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Sustainable Mobility and the Potential of Neo-Retro Electric Revival of the Bajaj M80

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Article

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Abstract

The Bajaj M80, introduced in the 1980s, is a step-through model significant in India's two-wheeler history, renowned for its durability, practicality, and widespread appeal across rural and some urban users. Despite its discontinuation, the M80 not only remains deeply rooted in the memory of Indian consumers, but thousands of consumers still use it every day. While the resurgence of retro-styled vehicles has gained traction, evidenced by the revival of motorcycles like Jawa and Yezdi and electric scooters like the Bajaj Chetak and moped-like Kinetic E-Luna, there remains an unaddressed gap in the electric step-through segment.

This study explores the potential of converting the Bajaj M80, a historically significant Indian two-wheeler, into an electric vehicle (EV) that aligns with modern sustainability goals while preserving its iconic retro aesthetic. This research aims to assess market feasibility, design considerations, and consumer demand for an electric step-through vehicle by analysing the growing consumer preference for retro aesthetics combined with sustainability.

Based on observations of the Bajaj M 80 users on city roads, secondary data for understanding the cultural significance and utility value, and an experiment to convert the existing model into an electric one by adding new features, this paper demonstrates a practical approach to reviving vintage mobility with contemporary performance and ecological responsibility. The findings from the study support several of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including SDG 7, SDG 9, SDG 11 and SDG 12, which focus on the use of clean energy, innovations, sustainable cities and responsible consumption and production. The findings contribute to the discourse on sustainable mobility and provide strategic insights for manufacturers seeking to tap into the nostalgia-driven electric-vehicle market.

1. Introduction

The resurgence of neo-retro products reflects a growing consumer desire to reconnect with nostalgia and benefits from associations with the past [1]. This trend resonates strongly with their craving for genuine relationships and authentic emotional connections in an increasingly digital world [2]. Neo-retro products are technologically up-to-date with significant design characteristics from the past, while still conveying information that these products offer new functionalities. Consumers perceive a higher level of newness in a neo-retro product design than in a typical modern product design [3].

There are various examples of neo-retro models introduced recently. The Medion Life Retro Radio has an old wooden frame[1] and the Saregama Carvaan audio player and speaker are designed to resemble vintage radios [4]. They offer new functionalities like LCD, USB, and Bluetooth connectivity. The popularity of these radio sets spans age groups from 40-year-olds to senior citizens, highlighting the widespread appeal of retro aesthetics combined with contemporary functionality. Saregama Carvaan's retro design, feature list, and song selection have earned it a place in people's homes [4]. This pattern reflects a collective desire to reconnect with the past while embracing contemporary advancements.

Within the automotive sector, this phenomenon is particularly evident in the electric two-wheeler segment. There is a growing demand for electric scooters, designed in a retro style using modern technologies [5]. Notable examples in India include the newly showcased Royal Enfield Flying Flea and electric scooters like the Bajaj Chetak Electric and Kinetic E-Luna. These vehicles blend classic design with sustainable technology, reflecting a growing market for retro-inspired electric mobility. There is a clear indication that consumers want to have a semblance of familiarity with their products [6].

Despite the success of these revivals of various two-wheeler categories, the electric step-through category remains overlooked. The Bajaj M80, once an iconic step-through vehicle in India, has yet to see a modern electric equivalent. This gap presents a unique opportunity to explore the potential for an electric Bajaj M80 that balances heritage with cutting-edge mobility solutions. Based on observations of M80 riders, this research examines the utility and the nostalgic aspects of continued use of the Bajaj M80 and develops a prototype. This study is divided into five parts. The second part represents the academic literature related to sustainable mobility and the nostalgic value of the product. The third part explains the methodology. The fourth part discusses various themes that evolved from the observations. The fifth part deals with the findings from observation and making the prototype. The sixth part discusses the conclusions.

