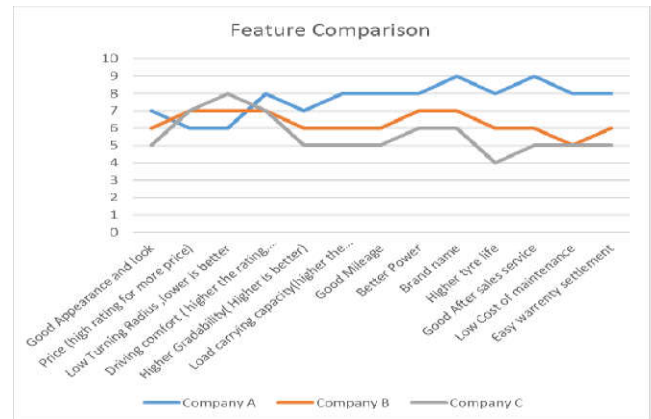
Source of Finance	Told by so many customers
National Banks	2
Private Bank	4
Co-op society	5
Finance from OEM	28
Other Source	1



Purchase motivator	Frequency of mentioned
Brand	6
Comfortable driving, Ergonomics, Low TCD	10
Style, Looks	4
Loading capacity, Gradability, Brakes	8
Affordable Price, EMI, Good milage	7
Affter sales support	5



Features	Company A	Company B	Company C
Good Appearance and look	7	6	5
Price (high rating for more price)	6	7	7
Low Turning Radius ,lower is better	6	7	8
Driving comfort ( higher the rating, better)	8	7	7
Higher Gradability( Higher is better)	7	6	5
Load carrying capacity(higher the better)	8	6	5
Good Mileage	8	6	5
Better Power	8	7	6
Brand name	9	7	6
Higher tyre life	8	6	4
Good After sales service	9	6	5
Low Cost of maintenance	8	5	5
Easy warrenty settlement	8	6	5



50% tippers are used for sand carrying and 50% are stone or stone crush. Every day running is less than 150km of every truck. As sand is to be brought from river and stone from factories near small hills outside of the city, roads are not good or not available. 70% driving is done off road. Purpose of the study is to understand buying tipper truck motivators. All the owners are facing driver availability issue as nobody like off road driving and going out of the city. This is an overload market. Reliability of the truck is more important as operation takes place at remote location where repair facility is not available. As this is an overload market and roads are not good, nobody is bothered about mileage or kmpl. Average payload is 4 tonne and maximum payload is 5 tonne. Trucks are operated for 7 hr/day. It is evident than friends and relatives is the big source of information and hoardings play a very little role. Word of mouth from friends and relatives is more trustworthy than any other medium. People do advocacy of some product when they get good experience and good service and if they are loyal to brand and good experience. Company's need to see the importance and cost getting incurred on hoardings. Even company demos are not adding value or they are not effective to educate and guide customers about their products. Dealers are playing important role.

**Source of Finance:** Customer like Finance from OEM's Finance over other sources like cooperative societies nationalized banks, private banks. Reasons are- Staff from OEM finance are aware of details of the product unlike other finance source, fast processing of the application and OEM finance try to give maximum loan amount to customer and that too with some additional benefits.

**Purchase motivators and frequency of mention is indicated:** When Customers were given a list of purchase motivators, prompted and unprompted questions were asked to prioritize out of 6 choices and graph was plotted as above after analysis. Customers were giving clear preference to comfort over vehicle specifications and more financial benefits.

**Features of tippers of all three OEM's**

## RESULTS

- Customer take response from friends and relatives, more than other sources of information. Because people believe relatives and friends because of trust. They think various internet sites are paid means and hence can mislead.
- Customer take loans from Finance companies rather than banks or co-op societies. That is easy for processing. Finance companies are specialists in this job.
- Customers have clear preference to comfortable driving as this is an off road application and hectic operation. They want comfortable vehicle so that their drivers or they themselves can meet the timeline of deliveries. Vehicle specification is primary and hygiene and all competition players at par in this regards and in price but comfort is the aspiration and deciding factor.
- 4. Company A is better, in comparison with company B & C-but still it has scope improvement on cost reduction as price is more and secondly in reduction of turning circle radius.

## Conclusion

Customers use the product so they know what they want and they tell precisely. Few years back every customer was wanting mileage or km/lit. But there are some applications like tippers, where mileage comes as a secondary requirement. First priority is driving comfort, good ergonomics is a key requirement. 70% drivers are opinion makers and the owner cum drivers-both want comfort in this tuff application. Scarcity of drivers is a big question in front of owners. Improvement in profit comes after operations and it can come through more number of trips which is possible only if truck driving is comfortable.

## REFERENCE

Marketing Management by Philip Kotler, Kevin Lane Keller  
Guerrilla Marketing by Jay Levinson

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