



CONSUMER PREFERENCE AND SATISFACTION TOWARDS HANDICRAFT PRODUCT IN TIRUNELVELI DISTRICT

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Abstract

An objective of the study is to analyse the customer's Preference and satisfaction towards the handicraft product. Justifiable sample size was found to be 309. Keeping 25% of non-response approximately, 400 questionnaires were distributed. Among the distributed questionnaire 380 were received and only 375 were accepted. The research is used in descriptive method. Questionnaire was used to collect data. Descriptive statistics, Correlation and Regression were used. It is inferred that most of the Indian customers preferred the handicrafts such as Metal ware, Wood ware, Hand printed textiles, Embroidered and crocheted goods, Shawls, Carpets, Bamboo products, Pot / Clay product, Imitation jewellery, Paintings, Earthenware, it is suggested that handmade product price is very high when compared the commercial product. So, customers understand the artisan pain and buy the handmade product. It is suggested that most of the handicraft product does not have certificate. The certified handmade product is the future opportunity of the business environment and market scenario.

Keywords: customer's Preference, satisfaction, handicraft product, Tirunelveli

Introduction

As defined by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization/Information Technology Community (UNESCO/ITC), products encompass items created entirely by hand or with the assistance of tools. While mechanical tools are permissible, the primary input from the artisan must be manual for the end product. Handicrafts originate from raw materials and can be crafted in unrestricted quantities. These items hold the potential to serve utilitarian, aesthetic, artistic, and creative purposes. They can also bear cultural, decorative, functional, traditional, religious, and social importance, being both symbolically and significantly tied to various contexts. Handicraft production plays a pivotal employment role in numerous developing nations

and frequently constitutes a substantial segment of their export economy. Yet, due to escalating globalization, items are progressively undergoing commoditization, leading artisanal producers to confront heightened rivalry from global manufacturers, notably in China and other Asian nations. Ribbink, D., Van Riel, A. C., Liljander, V., & Streukens, S., (2004) stated that market for home accessories, often utilized as a gauge for the desire for handmade products, is significantly swayed by fashion trends, consumer spending habits, and economic circumstances in final markets. Adapting to swiftly evolving market inclinations emerges as a prominent hurdle for those engaged in exporting handicrafts.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In India, the realm of handicrafts stands as a significant livelihood avenue for rural populations, engaging more than five million artisans, with a notable focus on women and marginalized segments of society. Despite being anticipated as a leading contributor to India's non-agricultural sector revenue, the handicraft industry grapples with a series of challenges in the contemporary landscape, particularly concerning production and marketing aspects. Despite its potential, the handicraft sector faces substantial obstacles. A considerable number of artisans are compelled to seek alternative income sources for their daily sustenance, as the traditional family-based handicraft businesses have fallen short of generating the requisite earnings. The study addresses the multifaceted production and marketing predicaments encountered by both artisans and marketers in the handicraft industry. Furthermore, the study endeavors to pinpoint prospects that could foster the industry's growth and advancement.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To analyse the customers preference towards the handicraft product
2. To test the relationship between customers perception and customers satisfaction
3. To investigate the factors, influence of customers satisfaction

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The handicrafts sector within the nation provides employment to approximately 3.5 million individuals and contributes foreign exchange of approximately Rs. 36,000 Crores on an annual basis. This sector plays a crucial role in bolstering the rural economy of the country. Reflecting the cultural opulence, handicrafts embody the diversity and traditions inherent to the nation. Nevertheless, the industry faces significant hurdles stemming from issues like low productivity, inadequate wages, and labor-intensive work environments. The younger generation exhibits a waning interest in pursuing careers within this traditional sector. Recognizing the sector's potential, both central and state governments have introduced a range of initiatives to foster its growth. These encompass strategies such as adopting a cluster-based approach for expansion, establishing innovative tools and craft augmentation centers, enhancing skills through training programs, diversifying plans and product offerings, setting up marketing infrastructure, and cultivating craft-related tourism initiatives.

Research Methodology

Descriptive Research

Research design is the path designed to reach the specific objective. Descriptive research tends to describe the characteristics of a group. Hence, this study is descriptive in nature.

Sample size

Based on the pilot study, the percentage of respondents having positive attitude was found to be 72%. The sample size was determined by a sampling proposition by using the formula

$$n = \frac{Z^2 \frac{\alpha}{2} (1 - P)(P)}{d^2}$$

Where $Z^2 \frac{\alpha}{2} =$ T.V for 95

$$p = 72\%$$

$$1-p = 28\%$$

$d^2 =$ precision value

$$n = 309$$

Justifiable sample size was found to be 309. Keeping 25% of non-response approximately, 400 questionnaires were distributed. Among the distributed questionnaire 380 were received and only 375 were accepted for further analysis.