2. Review of Literature

2.1 Innovation and retro industries

Established theories of industrial evolution describe technological progress as a linear trajectory; in this view, product and process innovations advance sequentially along performance S-curves, ultimately displacing mature standards[7] [8]. However, academic literature challenges this linear assumption by introducing the concept of retro-industry sectors that deliberately introduce elements from the past into contemporary products, processes, and strategies [7]. Rather than viewing innovation purely as a forward-looking function, retro-industries adopt a circular approach to innovation adoption and diffusion[9] [10]. Under this model, old technologies or designs can make a comeback when market or environmental conditions shift. For example, early electric cars were rejected in favour of gas engines, but are now viable again. This link between past and present is driven by heritage, tradition, nostalgia, and neo-retro design [11].

2.2 Global transition toward sustainable mobility

Electric vehicles (EVs) are considered a crucial solution to mitigate urban air pollution and reduce fossil fuel dependency [12] [13]. Though electric two-wheelers can make urban transportation more sustainable, persisting price differentials and the absence of an obvious additional use value are barriers to the market penetration of mid-size and large electric two-wheelers [14]. A significant subset of vehicle users, particularly in developing nations, own two-wheelers over two decades old and hesitate to abandon them because of their high utility value and deep emotional or nostalgic attachment [15]. The used market growth is strong due to increasing household income, migration of individuals in search of

work or education, and greater availability of used two-wheelers [16]. However, this expanding second-hand internal-combustion vehicle (ICV) base also reinforces lock-in to fossil-fuel mobility unless complemented by targeted policies that shift demand toward electric alternatives[17].

Empirical work on second-hand vehicle markets shows that they improve affordability and access to mobility, particularly for lower-income households and migrants, but can also delay fleet turnover to cleaner technologies if not coupled with scrappage or upgrade incentives [18]. Empirical work on second-hand vehicle markets shows that they improve affordability and access to mobility, particularly for lower-income households and migrants, but can also delay fleet turnover to cleaner technologies if not coupled with scrappage or upgrade incentives. In two-wheeler–dominant contexts, the rapid expansion of the used market amplifies these trade-offs, as low-cost ICV options remain attractive relative to new electric models. Recent studies argue that sustainability of the two-wheeler sector requires policies that simultaneously manage the used ICV stock (e.g., through emission-based registration fees or voluntary scrappage schemes) and stimulate demand for affordable electric replacements [18] .

In this context Government can boost demand for EVs by providing incentives in the form of revenue support, tax exemptions and rebates on electricity charges for charging EVs to make the conversion process and preserve automotive heritage profitable and hence sustainable [15].

Several studies underscore the environmental and economic benefits of retrofitting existing internal combustion engine (ICE) two-wheelers into electric vehicles. According to Sharma et al. (2021), retrofitting can extend the life of a vehicle by 5–10 years while reducing lifecycle emissions by up to 60%. Moreover, Conversion is often cheaper than buying a new vehicle, mainly due to reduced upfront capital costs while maintaining similar operating costs [19].

2.3 Nostalgic value of the product

Product design and sustainable consumption literature has explored the concepts of nostalgic value and emotional durability. Products with personal histories are more likely to be retained, even when functionally obsolete [20]. In the context of vehicles, until the late '90s, owning a vehicle, be it a car or a two-wheeler, was considered a symbol of a luxurious life in India, which was often bought from an individual's provident fund, and with automobile technology at affordable prices, it became a symbol of freedom, boosting people's confidence [21].

Understanding user psychology, attachment, and decision-making frameworks is essential. Such emotional ties complicate the disposal of ageing two-wheelers. However, they also offer an entry point: converting to electric propulsion lets owners preserve their vehicle's identity and sentimental value while aligning with modern energy goals. This aligns with the notion of value co-creation proposed in Service-Dominant Logic [22], where users actively shape product meanings.

