



Turbocharged cars and the ever-lasting bad fuel problem

MATLUB UL ALAM

Turbocharged cars - known for running devices called 'turbochargers' to boost engine performance - have seen a surge in popularity in the past few years. Veteran and new car owners alike are steadily shifting to turbo models over non-turbo ones, but with the shift in popularity comes a glaring issue: fuel quality.

While fuel quality is an important part of running any automobile, it is especially important for a turbocharged car due to the specific requirements and demands put on the engine. Let us take a closer look at how popular turbocharged cars are in Bangladesh and how bad fuel is affecting turbocharged car owners.

How popular are turbocharged cars? A turbocharger is a device installed as a part of an engine that is powered by the force of exhaust gas. The job of a turbocharger is to compress more air into the engine's cylinders. As a result, an increased amount of air allows more fuel to be added to the engine. Thus, the engine can produce more power by consuming less fuel. Since turbocharged engines are dependent on a precise balance of fuel and air for optimum combustion, fuel quality often becomes the most important factor behind properly running a turbocharged car.

According to the market research organisation Mordor Intelligence, 50% of the gasoline-powered cars sold all over the world in the forecast period of 2023-2028 may have turbochargers, and similar growth is expected to continue. Because of changes in legislation all around the world, car manufacturers are motivated to produce more turbocharged cars. These cars can produce more power while consuming less fuel and emitting fewer pollutants - making them an easy choice to consider for potential new car buyers.

Momin Uzzaman, Manager of Sales at DHS Motors, shared his opinion on why car manufacturers are focusing on producing more turbocharged cars. "The main reason is to downsize engines. For example, previously, the Honda CR-V had a 2.4-litre engine. It produced 136 horsepower. By improving technology, the engine size was decreased to 2.0 litres. It

then produced 152 horsepower. Now, by adding a turbocharger, the Honda CR-V can produce 192 horsepower from its 1.5-litre engine," he shares

So, what are the benefits of having a turbocharged car? According to Momin, a turbocharged car has two main benefits. Firstly, the car is more fuel-efficient.

Secondly, the cc (cubic centimetre) of the engine is decreased, which necessitates paying less tax and duty. When it comes to popularity, Momin adds that because of lower prices, turbocharged cars have gained a lot of popularity in Bangladesh. "By adding turbochargers, the engine size is decreased to 1500 cc, compared to 2000 cc and 2400 cc engines previously. Therefore, less duty and tax need to be paid to the government. As a result, these cars are getting wide acceptance."



While less duty charge is among the top reasons, some other factors behind the recently widened acceptance of turbocharged cars are their fun-to-drive features, efficiency, lower price, the need of paying less AIT and of course, attractive looks. For the past couple of years, the road structures in Bangladesh have improved, which has made driving for both new drivers and veterans a more pleasing experience, with turbocharged cars enhancing the experience even more.

Fuel quality in Bangladesh and the consequences

While it's true that turbocharged cars are being bought more locally, the undeniable fact remains that turbocharged cars require good-quality fuel to operate. For example, a 10th-generation Honda Civic requires a minimum of RON 91-rated fuel. This

is because a turbocharger raises high pressure inside its engine cylinders. Therefore, the fuel should have less tendency to prematurely detonate before reaching the optimal ignition point. As only good fuel has this desired feature, it's natural for turbo owners to want high-quality fuel. Sadly, many turbocharged car users are unsatisfied with the fuel quality available in Bangladesh.

When asked about the local availability of good fuel, Saiful Osman, the executive director of Sadi Filling Station Ltd, said that it is difficult to tell if filling stations receive a supply of good fuel or not. "But it is possible to get good fuel if no mixing, tempering, or adulteration is made," he adds. Both turbocharged and non-turbocharged cars regularly refuel at Sadi Filling Station Ltd.



PHOTOS: ABRAR SHAREQUE KHAN

In social media platforms, especially local Facebook groups about cars and car owners, issues related to bad fuel quality are discussed almost every day. What is the main cause behind this bad fuel? According to Saiful, because of adulteration and the mixing of low-grade gasoline and condensate, fuel quality is ultimately reduced. Many filling stations do not clean their fuel reservoir tanks regularly, which also reduces the quality of fuel supplied to car users.