Sampling technique

The study focused on senior citizens alone. For the sake of easy approachability, tirunelveli district was selected as the study area. Respondents were also conveniently selected.

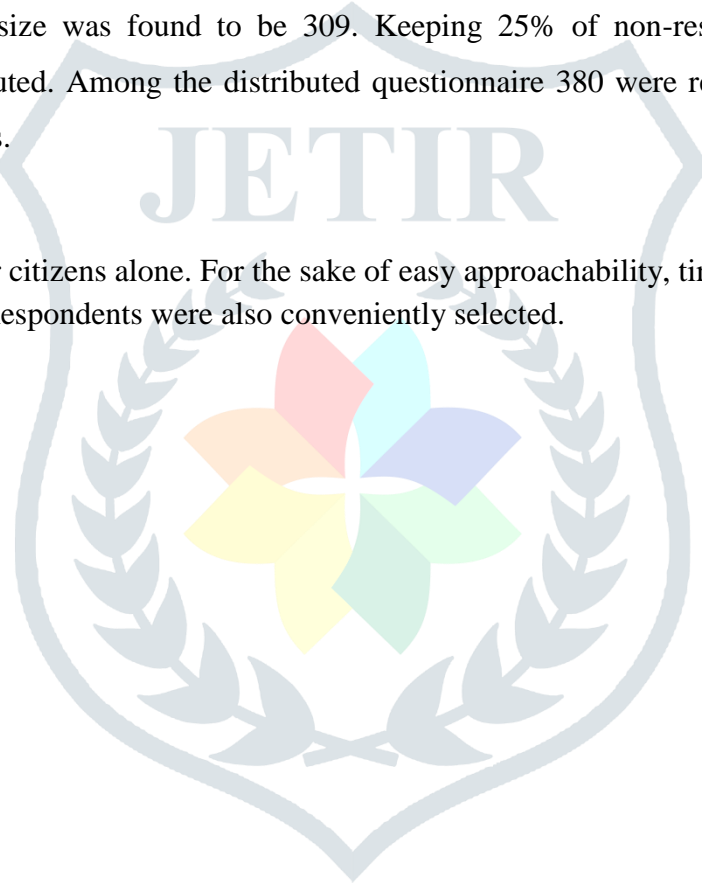


Table 1 Type of Handicraft Product Preference by The Customers

Metal ware	Preference	153	(40.8)
	Non-Preference	222	(59.2)
Wood ware	Preference	255	(68.0)
	Non-Preference	120	(32.0)
Hand printed textiles	Preference	201	(53.6)
	Non-Preference	174	(46.4)
Embroidered and crocheted goods	Preference	315	(84.0)
	Non-Preference	60	(16.0)
Shawls, Carpets	Preference	288	(76.8)
	Non-Preference	87	(23.2)
Bamboo products	Preference	342	(91.2)
	Non-Preference	33	(8.8)
Pot / Clay product	Preference	273	(72.8)
	Non-Preference	102	(27.2)
Imitation jewellery	Preference	336	(89.6)
	Non-Preference	39	(10.4)
Paintings	Preference	219	(58.4)
	Non-Preference	156	(41.6)
Earthenware	Preference	306	(81.6)
	Non-Preference	69	(18.4)
Jute products	Preference	276	(73.6)
	Non-Preference	99	(26.4)
Marble Sculpture	Preference	318	(84.8)
	Non-Preference	57	(15.2)
Bronze Sculpture	Preference	324	(86.4)
	Non-Preference	51	(13.6)
Leather Products	Preference	300	(80.0)
	Non-Preference	75	(20.0)
other miscellaneous handicrafts	Preference	267	(71.2)
	Non-Preference	108	(28.8)

Source: Primary Data

ODOP (2022) India is one of the largest handicrafts exporting countries. In March 2022, the total handicraft export excluding handmade carpets from India was USD 174.26 million which was an 8% increase from February 2022. During 2021-22, the total exports of Indian handicrafts were valued at USD 4.35 billion; a 25.7% increase from the previous year

Table 1 explain the type of handicraft product preference by the customers. 153 respondents are preferred Wood ware handicraft and 222 customers are not preferred Wood ware handicraft

