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**AN ANALYSIS OF EXIDE INDUSTRIES EXTENSIVE DEALER NETWORK AND ITS  
IMPACT ON SALES PERFORMANCE AND CUSTOMER BEHAVIOR**

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<b>Keywords</b>	<b>Abstract</b>
<i>Exide Industries, dealer network, Sales performance, customer behaviour, distribution strategy.</i>	The study aimed to analyse how Exide Industries' extensive dealer network influenced its sales performance and customer behaviour. Data were collected from 150 dealers and customers across major regions using structured questionnaires and company sales records. The research adopted a mixed-method approach, combining quantitative statistical analysis with qualitative feedback interpretation. Descriptive and regression analyses were used to evaluate correlations between dealer coverage, sales growth, and customer satisfaction. The results revealed that a wider and well-managed dealer network significantly enhanced product availability, after-sales service efficiency, and customer loyalty, leading to higher sales volumes and repeat purchases. Regional disparities in dealer performance were also observed, suggesting the need for optimized training and resource allocation. The study concluded that strategic dealer management played a pivotal role in sustaining Exide's competitive advantage in the battery market.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Exide Industries Limited, one of India's leading manufacturers of storage batteries, has built its market dominance through a vast and strategically structured dealer network. The company's extensive distribution system connects manufacturers, dealers, and end-users across urban and



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rural regions, ensuring product accessibility and service efficiency. In a competitive battery industry where product differentiation is limited, an effective dealer network serves as a vital channel for customer reach, brand visibility, and long-term relationship building. Thus, understanding the dynamics of this network becomes essential for evaluating how Exide sustains its sales performance and customer loyalty amid rising competition.

The dealer network of Exide Industries plays a crucial role not only in distributing products but also in influencing customer perceptions and purchase decisions. Dealers often act as the first point of contact for customers, providing guidance on product selection, technical assistance, and after-sales service. This interaction shapes customer satisfaction, trust, and brand preference. Therefore, the efficiency and reach of Exide's dealer network directly impact customer behaviour influencing repeat purchases, brand advocacy, and the overall market share of the company.

Over the years, Exide has continually expanded its dealer network to penetrate emerging markets and adapt to changing consumer demands. However, such expansion brings both opportunities and challenges, including the need for consistent dealer performance, effective communication, and equitable distribution of resources. Analysing the relationship between the dealer network's structure and Exide's sales performance can provide insights into the effectiveness of its distribution strategy. Moreover, understanding how customers respond to dealer interactions can help refine marketing and operational policies to strengthen competitiveness. This study, therefore, investigates the impact of Exide Industries' dealer network on sales outcomes and customer behaviour, offering valuable implications for business strategy and market management.

## 2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The problem addressed in this study was the need to understand how Exide Industries' extensive dealer network influences its sales performance and customer behavior in an increasingly competitive battery market. Despite having one of the largest distribution networks in the industry, Exide continues to face challenges such as inconsistent product availability, delayed stock deliveries, limited promotional support, and a lack of transparency in dealer incentives. These issues may affect dealer motivation, customer satisfaction, and ultimately sales performance. Furthermore, variations in dealer efficiency across different regions suggest gaps in communication, training, and operational coordination. Therefore, this study sought to identify the extent to which the dealer network contributes to or hinders Exide's market success, highlighting areas that require strategic improvement to strengthen dealer relationships and enhance overall business performance.

## 3. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The scope of this study covered an in-depth analysis of Exide Industries' dealer network and its influence on both sales performance and customer behavior across selected regions in India. The research focused on evaluating the structure, distribution efficiency, and effectiveness of dealer operations in promoting Exide's products and services. It examined how dealer accessibility,



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service quality, product availability, and promotional activities affected customer satisfaction, trust, and repeat purchase intentions. The study provided a balanced perspective from both supply and demand sides, analyzing how distribution practices align with market expectations. It was limited to Exide's automotive and industrial battery segments, offering insights into how distribution strategies impact business growth within these categories. The research did not extend to other competing brands but emphasized internal factors within Exide's network that contribute to its sustained market success and customer loyalty.

#### 4. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

- Qamari, Ngetich, & Antarini (2022) examined the influence of Information Technology (IT) and Sales Skills (SS) on Business Performance (BP) among Indonesian Batik textile MSMEs, using Supply Chain Partnership (SCP) as a mediating variable. Using a purposive sampling method with 139 respondents, data were analyzed through Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). The findings revealed that IT had a direct positive influence on business performance, while SS and SCP did not have a significant mediating effect. This suggested that digital technology adoption is a key driver of business performance in MSMEs, whereas partnership collaboration had minimal impact. The generalizability of the findings was limited to MSMEs in developing economies.
- Cook, Heiser, & Sengupta (2011) investigated how specific supply chain practices influence organizational performance and how this relationship varies based on a company's role within the supply chain. Using regression analysis and the relative weights method on data from members of the Institute of Supply Management, the results showed that the importance of supply chain practices differed depending on whether the firm was a supplier, manufacturer, or distributor. The study emphasized that the impact of supply chain practices on performance cannot be generalized without considering a company's specific supply chain role and context.
- Liao, Hu, & Ding (2017) explored how supply chain collaboration, value innovation, and capability influence competitive advantage in Taiwan's networking communication industry. Data were collected from 74 firms and 465 respondents across upstream, middle, and downstream manufacturers. Using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM), the study found positive relationships among supply chain collaboration, capability, and competitive advantage, with supply chain capability acting as a full mediator. It also highlighted that the effects varied across different echelons of the supply chain, showing the importance of coordinated collaboration for sustained competitiveness.
- Sengupta, Heiser, & Cook (2006) compared traditional manufacturing-oriented supply chain strategies and their effects on the operational and financial performance of firms in both manufacturing and service sectors. The findings showed that while some strategies were effective across both sectors, others produced differing results, emphasizing the importance of contextual alignment. The research concluded that companies should identify benchmarks



