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Why Electric Cars Won't Take Over

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Category: Cars & Technology

I believe that petrol and diesel cars will be around in the foreseeable future? Why am I saying this? Do I not care about the environment? Do I not care about saving money? The answer is complicated. You see, it is much more complicated than just the car itself, it goes beyond that. Electric cars are not the holy grail of cars. I will go over why in this post.

Infrastructure

We have developed petrol cars for so long that the distance to the nearest petrol station isn't even a factor during our purchases. This is not the same for electric cars. Charging stations have to be implemented everywhere which have numerous disadvantages. Firstly, a lot of money has to be spent digging underground for minerals like copper and lithium which is against the environmental impact which electric cars preach. A lot of land has to be used due to the lower range of electric vehicles, and power outages result in the breakage of the charging stations. In older cities which are small or have an extensively packed construction infrastructure, it is hard to plan and modify wiring, outlets and to prepare land for building stations.

For example, in Qatar, electric cars don't sell much as there are not many charging stations. There are electric buses for public transportation but they are not common for consumers.

Performance

Most electric cars drive slower than petrol and diesel cars. This can be a deterrent for car enthusiasts who love testing the latest and greatest cars. It can also make cars boring for the most part. A petrol engine gives you something to look forward to. Does it have a V6 or a V8? 250HP or 350HP? How many cylinders does it have? With electric cars, all of that goes away.

It is not just about speed, however. Electric cars need to be topped up more compared to petrol cars. Batteries die out quicker on electric cars compared to petrol cars as well. Sure, engines do fail on petrol cars but it is easy to maintain if you get an Asian car like a Toyota, a Honda or a Kia.

Of course, batteries cause environmental degradation as well, reducing the supposed contribution to the environment even more.

Charging

Charging takes more time on electric cars than petrol cars. The gap is expected to narrow. However, it will never be as fast as a petrol car. Being able to take your fuel source and just dump it in your vehicle is easier than waiting for a charger to convert AC to DC.

Energy Sources

If the energy used to charge electric vehicles comes from coal or other non-renewable sources, then the whole environment factor goes into the trash.

Diversity

Do you want a petrol car that is both reliable and fast? You got it. What about one that is only fast because you don't care about the maintenance? You got it. What about a family car? You got it. What about an electric car that does all of the above? You have 2-3 cars that can do that and that's it. There is a lack of diversity in electric cars which needs to be fixed for them to go mainstream.

Conclusion

If there is one thing that I want the reader to take away from this post, it is that electric cars are not the best for the environment and that there is a long time before they are adopted. There are multiple factors that are responsible for this. Even after their adoption, they will not stomp over petrol or diesel cars because petrol cars are just more accessible.