

Perception of Customers towards Handloom Products: A Case Study on the Millennium City of Cuttack



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Abstract

Handloom industry is a traditional industry in India which provides large employment to people. It has labour intensive and low capital investment. So, it has huge potential of job creation. It develops the rural and semi-urban areas. It uses unskilled labour and has distinct impact on poverty alteration. It has domestic market, domestic inputs, indigenous raw material and traditional technology. Handloom products of Odisha have distinct demand in local as well as international markets because these products communicate the cultural heritage of our country. But in the modern technological era, due to machine made and computerized products, the demands for handloom products are now decreasing. A lot of research has been done in the field of consumers' perception towards handloom products, still then there is no research on the perception of customers in the Cuttack city. So, this paper attempts to study the customers' perception towards handloom products in the Cuttack City. The study is based on both primary and secondary data. Primary data have been collected through questionnaire and direct interviews. The sample data consists of 50 respondents. The secondary data have been collected through well designed strategy and these have been collected from various e-journals, e-magazines, e-annual reports of companies and from various reputed websites. The collected data have been classified and tabulated according to the requirements of the study. There are various tools like percentage calculations; valid percentage calculation, chi-square test, Llikert 5 points scale of ranking the perception etc. have been used for analysis. It is found that perception of customers towards handloom products is almost positive and there is no significant relationship between male and female with regard to their perception towards handloom products in the Cuttack city.

Keywords: Technology, Handloom Products, Customers' Perception, Traditional Industry, Domestic Market.

Introduction

"I believe that where there is pure and active love for the poor there is God also. I see God in every thread that I draw on the spinning wheel"

Mahatma Gandhi

Khadi came to existence in Rigveda. The father of our nation Mahatma Gandhi (Bapu) discovered khadi in 1908 when he was in London and during the non-cooperation movement khadi became a symbol of the Indo-British battle over the looms of Manchester. Pandit Jabahar Nehru wove for his daughter Indira a wedding sari in pink khadi while he was in jail. This sari is still worn by women of the Nehru and Gandhi family on their wedding day. Being hand woven and handspun, each khadi fabric is distinct and exclusive. It has the added advantage of staying cool in summer and winter, which is a rare quality among fabrics. Khadi also grows softer on each wash and due to its hand woven structure, is comfortable and skin friendly.

Odisha handlooms have a rich tradition. Its 'Tie & Dye' patterns are world famous. Their Tie & Dye patterns are popularly known as 'IKAT'. The ikat technique is commonly known as "BANDHA" in Odisha. Handloom weavers of Odisha produce various types of fabrics such as sarees (which constitute the major component), dress materials, scarfs, dhotis, towels, other fabrics of day to day use such as wall hangings, etc.

According to designing and techniques are concerned, it varies from double ikat (tie and dye) by Bhulia Meher weavers of undivided Sambalpur, Bolangir, Kalahandi and Phulbani districts (such as Pasapalli,

Bichitrapuri, etc) to single ikat woven in Maniabandha, Nuapatna, Mahammadpur (Nischinta koili block) area of Cuttack district (Khandua designs) to extra warp and weft designs. Bomkai of Berhampur, Cotton of Khurdha, Vegetable dyed fabrics of Kotpad of Koraput district, fine count sarees of Jagatsinghpur and Tasar fabrics of Gopalpur, Fakirpur in Keonjhar District of Odisha. Bomkai saris of Odisha have a good market all over India and abroad. To produce this type of sari, three shuttles weaving technique is used. Products are labour intensive. Generally these saris are used in rituals and ceremonies purposes. Other popular India famous saris are Sambalpuri, Sonapuri and Maniabandhi. Most of the handlooms of this state are situated at the district Sambalpur, Sonepur and Cuttack.

Review of Literature

There are number of studies carried out by various researchers in this area. Some selected research works are portrayed as follows:

Kumudha and Rizwana (2013) in their paper "A Study on Consumer Awareness about Handloom Products with Special Reference to Erode District" studied the customer awareness about handloom products in Erode District. They concluded on their study that consumers are not very much aware about the handloom products. Hence sufficient measures have to be taken place in order to increase the awareness of handloom products.