Personal norms and awareness of consequences guide prosocial behaviours like environmental action [23]. Retrofits may appeal to users who consider vehicle conversion a moral obligation to reduce

pollution while respecting their heritage.

Using default options, framing, or emotional triggers, as proposed by [24], can support behaviour change. Highlighting the continuity rather than replacing the vehicle can reduce psychological resistance.

2.4 EV Sector in India

India's EV sector is undergoing transformative advancements driven by domestic manufacturing capabilities and technological innovations. Major automotive manufacturers, such as Ola Electric and Ather Energy, have established dedicated EV production facilities, focusing on localising critical components like batteries and powertrains to reduce import dependency [25]. Additionally, the industry is investing in connected vehicle capabilities and smart charging solutions, showcasing collaborations between automakers and technology firms [26]. The Indian government has been pivotal in fostering EV adoption through policies like the Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of Hybrid and Electric Vehicles in India (FAME) Scheme. Launched under the National Electric Mobility Mission Plan (NEMMP), FAME incentivises the electric vehicle market across various segments, including two-wheelers, three-wheelers, buses, and charging stations [27]. The scheme's second phase allocated ₹10,000 crores to support EV adoption and infrastructure development. Furthermore, the Union Budget 2025–2026 introduced significant funding increases for EV infrastructure and manufacturing incentives, including a massive 713% jump in PLI (Production Linked Incentive) for automotive components and batteries [28]. These initiatives align India's automotive sector with global sustainability goals while boosting domestic production capabilities.

Indian consumers increasingly embrace EVs due to heightened awareness of environmental sustainability and cost-effectiveness. Surveys indicate that 86% of consumers are willing to consider an EV for their next vehicle purchase [29]. Sustainability has emerged as a key criterion influencing buying decisions, alongside safety and cost savings. India had only 220 publicly available slow chargers and 25 fast chargers. The number increased to 47000 and 28000 in 2024, respectively. Projections indicate India will have over two lakh publicly available slow chargers and nearly 1.6 lakh fast chargers by 2030 [30].

Integrating EVs into India’s transportation is a strategic necessity. It is not just a technological shift, but promises benefits like enhanced energy security, reduced health issues, increased job creation, and ultimately supporting the goal of 30% EVs by 2030 [31]. While there is growing research on EV adoption and retrofit technologies, few studies explicitly integrate behavioural theory with emotional value frameworks to study two-wheeler retrofits. This research will comprehensively analyse the electric step-through gap (Table 1), providing a roadmap for reviving the Bajaj M80 and contributing to sustainable mobility and retro-inspired innovation discourse.

Table 1
The Electric Step-Through Gap

Sr. No.	Type	Relaunch/redesigned	Model	Features
1	Continuous Production Successors	Legacy maintained through production while integrating modern technologies	Honda Activa Series	Transitioned from petrol-powered scooters to newer generations like Activa Electric, combining reliability with sustainability.
2	Revival Models	Classic vehicles relaunched after years of discontinuation, blending vintage styling with contemporary features	Jawa/Yezdi Motorcycles	Revived with models like Jawa 42 and Yezdi Roadster, offering retro aesthetics with modern engineering.
			Vespa Scooters	Modern iterations like Vespa SXL 125/150 retain iconic designs while incorporating advanced technology.
3	Revival in Electric Format	Classic models reimagined as electric vehicles, merging retro design with sustainable mobility.	Bajaj Chetak Electric	A modern electric version of the iconic Bajaj Chetak, maintaining its classic silhouette.
			Kinetic E-Luna	The Luna moped is revived in an electric format, combining nostalgia with green technology.
4	Retro-Inspired Scooters	Modern scooters are designed to evoke nostalgia while offering advanced features	Yamaha Fascino:	Neo-classic styling paired with lightweight design and innovative functionality. Keeway Sixties 300i: Premium retro-styled electric scooter
5	Retro-Styled Motorcycles	Motorcycles incorporate vintage-inspired designs while offering modern engineering. Royal Enfield Classic Series: Blends timeless styling with contemporary performance. Electric RE - to be launched soon.	Honda CB350 H'ness	Nostalgic yet modern ride experience.
			Kawasaki W175	A retro-styled bike catering to enthusiasts seeking vintage aesthetics.
6	Step-Through Models			No modern step-through vehicles are available in India, presenting an

Sr. No.	Type	Relaunch/redesigned	Model	Features
				opportunity for revival in an electric format.