"Approximately 10-15 cars have issues related to bad fuel, out of the 40-45 cars that come to our service centre every week," adds Saiful, who is also the CEO of a car service centre named iWorksBD. Quick maths will show that nearly 30% of the problematic cars that come to his service centre face fuel-related problems. While this figure will vary across different

service centres, it still gives a bad impression about the quality of fuel that we normally get.

We also asked Momin about how they are handling fuel-related issues since they mainly sell turbocharged cars to their customers. According to his response, they take samples of fuel from different fuel stations every 3-4 months, after which they test the samples. After getting results, they suggest their customers take fuel from filling stations that ensure quality.

Any solution?

Despite getting bad fuel, people are not stopping buying turbocharged cars. But at the end of the day, turbocharged cars cannot run efficiently if good fuel is not provided. For example, a turbocharged car's engine may make knocking sounds and jerk if it gets bad fuel.

So, is there a solution? Can ECU (Electric Control Unit) reprogramming be conducted on turbocharged cars so that they do not require a higher RON-rated fuel? Saiful answered, "I am not sure if it will work or not. But I know of an authorised car dealer who reprogrammed some of their cars' ECUs - which still did not provide any benefit. Their cars still have many troubles and low fuel efficiency."

Saiful shares some tricks and tips for turbocharged car users: "Try to be careful so that you do not fill up your car with bad fuel. Use good-quality air filters and engine oil. Engine oil must be authentic, and it should have the specification 'API SP' or 'API SN PLUS'. Change the oil within the interval of 3,000 kilometres."

Sadly, there is no permanent solution if your car regularly suffers because of bad fuel. Many use octane boosters and other additives, but these do not solve the problems long-term. The only solution is to use high-quality fuel, which we do not get on a regular basis. All we can do is take feedback from fellow turbocharged car users about where they refuel regularly. Fuel system service can also be conducted more frequently. Additionally, carbon cleaning can help reduce carbon deposits created from unburned fuel during the combustion procedure.

CREATIVITY

Why does it matter and is it fostered in our workplace?

MORIUM KULSUM

Whenever we talk about organisational success, we always shine a spotlight on the concept of 'productivity' while completely overlooking the significance of 'creativity'. The reason is rather obvious: it is easy to quantify how productivity contributes to success. The more efficient the employees, the more impressive the bottom line. Productivity plays a pivotal role in achieving business goals; however, relying solely on productivity will not guarantee lasting success.

In today's innovation-driven economy, creativity not only enables companies to navigate crises effectively but also empowers them to gain a competitive edge in the cutthroat business landscape. This is a key reason why multimillion-dollar companies are embracing creativity in offices and cultivating it from within. Let's take a closer look at how creativity is viewed in our workplaces and how leaders can nurture this invaluable trait among their employees.

Do our leaders encourage creativity?

Leaders recognise that a business emerges from the crucible of innovative ideation. However, as operations commence, they often get caught up in the fray of routine tasks and lose sight of the importance of out-of-the-box thinking.

Bayezid Hasan, who recently joined Coca-Cola Bangladesh as the Head of Supply Chain Finance and Financial Planning and Analytics (with prior experience as the Senior Finance Manager at Unilever), says that there exists a mixed landscape when it comes to the encouragement of creativity in our workplace. According to him, leaders prioritise the achievement of company goals but do not hold their employees back from embracing their creative instincts. "Employees must decide how to attain those goals: either stick to the tried-and-true old-school methods or go all out with novel approaches," he adds.

Sazid Al Kabir, a Territory Officer at Banglalink, acknowledges that in some instances, particularly within companies that reached a 'top-of-mind' status, leaders prioritise maintaining the status quo and playing it safe. "These leaders can be hesitant in embracing

change because they worry it may alienate loyal customers," Sazid says. Although our leaders may not directly impede creativity, many of them have not yet fully embraced the role of actively encouraging it within their organisations.

