

Effects of Promotion on Customer Awareness Towards Handloom Products of Aurangabad Districts of Maharashtra

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Abstract - Handloom products are one of the old and traditional products, through which millions of rural artisans in our country can make their livelihood. Handloom is well known with their quality artisan work, etc. In recent days power loom industries are developing fastly. The customers are finding it difficult to differentiate handloom products from power loom products. In this context, the present study is an effort to analyze the effects of promotion mix on customer awareness towards handloom products and suggest new promotion strategies which influence the buying behaviour of handloom customers. The present study has been conducted in Aurangabad district of Maharashtra. The data required for the present study has been collected from primary source. For this study 200 respondents from the Aurangabad District were contacted for administering the questionnaire. The analysis is based on questionnaire and the conclusion is drawn on the basis of findings.

Keywords - Handloom products, customer awareness, customer satisfaction, promotional strategies.

I. INTRODUCTION

The Handloom sector is one of the largest economic activities after agriculture and constitutes an integral part of the rural and semi rural livelihood. Handloom weaving is one of the richest aspects of the Indian cultural heritage. The real strength of our handloom industry lies in its exquisite designs, unique motifs, and link with culture and tradition on the one hand, and its socio-economic importance in providing livelihood opportunity to lakhs of people living in rural areas, on the other hand.

As per 3rd handloom census report carried out in 2009-10 Maharashtra has 3418 handloom sector plays vital role in the context of present Indian economy, as it provides employment and it is the largest sector in the employment generation stands only next to Agriculture. The demand and popularity of Indian handloom has been growing not only in our country, but also around the world. But the distinctiveness of handloom products compared with other mill made cloths is not known to the customer. Hence, the present study is an attempt to understand the customer awareness about handloom products, various promotional factors that influences the buying behaviour of customers towards handloom products. The customer may or may not be conscious about the originality and quality of the products which he is going to consume, which may affect on handloom industry and Indian economy. In the present study efforts are made to understand the effects of promotion on customer awareness towards handloom products and suggest various modern techniques which help to promote handloom industry in effective way.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

1. **Report on market research for promotion of India handloom brand by Majestic MRSS Ltd.** (2016) reveals that handloom products are well appreciated by the young Indian because of its excellent fabric quality and a different overall look. This report also focuses on the purchasing of these handloom products which are purchased only for special occasions and not for regular usage thereby reducing frequency of purchase. This report further recommends advertisements and promotions through recommended media which would help enhance the level of acceptance and usage pattern amongst the target audience.
2. **K. Ravi John and S. Kamini** (2016) have conducted a study on socio economic status of women entrepreneurs in handloom sector. This study finds that the handloom industry suffers technological backwardness and its productivity is affected despite strenuous labor input. This study also suggest that viable techniques may be evolved which will motivate there entrepreneurs to become successful.
3. **B. Muralikrishna and J Venkata Ramana** (2016) in their study finds that majority of handloom customers are getting awareness on handloom products through sales personnel, friends and relatives followed by trade fairs/ handloom exhibitions. Hence, they suggest to the handloom traders, weavers to focus more on advertising, sales promotion and other promotional activities to provide more awareness on handloom products. Further this research suggests for more customer awareness programmes to be conducted to differentiate and other mill made products.
4. **Venkatesh J. and Vinoth Kumarasamy** (2016), focus on the impact of viral marketing on handloom products. This research study gives strong idea about viral marketing scenario, the companies and industries are using the combination of both traditional and social media marketing for the development of business. This study further helps to understand that social media helps the marketers to deliver their messages in a clear and simple without any chaos in the promotion of their brands.

5. **Veena Humbe** (2012) focuses on the role of social media in marketing handloom products. The use of social media in marketing can benefit the handloom products, reducing marketing expenses, increasing the sales, providing the details regarding the market place to purchase handloom products and exposures towards handloom products.
6. **Veena Humbe and Pallavi Bhalerao** (2018) in their study observe the various benefits of social media to handloom women weavers, as they can directly communicate to the customers within a few seconds, which has great impact on sell. In the same manner this study also focuses on the use of social media for increasing business and brand also.