Deshmukh, P. (2013) in her paper "Buying behavior of consumer towards handloom and handcraft with special reference to CIDCO urban Haat project Navi Mumbai" studied consumer buying behavior and factors which influence the purchase decision process. This study has been proved that high class consumers are almost not involved in purchase decision process.

Nisha and Anupama (2014) in their paper "Consumer behaviour towards Handloom Products in the State of Punjab & Haryana" studied the consumer behavior towards handloom products in Punjab and Haryana. They concluded that the handloom products are medically good for skin and have Aesthetic sense. The use of handloom products effect Swadeshi feelings and even the purchase of handloom products satisfy them.

Anusuya and Chinnadori (2015) in their paper "A study on consumer awareness and satisfaction towards handloom products with special reference to Coimbatore district" studied the awareness level of customers while buying and using handloom products. They concluded that consumers are very much aware about the handloom products but there makes no profit to the handloom seller.

Kalyani and Acharyulu (2015) in their paper "A demographic study on Customer Satisfaction about Handloom Products in India- A study on Andhra Pradesh State Handloom Weavers' Cooperative Society Limited" studied the influence of demographic variables like gender, age, educational qualification, occupation and annual income on customer satisfaction towards handloom products. They

concluded that huge awareness is required to be performed in public for handloom products.

Murali Krishna and Venkata Ramana (2016) in their paper "Study on Customer Awareness and Satisfaction towards handloom products with special reference to Guntur District – Andhra Pradesh" studied that the awareness and satisfaction levels of customers while buying and using handloom products. Also the various factors that influence the buying behaviour of handloom customers. They concluded that Majority of the handloom customers are getting awareness on handloom products through sales personnel, Friends & relatives followed by Trade fairs / handloom exhibitions.

Gayathri and Kinslin (2016) in their paper "Attitude of consumer towards handloom products with special reference to Trivandrum district" studied the customer awareness about handloom products. They concluded that consumers are more aware of handloom product but not much aware of descriptions and quality checking methods.

Research Gap/Relevance of the Research Article

A no. of good research article has been conducted and also published on the consumers' perception towards handloom products. But there is no research has been made on customers' perception towards handloom products in the Cuttack city. So, this is an attempt to research on customers' perception towards handloom products in the Cuttack city of Odisha.

Objective of the Study

The objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To analyze the customers' perception towards handloom products in Cuttack City.
2. To examine the perception of male and female customers in the Study area.

Research Methodology

The study is based on both primary and secondary data. Primary data have been collected through questionnaire and direct interviews. The sample data consists of 50 respondents. The sample data have been collected during November and December 2017. The secondary data have been collected through well designed strategy and these have been collected from various e-journals, e-magazines, e-annual reports of companies and from various reputed websites. The collected data have been classified and tabulated according to the requirements of the study. There are various tools like percentage calculations; valid percentage calculation, chi-square test, Likert 5 point's scale of ranking the perception etc. have been used for analysis.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Profile of Sample Unit

The sample unit includes buyers of handloom products which consist of students, Govt. employees, housewife, professional and businessman (each category has equal percentage to total sample units) in the Cuttack city including male and female. The Sample unit is 50 and it includes 25 female e-buyers and 25 male e-buyers. So, the respondents as regards to male and female are 50%.

Table No 1: Profile of the Sample customers

Profile	No. of respondents (N=50)	% to Total	Valid %	Profile	No. of respondents (N=50)	% to Total	Valid %
Gender:				Age:			
Male	25	50	50	Up to 25	14	28	28
Female	25	50	50	26-40	12	24	24
Education:				Above 40	24	48	48
Secondary	09	18	18	Occupation:			
Degree	17	34	34	Student	10	20	20
Above Degree	24	48	48	Housewife	10	20	20
Annual Income:				Govt. Employee	10	20	20
Below Rs 1,00,000/-	18	36	36	Professional	10	20	20
Rs. 1,00,000-5,00,000	20	40	40	Businessman	10	20	20
Above 5,00,000/-	12	24	24				
Total Sample (=N)	50	100	100	Total Sample (=N)	50	100	100

(Source: Collected and compiled from Field Study)

Table no 1 show that out of 50 respondents 18% have below secondary, 34% have degree and 48% have above degree qualification. Out of 50 respondents 36% have below Rs. 1,00,000/-, 40% have between Rs. 1,00,000 to Rs. 5,00,000/- and 24 % have above Rs. 5,00,000/- as their annual income. Out of 50 respondents 28 % have up to 25 years age, 24% have between 26 to 40 years age and 48 % have above 40 years age.