This study examines the potential for the electric revival of the Bajaj M80 in the contemporary Indian market while responding to several practical challenges experienced by electric vehicle (EV) users. The Bajaj M80 represents an important reference point in the history of Indian two-wheeler mobility because of its distinctive step-through architecture, practical utility, lightweight construction, and accessibility for a broad range of users. Its design philosophy was centred on simplicity, ease of operation, manoeuvrability, and everyday practicality, characteristics that remain relevant in the context of contemporary urban and semi-urban transportation. Reinterpreting these qualities through an electric powertrain could therefore provide an opportunity to combine a familiar and function-oriented vehicle concept with the technological and environmental advantages of electric mobility.

Although electric motorcycles and electric scooters have witnessed considerable development and market acceptance in India, the step-through category remains comparatively unexplored. Existing electric two-wheeler offerings are predominantly concentrated around scooter and motorcycle formats, resulting in limited diversity in vehicle architecture and user-oriented design solutions. This gap suggests an opportunity to reconsider the step-through configuration as a viable platform for electric mobility. Unlike conventional scooters and motorcycles, a step-through vehicle can offer a distinctive combination of accessibility, compact dimensions, ease of mounting and dismounting, practical utility, and potentially efficient use of materials and components. These characteristics may be particularly relevant for short-distance commuting, everyday transportation, and users who prioritize convenience and functional simplicity over performance-oriented characteristics.

The proposed electric revival of the Bajaj M80 therefore extends beyond the conversion of a conventional internal-combustion vehicle into an electric version. It represents an exploration of how a historically significant vehicle architecture can be reinterpreted in response to contemporary mobility requirements. In this context, the project also addresses broader principles of responsible production and consumption by investigating whether an existing and culturally familiar vehicle concept can be adapted rather than entirely replaced by a new vehicle platform. Such an approach may encourage more resource-conscious product development by considering durability, material efficiency, component integration, maintainability, and the potential for longer product relevance.

By combining the recognizable characteristics of the step-through format with contemporary electric technology and sustainable design considerations, the study aims to demonstrate the potential of this vehicle category as an alternative approach to accessible, practical, and responsible electric mobility. A thoughtfully designed electric step-through vehicle could address some of these concerns through a compact and utility-focused architecture. Hence the objectives of this research are to:

I. Identify step-through vehicles' social significance and enduring appeal, focusing on the Bajaj M80.

II. Explore the technical feasibility of converting the Bajaj M80 into an electric vehicle.

3. Methodology

This study uses a mixed-method approach, combining qualitative observation-based research to explore the potential revival of the Bajaj M80 as an electric step-through vehicle, followed by an experiment to revive the model.

A comprehensive field study was conducted to document more than 100 Bajaj M80 vehicles. The primary study locations were Pune, Kolhapur, and Satara, with additional observations undertaken in selected coastal regions of Maharashtra. The study employed purposive sampling. Vehicles were included when they were identifiable as Bajaj M80 variants and were either in active use, retained by owners, modified, restored, or undergoing repair. The study did not aim to produce statistically representative results; rather, it sought to document the diversity of existing vehicles, users, adaptations, and usage contexts.

Each observed Bajaj M80 was documented using a structured observation protocol. The protocol was designed to ensure consistency across locations and to capture both the technical characteristics of the vehicle and its social and cultural context of use. The protocol incorporated an observation checklist and descriptive field-note sections covering vehicle condition, functional characteristics, usage patterns, user modifications, ergonomics, aesthetic features, and contextual factors. Each vehicle was treated as an individual unit of observation and assigned a unique identification code.