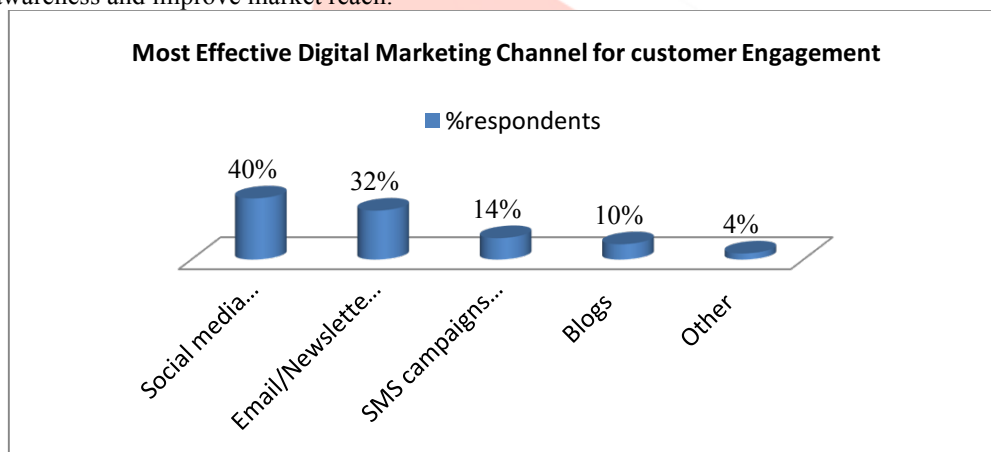
III. HANDLOOM MARKETING

Marketing has been recognized as being central to the growth and development of the handloom industry. The objective of handloom marketing assistance is to develop and promote the marketing channels in domestic as well as export markets. Strengthening of handloom organizations for improvement in the marketing and export of handloom items, organization of festive fairs, exhibitions, digital advertisements etc. facilitate in the promotion of marketing of handloom products.

The development of Information Technology in India has moved very fast. Marketing institutions are gaining the advantages from information technology activities and at the same time provide more benefits and opportunities especially in marketing services. In last few years the idea of buying and selling has tremendously changed. The internet has overtaken television as the largest advertising market.

Traditionally marketing methods have required a large investment of time and a team of people to support the various associated costs and expenditure of resources. The handloom industry has much to gain from this social media. Surveys show that e-commerce market in India is growing fast. Once listed on an online platform, a weaver can instantly start selling directly to a population of billion plus, whereas currently they sell to a middle man at much lower prices. E-commerce players have already started to lend a helping hand to this industry. Amazon has a store called crafted in India which curates authentic handloom and handcraft. Flipcart also has tied up with the Ministry of Textiles under its Abhiyaan program.

There are various enterprises that are using social media power to increase brand awareness, and sell products. There are various such enterprises that link to main social network services that they use including facebook page, Google plus, Twitter page, and can make YouTube video embedded in it. All of the social media services complement the main site and work together to increase brand awareness and improve market reach.



(Source: Octane Research, 'Digital by default- Digital India 2017: Marketing Trends and Forecast', Dec. 15, 2016)

Above graph explains about a survey conducted in 2016, marketing professional in India by Octane, which found that 40% of respondents believed that social media updates were the most effective digital activity for engaging consumers. In India social media marketing is used mostly for digital marketing. This research found social media marketing was the digital marketing activity the greatest share of respondents to its survey 68% expected to increase spending on in the coming year. This explains that social media marketing is new marketing technique which has got good response from customers, which further suggests that this technique should be implemented to handloom industry for increasing consumer demand and awareness.

IV. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To find out the factors that influences the promotional strategies of the hand loom industry
2. To examine the effective promotional tools for promoting handloom products.
3. To study the factors which influence the buying decision of handloom customers.
4. To study the level of customer awareness regarding handloom products.
5. To analyze the opinions, value the judgment and suggest valuable recommendations for the benefits of handloom industry.

V. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

It uses both primary and secondary data. The secondary data uses information from both published and unpublished sources. Survey method was used for collecting primary data. Survey was conducted by convenience sample method. The sampling unit consists of customers of handloom products. The sample size was 200 so as to fit the constraint of time and resources. A sample survey collects information from all the participants who were selected through the convenience sampling method. Percentage, ratio, chi-square and correlation were used to analyze the data.

VI. RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS

- On 7th August 2015 the Indian handloom brand was launched to increase awareness about the exemplary advantage of using Indian handloom products including their quality with regards to raw materials, processing, weaving and also the environmental friendly feature of handloom output.
- In handloom there are larger design choices compared to power loom. A designer can create a design the way they want and change at any point during weaving. However this is not possible while doing it with a power loom. Also a handloom product will always increase its price over years whereas a power loom won't. The handloom product will become more precious with time.
- Table 3 shows that majority of the respondents are aware of the fact that handloom products includes various products but most preference is given to purchase sarees. This table shows 47% of respondents give preference to purchase sarees of handloom industry.

Table 1: Sources of Awareness about Handloom Products

Sources of Awareness about Handloom products		No. of Respondents	Percentages
1	Sales personnel	30	15%
2	Advertisements	43	21.5%
3	Friends and Relatives	61	30.5%
4.	Trade fairs/ Handloom Exhibition	66	33%
	Total	200	100

(Source: Field Survey)

- The table 1 indicates that 15% of the respondents are getting handloom awareness and information from sales personnel, 21.5% of respondents are getting awareness and information from advertisement, 33% of respondents are getting awareness and information from trade fairs/ handloom exhibitions, 30.5% of respondents are getting handloom awareness and information from friends and relatives.

Table 2: Factors Influencing the Buying Decision

Factors Influencing		No. of Respondents	Percentages
1	Price	20	10%
2	Quality	74	37%
3	Location	35	17.5%
4.	Artisan Skill	46	23%
5.	Comfort	25	12.5%
	Total	200	100

(Source: Field Survey)

- Table 2 indicates 37% of the respondents in which quality is the base for their purchasing decision, 10% of the respondents in which price is the base for their purchasing decision, 23% of the respondents in which Artisan skill is the base for their purchasing decision, 12.5% of the respondents in which comfort is the base for their purchasing decision. This table explains that customer mostly buy handloom products due to factors of Quality and artisan skills.

Table 3: Preference towards Handloom Products

Handloom products		No. of Respondents	Percentages
1	Sarees	94	47%
2	Suiting & Shirting	24	12%
3	Shawl	15	07.5%
4.	Bed sheet	30	15%
5.	Carpet	16	8%
6.	Towel	21	10.5%
	Total	200	100

(Source: Field Survey)

- Table 3 indicates that 47% respondents have given preference to purchasing of handloom sarees. 15% respondents also given preference towards Bed sheets, 12% respondents have given preference towards purchasing suiting and shirting.

Table 4: Customers Awareness towards Handloom Products

Sr. No.	Questions	Yes	No	Percentages
1	Do you purchase Handloom products?	120	80	60%
2	Do you know handloom brand/mark?	110	90	55%
3	Can you differentiate handloom products and power loom products?	90	110	45%
4	Do you purchase handloom products due it suits every season?	118	82	59%
5	Do you give preference to handloom products because it is environment friendly?	98	102	49%
Average awareness towards Handloom products				53.6%
The chi-square value- 13.4457, p-value -0.009291, Significant at p<0.05				

(Source: Field Survey)

- It is also observed from the data presented in table that 55% of respondents were aware about handloom brand. 60% respondents purchase handloom products, but 45% respondents only can differentiate between handloom products and power loom products. This table further observes that 59% respondents are aware that it suits every season. 49% respondents also aware about handloom products are environmental friendly. From this table it can be observed that there is 53.6% average awareness of customer towards handloom products.
- Customers are aware towards handloom products, is the first hypothesis. Above table explains that chi-square statistics is 13.4457 with degree of freedom of 4 and the p-value is 0.009291, which explains that this hypothesis is statistically significant, therefore this hypothesis is accepted.