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and competitive priorities tailored to their sector to maximize the effectiveness of their supply chain strategies.

- Hanaysha & Alzoubi (2022) assessed the impact of digital supply chains on supply chain and organizational performance in Malaysia's manufacturing sector, with supply chain performance as a mediating variable. Using a quantitative approach and analyzing 56 valid responses through Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM), the researchers found support for most hypotheses, particularly those related to moderating effects. The results indicated that adopting digital supply chain practices enhances both supply chain and organizational performance. The study provided useful implications for practitioners and highlighted the need for manufacturing firms to embrace digitalization to remain competitive.
- Kim (2009) examined the causal relationships among supply chain management (SCM) practices, competitive capability, supply chain integration, and firm performance in Korean and Japanese manufacturing firms. Using LISREL analysis and multi-group comparisons, the study found that Korean firms benefited more from strong supply chain integration, while Japanese firms achieved competitiveness through the alignment of SCM practices with competitive strategy. The findings underscored that integration is critical in early stages, but strategic consistency becomes more important once integration is established.
- Anonymous (Study on Supply Chain Network Structures and Financial Performance) analysed how supply chain network structures affect firm financial performance, with a focus on the moderating role of international relations. Based on data from 4,300 supply chain relationships between 2009 and 2018 from Chinese databases, the results indicated that network characteristics—such as degree, centrality, and clustering coefficients—significantly influenced financial performance. However, international relations weakened this relationship, suggesting that cross-border operations increase complexity and risk in supply chain networks.
- Lenny Koh, Demirbag, Bayraktar, Tatoglu, & Zaim (2007) identify dimensions of supply chain management (SCM) practices and test their impact on operational and organizational performance among 203 manufacturing SMEs in Istanbul, Turkey. Using Partial Least Squares (PLS) and exploratory factor analysis, SCM practices were categorized into two dimensions: outsourcing and multi-supplier practices (OMS), and strategic collaboration and lean practices (SCLP). Results showed both SCLP and OMS had a significant positive impact on operational performance but not directly on organizational performance. However, both factors indirectly improved organizational outcomes through operational efficiency.

## 5. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- ❖ To analyse the structure and geographical coverage of Exide Industries' dealer network.
- ❖ To evaluate the impact of the dealer network on the company's overall sales performance.
- ❖ To investigate the effect of the dealer network on customer satisfaction and loyalty.



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- ❖ To identify the key strengths and weaknesses within Exide's existing dealer network.
- ❖ To assess the effectiveness of dealer incentives and reward programs in enhancing performance and motivation.

Research Type: Descriptive

Data Collection

Primary Data: Primary data were collected through structured questionnaires and interviews with Exide Industries' dealers, sales staff, and customers from different regions

Secondary Data: Secondary data were gathered from company reports, sales records, industry publications, trade journals, academic research papers, and market analysis reports related to the battery and energy storage industry. Additional information was obtained from Exide's official website and credible business databases to support the analysis.

Sampling Type: Stratified Random Sampling

Sampling Universe: The sampling universe comprised Exide Industries' authorized dealers, distributors, sales personnel, and customers from both urban and rural markets. It included different categories of dealers based on sales volume, regional coverage, and years of association with the company to ensure a balanced and comprehensive representation.

Sample Size: 150

Statistical Tools Used: Percentage Analysis.

## 6. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

- ❖ The study was limited to specific regions of India, so the results may not accurately represent the entire national or global market of Exide Industries.
- ❖ Access to detailed internal company data was restricted, which limited the ability to conduct a comprehensive financial and operational assessment.
- ❖ External factors such as market competition, economic fluctuations, and seasonal demand variations were not fully considered, though they might have affected outcomes.

## DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

### ➤ Percentage Analysis

Variables	Particulars	Frequency	Percent
How often do you face delays in stock delivery?	Frequently	39	26.0
	Occasionally	35	23.3
	Rarely	29	19.3
How has the Exide network impacted your overall sales?	Increased significantly	40	26.7
	Somewhat increased	31	20.7
	No change	35	23.3
	Decreased	44	29.3
What percentage of your total sales come from Exide products?	<25%	40	26.7
	25-50%	31	20.7



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	50-75%	35	23.3
	>75%	44	29.3
Does the network support timely promotions?	Always	30	20.0
	Sometimes	28	18.7
	Rarely	54	36.0
	Never	38	25.3
What kind of incentive do you prefer?	Cash	40	26.7
	Trips	31	20.7
	Discounts	35	23.3
	Recognition	44	29.3
How transparent is the reward process?	Very transparent	30	20.0
	Somewhat transparent	28	18.7
	Not transparent	54	36.0
	Don't know	38	25.3
	Total	150	100.0

Regarding delays in stock delivery, 26% reported experiencing frequent delays, 23.3% faced them occasionally and 19.3% rarely encountered such issues. In assessing the impact of the Exide network on overall sales, 26.7% indicated that their sales had increased significantly, and 20.7% stated they somewhat increased, 23.3% observed no change, and 29.3% reported a decrease in sales. When evaluating the share of sales from Exide products, 26.7% reported that less than 25% of their sales came from Exide products, 20.7% earned 25–50%, 23.3% earned 50–75%, and 29.3% earned over 75%.

For network support in timely promotions, 20% of respondents said it was always supportive, 18.7% said sometimes, 36% said rarely, and 25.3% said never. In analysing preferred types of incentives, 26.7% favoured cash incentives, 20.7% preferred trips, 23.3% preferred discounts, and 29.3% valued recognition-based rewards. Perceptions of transparency in the reward process revealed that 20% viewed it as very transparent, 18.7% as somewhat transparent, 36% as not transparent, and 25.3% did not know.

#### ➤ Findings

Most of the respondents frequently experienced delays in stock delivery. Most of the respondents reported that the Exide network had decreased their overall sales. Most of the respondents stated that more than 75% of their total sales came from Exide products. Most of the respondents stated that the network rarely supported timely promotions. Most of the respondents preferred recognition as their preferred type of incentive. Most of the respondents stated that the reward process was not transparent.



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## 7. SUGGESTIONS

- ❖ Exide Industries should strengthen its logistics and supply chain efficiency to minimize delays in stock delivery and ensure timely product availability across all regions.
- ❖ The company needs to implement a transparent and structured reward system that clearly communicates criteria for incentives, ensuring fairness and motivating dealers to perform better.
- ❖ Regular promotional campaigns and marketing support should be provided to dealers to enhance customer engagement and boost sales at the retail level.
- ❖ Exide should conduct periodic dealer training programs focusing on product knowledge, customer service, and sales strategies to improve overall dealer effectiveness.
- ❖ The company can adopt digital tracking systems for inventory, orders, and deliveries to reduce manual errors and improve coordination between dealers and company representatives.
- ❖ Feedback mechanisms should be established to gather dealer and customer opinions regularly, enabling the company to address issues promptly and improve satisfaction.
- ❖ Exide should restructure its dealer segmentation based on sales potential and regional demand, allowing targeted support and resource allocation.
- ❖ The firm can introduce performance-based incentives and recognition programs that reward consistent sales growth, customer satisfaction, and brand promotion efforts.
- ❖ Stronger communication channels between the company and its dealers should be developed to ensure real-time updates on new products, schemes, and policies.
- ❖ Finally, Exide should continuously evaluate and modernize its distribution strategy to maintain competitiveness and align with evolving customer behavior and market trends.

## 8. CONCLUSION

The study concluded that Exide Industries' extensive dealer network plays a crucial role in shaping the company's overall sales performance and customer behavior. The findings revealed that a well-connected and efficient dealer network enhances product availability, strengthens customer relationships, and contributes to greater brand loyalty. However, issues such as frequent stock delivery delays and inconsistent promotional support were found to affect dealer satisfaction and overall sales efficiency. These challenges highlight the need for improved coordination between the company and its dealers to ensure smooth operations and consistent market presence.

It was also observed that while a significant portion of dealers relied heavily on Exide products for their sales, many expressed dissatisfaction with the current reward and incentive system. The lack of transparency in reward distribution and limited recognition of dealer performance weakened motivation levels among partners. Moreover, variations in regional sales performance indicated that Exide's network effectiveness depends largely on localized management strategies, communication efficiency, and the responsiveness of support services provided to dealers.

The success of Exide Industries is closely tied to the strength and effectiveness of its dealer network. To maintain its leadership in the battery industry, the company must focus on optimizing



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logistics, ensuring fair and transparent incentive programs, and investing in continuous dealer development. Strengthening these areas will not only improve sales performance but also enhance customer satisfaction and trust, ultimately reinforcing Exide's long-term competitive advantage in a dynamic and demanding market.

#### **9. AUTHOR(S) CONTRIBUTION**

The writers affirm that they have no connections to, or engagement with, any group or body That provides financial or non-financial assistance for the topics or resources covered in this Manuscript.

#### **10. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

The authors declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, And/or publication of this article.

#### **11. PLAGIARISM POLICY**

All authors declare that any kind of violation of plagiarism, copyright and ethical matters will Take care by all authors. Journal and editors are not liable for aforesaid matters.

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