Profile of Sample Customers' Perception

The table no 2 shows the perceptual attributes of the sample customers towards handloom products in the study area. As so far as the customers' perception towards price of the handloom

products, the test statistics chi-square test show that the null hypothesis there is no significant difference between magnitude of price, is rejected and so, there is significant difference between different magnitude of price of handloom products. The customer's perception towards quality of handloom products, the test statistics chi-square test shows that there is no significant difference between qualities of handloom products. On durability of the handloom products 70% customers viewed for yes, 26% viewed neutral for transparency and only 04% viewed as no, on durability of handloom products.

Table No 2: Perceptual Attributes of the Sample Customers

Perception	No of respondents	% to Total	Test Statistics(5% level of significance)	Perception	No of respondents	% to Total	Test Statistics(5% level of significance)
Price				Quality			
Low Price	10	20	$\chi^2= 18$ p value=7.815 df=3	Good	30	60	$\chi^2= 41.36$ p value=7.815 df=3
Reasonable Price	25	50		Very Good	15	30	
Costly	05	10		Excellent	04	08	
Convenience	10	20		Bad	01	02	
Durability				Various Features			
Yes	35	70	$\chi^2= 49.34$ p value=5.991 df=2	Yes	37	74	$\chi^2= 58.62$ p value=5.991 df=2
No	02	04		No	01	02	
Neutral	13	26		Neutral	12	24	
Total Sample (N)	50	100		Total Sample (N)	50	100	

(Source: Collected and compiled from Field Study)

Ranking of Selected Handloom Products by Sample Customers

The table 3 shows the ranking of 5 selected handloom products by sample customers according to their buying behavior. Rank 1 implies 1st preference to purchase the product from e-market, rank 2 implies 2nd preference to purchase the handloom products and so on. Out of 50 customers 18 i.e., 36% prefer 1st

preference to purchases sarees, 12 i.e., 24% prefer as their 2nd preference, 09 i.e., 18% prefer as their 3rd preference and 08 i.e., 16% prefer as their 4th preference and so on. Out of 50 customers 15 i.e., 30% prefer 1st preference to purchases Lungi, 10 i.e., 20% prefer as their 2nd preference, 07 i.e., 14% prefer as their 3rd preference and 09 i.e., 18% prefer as their 4th and 5th preference.

Table 3: Ranked of products by Likert 5 point scale

Rank	1	2	3	4	5	Total	Total Score	Rank
Handloom products	No. of respondents							
Sarees	18	12	9	8	3	50	184	1
Lungi	15	10	7	9	9	50	163	3
Handkerchief	2	7	8	15	18	50	110	5
Scarfs	5	9	10	12	14	50	129	4
Gamuchha	10	12	16	6	6	50	164	2
Sample Size(N=50)	50	50	50	50	50	500	750	

(Source: Collected and compiled from Field Study)

From the table no 3 as per Likert 5 point scale of ranking the selected handloom products it is evident that out of 50 customers majority of customers prefer 1st preference to purchases Sarees, 2nd preference to Gamuchha, 3rd preference to Lungi, 4th preference to Scarfs and 5th preference to purchase Handkerchiefs. Thus, from above analysis it is clear that buyers are prefer to purchases sarees, Lungi, and Gamuchha as the handloom products largely.

Key Findings

1. Handloom products have still demand in the present technological and modern market.
2. The perceptions of customers are still positive towards handloom products as regards to quality and durability.
3. There is no significant difference between the perception of the male and female handloom customers.
4. The markets of handloom products are still alive in the State and as well as in the Cuttack District.

Conclusions

Handloom weavers of Odisha produce various types of fabrics such as sarees (which constitute the major component), dress materials, scarfs, dhotis, towels, other fabrics of day to day use such as wall hangings, etc. Generally handloom sarees are used in rituals and ceremonies purposes. Other popular India famous saris are Sambalpuri, Sonapuri and Maniabandhi. Most of the handlooms of this state are situated at the district Sambalpur, Sonapur and Cuttack. It is found that perception of customers towards handloom products is almost positive and there is no significant relationship between male and female with regard to their perception towards handloom products in the Cuttack city.

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