The checklist component enabled the systematic recording and comparison of predefined observable characteristics, while the descriptive sections allowed the researcher to document unexpected modifications, usage practices, and contextual observations that emerged during fieldwork.

The insights generated during this exploratory phase were analysed thematically to identify the factors contributing to the vehicle's continued relevance and its potential for revival.

The Analysis of the observations revealed four salient themes: utility value, reliability, emotional attachment, and revival potential. In response to these themes, the study employed a novel analytical framework integrating functionality, ergonomics, and aesthetic considerations. Particular attention was given to the evolving role and structural configuration of the M80 within its historical and contemporary contexts to convert the M80 into an EV.

4. Intrinsic Value of M80

This section addressed the first objective, i.e., identifying step-through vehicles' social significance and enduring appeal, focusing on the Bajaj M80. If a particular two-wheeler model is on the road for more than 25 years and is still used by thousands of people in India, there must be a reason.

4.1 Utility Value.

Utility is key to owning a two-wheeler across various sections of society. The same was found at a gas cylinder distribution hub, where cylinders were distributed from large trucks to two-wheelers for easy deliveries in the tight lanes of cities and inside societies (Image 1). The most interesting thing was that all the two-wheelers were 25 + year-old M80S. This small 80cc vehicle was transporting three cylinders (a person with an approximate weight of 60Kgs + 3 cylinders around 87 Kgs (3X29) + the vehicle's weight of around 70 Kgs), so a total of 210–220 Kgs, while being more than 25 years old.

No other two-wheeler can pull this stunt, was the spontaneous response of one of the delivery boys when we looked at the vehicle. Interestingly, all the gas delivery people agreed and nodded when he made this statement. Figure 1 illustrates that the M80 is the ultimate expression of the bike's rugged strength and durability.

The utilisation of the M80 for transporting loads was noted in multiple urban areas within Maharashtra. Bajaj M80 was often seen carrying hawkers, vendors, or other blue-collar workers. This feat is hard to achieve for modern-day two-vehicle systems.

4.2 Emotional attachment:

Beyond the utility value of the vehicle, it was found that the M80 has a strong emotional attachment. Otherwise, there is no reason for even a few white-caller workers to use them to go to their office every day. There were many examples of sticking to this vehicle despite

having the ability to purchase a new bike. Stories of the M80 span generations. A grandfather sharing a nostalgic ride with his grandson or a college student meticulously maintaining his father’s M80 is not a rare sight. There were many examples of sticking to this vehicle in spite of having the ability to purchase a new bike. Some of them are ready to be personalised in aftermarket colour schemes, as seen in Fig. 2

Stories of the M80 span generations. Spanning a demographic of 20 to 75 years of age, the continuous operation of this bike is proof of its strength, longevity and its role as a cherished family heirloom. No wonder that the four variants of M80 are displayed in Asia’s biggest multi-brand vintage two-wheeler museum (Fig. 3).

4.4 Revival potential

There are ample examples of the revival of older motorcycles and two-wheelers in which the original utility value, functional character, and visual identity have been retained while incorporating contemporary features and technologies. These revivals demonstrate how established vehicle concepts can be reinterpreted to respond to changing user expectations without completely abandoning their original design principles. The adoption of larger motorcycle tyres has been perceived as contributing to improved manoeuvrability, road stability, and handling performance, while also creating a contemporary visual character. In the same way, the increasing trend of retro-inspired vehicles in electric formats

indicates a growing interest in combining familiar design identities with modern propulsion technologies. Models such as the Chetak, Kinetic DX, and E-Luna illustrate different approaches to reviving historically recognized scooters and mopeds while adapting them to present-day mobility requirements.