Table 5: Customers Awareness towards Handloom Promotion

Sr.No.	Questions	Yes	No	Percentages
1	Do you purchase handloom products after advertise in print media?	119 (133.20)	81 (66.80)	59.5%
2	Do you purchase handloom product with reference from your friends or relatives?	139 (133.20)	61 (66.80)	69.5%
3	Do you give preference to handloom products due to quality and artisan work?	140 (133.20)	60 (66.80)	70%
4	Do you purchase handloom product in exhibition or sale?	140 (133.20)	60 (66.80)	70%
5	Do you think social media marketing can help in selling handloom products?	128 (133.20)	72 (66.80)	64%
Average awareness towards Handloom promotion				66.6%
The chi-square value- 7.975, p-value -0.092497, Not significant at p<0.05				

(Source: Field Survey)

- It is also observed from the data presented in table 5 that 59.5% customer purchase handloom product after advertisement in print media, 69.5% respondents purchase handloom products with reference to their friends and relatives. 70% respondents purchase due to quality and artisan work. 70% respondents purchase handloom products through exhibition or sale. 64% respondents think that social media marketing can be helpful in selling handloom products. 66.6% respondents averagely show awareness towards handloom promotion.
- Customers are aware towards handloom promotion, is the second hypothesis. Above table explains that chi-square statistic is 7.975 with degree of freedom of 4 and p-value is 0.092497, which explains that this hypothesis is not statistically significant, therefore this hypothesis is not accepted.

Table 6: Correlation of Handloom Promotion with Customer Awareness of Handloom Products

Customer awareness towards Handloom Products (X)	Customer awareness towards Handloom Promotion(Y)
120	119
110	139
90	140
118	140
98	128
Mean :107.2	133.2
Standard deviation: 12.9306	9.4181
Correlation : -0.3309	

(Source: Field survey)

- Above table explains that there is negative relationship between customer awareness towards handloom products and customer awareness towards handloom promotion. From above table it can be said that handloom promotion is negatively associated with handloom products. It explains that as customer awareness towards handloom products increases handloom promotion decreases.

VII. SUGGESTIONS

- It is suggested that there is a need to preserve the traditional art weaving along with improving the socio economic status of the weavers and to uplift the status of handloom industry it is necessary to involve the young generation for contributing and developing handloom industry.
- Effective publicity through appropriate media mix should be done. Print and electric media can be used in right proportion.
- Awareness about handloom and power loom service center should be made through campaigns. The government should strengthen the handloom industry in terms of capacity and infrastructural facilities.
- It is suggested that variety of new products for all segments of customers should be developed with keeping new trends in mind.
- More awareness programmes has to conduct to differentiate handloom products with power loom products.

VIII. CONCLUSION

From the study it has been found that respondents were aware about handloom brand, purchases handloom products, but very few respondents only can differentiate between handloom products and power loom products. Handloom industry has been

facing competition from power loom products. Customers are also purchasing handloom products due its quality artisan work. Customers are taking decision of purchasing of handloom products with the reference from friends, relatives mostly.

There is need to develop educational infrastructure. The vocational education is also required for the awareness of weavers through which they can diversify their traditional handloom products through innovative ideas. There's additionally got to concentrate towards fast and low cost means that of transportation and communication for the extension of trade. Effective promotion through applicable media combine ought to be done. Print and electrical media may be utilized in right proportion. University, corporate sector and Government department should contribute by sponsoring and taking up research that result in innovative technology to adapt and upgrade the traditional tools and designs of the local artisans and weavers. Government should facilitate easier access of credit from banks and other financial institutions and the promotion of the products of these sectors in domestic and foreign markets.

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