Is creativity equally relevant to all roles?

Creativity can take on various meanings depending on the specific job and role within an organisation. Bayezid, drawing from his experience in financial planning and analytics, remarks, "For a finance person, creative thinking could mean developing innovative financial products, conducting thorough scenario analyses before making investment choices, and so much more - even though finance and creativity may seem like an unlikely pair."

Reflecting on his role as a Territory Officer, Sazid shared that the key responsibility in his position involves managing sales operations. He is aware that many sales professionals may think that their work lacks creative opportunities, feeling like they are just executing a top-down strategy. He adds, "A sales professional can hit major milestones only if he can understand the psyche of his customers and launch unique campaigns that resonate with them."

By and large, creativity is treated differently depending on the sector that an employee works in. It is highly relevant to departments like sales and marketing, whereas other domains, such as accounting, may inherently offer limited opportunities for creative exploration.

How to promote creativity in the workplace?

In Bangladesh, a growing number of leaders have come to acknowledge the value of new ideas. But they often struggle with how to actually bring out the creativity in their employees. Thus, here are six strategies you can employ to create a culture where creativity thrives.

Make creativity a priority

It cannot be denied that the responsibility for cultivating a creative culture lies squarely with the leaders. As such, top-level management should strongly and vocally champion this idea of fostering a creativity-influenced workplace. Bayezid adds, "Leaders should embody the principle of creativity through their communications and actions so that employees are inspired to emulate creative endeavours."

Give employees autonomy

To unlock a company's most important asset—its creative capital—managers need to grasp the importance of setting targets while avoiding micromanagement. Sazid had previously worked at a place where rigid guidelines dictated every course of action, which, according to him, "only stifled the creative flow and resulted in a diminished individual contribution". He adds that he has a level of autonomy in his current role, where he has the authority to design his work independently, free from constant supervision.

Facilitate cross-functional brainstorming

It should be management's mission to encourage collaboration among teams with diverse skills and strengths. Because innovation is more likely to happen when people of different disciplines, backgrounds, and areas of expertise share their thinking. "When I worked for a marketing agency," Sazid reminisced, "We would gather a cross-functional team of 10 to 12 people, including marketers, interns, and designers, to devise blended strategies for boosting sales at client restaurants."

Encourage upward communication

Hierarchical structures with multiple layers often hinder idea exchange, thereby impeding

creativity within organisations. To foster an environment conducive to creative thinking, managers must encourage open communication and active participation from employees at

all levels. Bayezid shares that his previous employer demonstrated a commitment to this principle by arranging a monthly event where any employee could directly ask questions to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO).

Arrange idea competitions

Another way to provide intellectual challenge and inspire creative output is by arranging various idea competitions. By creating a platform where employees can submit their ideas and compete for recognition and rewards, organisations foster a culture of innovation and engagement. Both Bayezid and Sazid noted that many companies now host multiple intra-organisational idea competitions for their employees from time to time, which are great for bringing in new ideas while also being good team-building exercises.

Be appreciative

While creativity requires a hands-off approach, it does not mean management's behaviour makes no difference. As Sazid points out, appreciation shown by supervisors for employees' creative endeavours can serve as a great motivator. Leaders must also take note that when employees try out new things—with their company's best interests in mind—they should not face harsh penalties if they make a mistake the first time around, as such negative reactions will discourage others.

In the event of unsuccessful attempts, Bayezid suggests that employees prepare a knowledge repository so that others can avoid making the same mistake in the future. "Also, before going all-in on an idea, employees must check in with their line manager to ensure that the same idea has not been attempted previously," he suggests.

All in all, our leaders must go beyond simply pulling the stops from creative thinking and instead take proactive steps to actively promote it among their teams. Even though creativity may be hard to demystify, it has a direct impact on business performance. Business success may not be guaranteed but what is guaranteed is that a business will face problems sooner or later, and when that happens, leaders will need creativity more than just getting things done efficiently.