These examples clearly demonstrate that heritage, familiarity, and functional utility can be valuable elements in the development of new electric products. However, despite the growing interest in retro electric two-wheelers, the revival potential of the step-through category remains relatively unexplored. The step-through format offers distinctive characteristics such as ease of access, practical ergonomics, compact proportions, and utility-oriented packaging, which could provide a meaningful foundation for contemporary electric mobility. Investigating this category could therefore broaden the design possibilities of electric two-wheelers and contribute to greater diversity in India's evolving EV landscape.

5. Findings

Field observations and secondary data helped us to understand the vehicle's historical impact, design significance, and feasibility of a revival in the current market. Utility value and nostalgia are the two strongest aspects of M80 users. Those from the upper- middle class seem to value nostalgic charm, and for blue-collar workers, utility value is the primary attribute.

5. 1 Prototype Development Phases/working concept vehicle/Neo-retro revival

The design aimed to preserve the Bajaj M80's original charm while transforming it into a working concept vehicle suited for contemporary mobility. Concept vehicles serve as prototypes that envision future possibilities and are adaptable to evolving technologies and diverse use cases. Retaining its 1980s visual identity, the M80 was reengineered with modern electric systems, with every detail from proportions to material finishes considered through the lens of present-day Indian sensibilities and durability. We developed the concept vehicle through four phases.

Phase 1: Stance and Structural Setup Proportion are fundamental in two-wheeler design. The original Bajaj M80 featured 16- and 17-inch wheels; however, to enhance visual balance and road presence, 19-inch rims were introduced. This necessitated structural revisions, including a reengineered swingarm and a reshaped chassis to accommodate the updated geometry. Longer rear suspension units were sourced to support the new stance and improve ride comfort.

The electric drivetrain comprising the battery pack, motor controller, audio-haptic module, and hazard flasher was discreetly housed within the under-seat cavity, preserving the overall form. The electric motor was positioned at the front, occupying the space originally reserved for the IC engine.

Phase 2: Body Design and Surface Development. Flowing metal fenders were key sculptural elements in shaping the prototype's retro-modern aesthetic. The café racer–inspired seat was reshaped for improved ergonomics and finished with body-coloured stitching to ensure visual continuity.

Phase 3: Surface Preparation and Painting. Given the chassis's 25-year history, intensive surface preparation was necessary. The frame was subsequently primed, painted, lacquered, wet-sanded, and polished to produce a uniform, gloss-finished bodywork. A distinctive colour gloss purple with a mild colour-shifting effect was selected to fuse retro essence with modern appeal.

Phase 4: Accessories and Finishing Touches. During assembly, updated components were installed, including brakes, cables, levers, an LED projector headlamp, and a vibration motor paired with a speaker.

The main innovation and novelty are Audio-Haptic Feedback for Safety and Experience. The audio-haptic module functions as both a safety and engagement tool. When in motion, it alerts pedestrians through customizable sound and notifies the rider of the vehicle state, i.e., on or off, through mild vibrations to the handle grips. For the rider, it restores the sensory feedback typically missing in EVs, serving not only as a functional safety aid but also as an emotional and perceptual bridge between traditional and electric mobility.

The prototype reflects the transformation from an old, polluting two-stroke vehicle into a clean, zero-emission electric form (Fig. 4). It highlights both the essence and timeline of the revival. A dedicated app can also be developed for ride data.

6. Conclusion

The motivation behind this project was not only to take care of the aesthetics side of design, but also to search for the best possible concepts and functional qualities to meet contemporary sustainable needs.

The integration of retro aesthetics with electric mobility has emerged as a notable trend within the two-wheeler segment, illustrating how nostalgia and sustainability can complement one another. This design approach holds significant potential for application to legacy two-wheeler models for several reasons.

