

**Vehicle Fuel Economy and Acceleration Influence New-Vehicle Shopping Decisions, J.D. Power Finds**Maruti Suzuki Most Considered Brand for 14th Consecutive Year

**SINGAPORE: 1 Nov. 2018** — For the first time in more than a decade, concerns about vehicle fuel economy and acceleration have overtaken exterior and interior styling as the most influential reasons shoppers reject certain models, according to the J.D. Power 2018 India Escaped Shopper Study,<sup>SM</sup> released today.

Good fuel efficiency is the most influential reason when deciding which vehicle to purchase. This year, 13% of new-vehicle buyers cite this as the most influential purchase reason, closely followed by vehicle performance (12%) and latest technology features (10%). Although vehicle price continues to be the most cited reason for ultimately rejecting a model that was initially being considered, shoppers are increasingly rejecting models in favor of others due to better fuel economy, the desire for specific features or options and better acceleration, with 17% of shoppers rejecting for these reasons in 2018 compared with 10% in 2017.

“Although fuel efficiency has always been top-of-mind for car owners in India, this has been heightened by recent increases in fuel prices and competition among vehicle manufacturers positioning fuel economy as a unique selling proposition,” said **Shantanu Majumdar, Regional Director, Automotive Practice at J.D. Power**. “While most newly launched vehicles score highly on styling, buyers in India are increasingly selecting or rejecting vehicles based on other attributes like performance, feature content, practicality of usage and vehicle warranty period. Manufacturers, therefore, need to ensure that they match product offerings to their customers’ purchase reasons.”

Following are additional key findings of the study:

- **Fewer shoppers visiting dealerships:** The decision to select or reject a model is increasingly occurring before visiting the dealership. This year, only 59% of shoppers visited the dealership, compared with 72% last year. Additionally, the proportion of shoppers who took a vehicle for a test drive has increased to 45% this year, compared with 38% in 2017.
- **Recommendations from friends and relatives and the internet key sources:** A larger portion of new-vehicle buyers used the internet to search for vehicle information (54% in 2018 vs. 50% in 2017). Recommendations from friends and family continue to be a key source for information, with 66% of new-vehicle buyers relying on this source to decide which make and model to purchase. Younger buyers (29 years old or younger) rely on these two information sources the most compared with older buyers (30 years and older).
- **SUV models are most considered:** This year, 1 in 4 new-vehicle buyers considered purchasing an SUV model, making it the most considered vehicle segment in India, surpassing the premium compact and compact segments. Customers who purchased an SUV cite vehicle performance, exterior styling, safety and good fuel economy as the most influential purchase reasons. New-vehicle buyers who decided not to purchase an SUV at a dealership did so primarily due to the higher price and desire for better fuel economy.

The 2018 India Escaped Shopper Study, now in its 14<sup>th</sup> year, is based on responses from more than 8,700 owners who purchased a new vehicle between September 2017 and May 2018. The study was fielded between March and August 2018.

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