A substantial number of legacy models, such as the M80, remain in operation, while many more are stored in deteriorating condition, often with owners expressing the hope that they may one day be restored. Rather than selling these vehicles as scrap, many owners keep them because of strong emotional attachments and sentimental value, which can elevate them to the status of personal heirlooms. Early adopters engage actively in discussing product features, instigating trial behaviour, and recommending a purchase [32]. The same can be said for the revival of the electric and neo-retro style of M80.

The paper underscores retrofitting as a viable strategy for sustainable mobility, particularly in developing countries. It bridges the gap between modern technology and traditional values. Since January 2026, established incumbent manufacturers, specifically TVS and Bajaj, have systematically outpaced early-stage startups to secure dominant positions in India’s electric two-wheeler market.[33]This shift underscores the enduring value of long-term brand equity, consumer nostalgia, and generational brand loyalty. Furthermore, the market resilience demonstrated by Bajaj suggests that such heritage-driven

consumer trust may similarly extend to other legacy brands or historic product lines, such as the Bajaj M80.

As this paper does not directly assess consumer acceptance for the revival of M80 in retro style, a rigorous study of the prevailing users is necessary to identify their preferences, market potential and price considerations.

The growth of India's electric vehicle (EV) sector can be attributed to a tripartite framework: proactive government policies, concentrated industry efforts, and increasing public acceptance. The expanding network of charging infrastructure and improvements in battery technology have addressed range anxiety concerns, making electric two-wheelers an increasingly practical choice for daily commuting.

Combining retro-inspired designs with modern electric powertrains represents automakers' proven strategy, appealing to emotional and environmental considerations. One policy barrier to large-scale restoration is the imposition of fines on unregistered vehicles. Reforming such regulations could enable the revival of numerous vehicles to their original form, thereby creating employment opportunities for workshops, service centres, component manufacturers, and restoration specialists.

Furthermore, the study recognizes that the transition to electric mobility involves challenges beyond the replacement of an internal-combustion engine with an electric motor. EV users may encounter concerns related to charging accessibility, battery range, charging time, vehicle weight, battery packaging, maintenance, practicality, and the suitability of the vehicle for diverse daily-use conditions. Consequently, the electric revival of the Bajaj M80 can be understood as both a product-design exploration and an investigation into an underrepresented direction within India's evolving electric two-wheeler landscape.

The electrification of the Bajaj M80 exemplifies how sustainable mobility can be culturally contextual. With proper regulatory support and industrial scaling, such retrofits could play a pivotal role in India's EV transition. Future work will explore smart integrations (IoT-enabled retro meters), solar charging options, and community-led retrofitting models. **Consequently, there remains significant scope for future research to investigate the viability of reviving other legacy two-wheeler models that possess an operational history exceeding a decade.** Such studies could explore whether the heritage equity observed in the Indian market is replicable across other developing or developed economies. Expanding this research internationally would help determine if consumer nostalgia and incumbent brand trust function as universal drivers in the global transition toward electric mobility, or if they are unique to specific regional market dynamics.

Abbreviations

LCD Liquid Crystal Display

USB Universal Serial Bus

EV Electric Vehicle

FAME Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of Hybrid and Electric Vehicles in India

NEMMP National Electric Mobility Mission Plan

PLI Production Linked Incentive

Declarations

Ethics approval and consent to participate

Ethics approval and consent to participate are not applicable

Consent to publish

Not applicable.

Competing interests

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Author contributionsSagar Gokhale: writing, review, editing and data collection. Anish Gokhale: Data collection, data analysis and developing a prototype

Data Availability

The datasets used and/or analysed during the current study are available from the corresponding author on reasonable request.

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Figures



Figure 1

A workhorse of a blue-collar worker



Figure 2

Examples of restored and custom-painted M80S

Credit: Authors, 2025



Figure 3

Variants of M80 in Vintage Miles museum, Mahabaleshwar, Maharashtra

Credit: Authors, 2025



Figure 4

Transformation from an old, polluting two-stroke vehicle into a clean, zero-emission electric form