- 255 respondents are preferred Hand printed textiles handicraft and 120 customers are not preferred Hand printed textiles handicraft
- 201 respondents are preferred Embroidered and crocheted goods handicraft and 174 customers are not preferred Embroidered and crocheted goods handicraft
- 315 respondents are preferred Shawls, Carpets handicraft and 60 customers are not preferred Shawls, Carpets handicraft
- 288 respondents are preferred Bamboo products handicraft and 87 customers are not preferred Bamboo products handicraft
- 342 respondents are preferred Pot / Clay product handicraft and 32 customers are not preferred Pot / Clay product handicraft
- 273 respondents are preferred Imitation jewellery handicraft and 102 customers are not preferred Imitation jewellery handicraft
- 336 respondents are preferred Paintings handicraft and 39 customers are not preferred Paintings handicraft
- 219 respondents are preferred Earthenware handicraft and 156 customers are not preferred Earthenware handicraft
- 306 respondents are preferred Jute products handicraft and 66 customers are not preferred Jute products handicraft
- 276 respondents are preferred Marble Sculpture handicraft and 99 customers are not preferred Marble Sculpture handicraft
- 318 respondents are preferred Bronze Sculpture handicraft and 57 customers are not preferred Bronze Sculpture handicraft
- 324 respondents are preferred Leather Products handicraft and 51 customers are not preferred Leather Products handicraft
- 267 respondents are preferred other miscellaneous handicrafts and 108 customers are not preferred other miscellaneous handicrafts handicraft

It is inferred that most of the Indian customers preferred the handicrafts such as Metal ware, Wood ware, Hand printed textiles, Embroidered and crocheted goods, Shawls, Carpets, Bamboo products, Pot / Clay product, Imitation jewellery, Paintings, Earthenware, Jute products, Marble Sculpture, Bronze Sculpture and Leather Products. ODOP (2022) The handloom and handicraft industry has served as the foundation of India's rural economy for numerous decades. The country is known for its diverse production, including items such as woodware, artmetal wares, handprinted textiles, embroidered products, zari goods, imitation jewellery, sculptures, pottery, glassware, attars, agarbattis, and more.

Table 2 Relationship Between Customer Perception About Handicrafts Product And Customers Satisfaction

	Customers satisfaction	product	Quality material	Alternative new material	Technological innovation	authenticity	packing	Environment friendly	Aesthetic appeal
Customers satisfaction	1								
product	0.886**	1							
Quality material	0.781**	0.780**	1						
Alternative new material	0.658**	0.645**	0.723**	1					
Technological innovation	0.381**	0.309**	0.354**	0.383**	1				
Authenticity	0.839**	0.818**	0.802**	0.610**	0.397**	1			
Packing	0.730**	0.731**	0.593**	0.462**	0.246**	0.803**	1		
Environment friendly	0.841**	0.833**	0.733**	0.648**	0.369**	0.762**	0.736**	1	
Aesthetic appeal	0.813**	0.770**	0.793**	0.789**	0.397**	0.716**	0.570**	0.678**	1

Source: Primary Data; * significant level

Table 2 explains the relationship between customers perception towards handicraft and customer satisfaction. Here, Product, Quality material, Alternative new material, Technological innovation, Authenticity, Packing, Environment friendly and Aesthetic appeal considered as an independent variable. Customer satisfaction is treated as a dependent variable

Pearson correlation analysis is applied. The correlation values are Product (0.886), Quality material (0.781), Alternative new material (0.58), Technological innovation (0.381), Authenticity (0.839), Packing (0.730), Environment friendly (0.841), Aesthetic appeal (0.813) are correlated with customers satisfaction.

It is found that Product, Quality material, Alternative new material, Technological innovation, Authenticity, Packing, Environment friendly and Aesthetic appeal are correlated with customers satisfaction. It is inferred that Technological innovation is having low level correlation with customers satisfaction.

Table 3 Factors Influence the Consumer Preference Towards Handicraft Product on Customer Satisfaction

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	F	Sig.
0.934 ^a	0.872	0.869	0.32213	312.005	0.001*

Coefficients ^a					
	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	0.106	0.089	-	1.195	0.233
Product	0.142	0.020	0.303	6.949	0.000
quality material	-0.035	0.036	-0.038	-.961	0.337
alternative / new material	-0.090	0.033	-0.089	-2.734	0.007
technological innovation	0.012	0.020	0.013	.625	0.532
Authenticity	0.225	0.044	0.231	5.087	0.000
Packing	-0.006	0.032	-0.007	-0.192	0.848
environment friendly	0.256	0.036	0.278	7.195	0.000
aesthetic appeal	0.274	0.033	0.325	8.342	0.000

Source: Primary Data

Table 3 explains the factors influencing the customer satisfaction. Here Product, quality material, alternative / new material, technological innovation, authenticity, packing, environment friendly, aesthetic

appeal are determinants considered as an independent variables and customer satisfaction is treated as a dependent variable.

Ho: There is no factors influence the Consumer preference towards handicraft product on customer satisfaction

Regression analysis is applied to know the effect of exploratory variables on the dependent variable. The adjusted r-square value is found to be 0.869. It is inferred that the independent variables are influenced at 0.869 levels. It is found that the exploratory variables such as Product, quality material, alternative / new material, technological innovation, authenticity, packing, environment friendly, aesthetic appeal are influenced at 86.9 percent towards the customer satisfaction. The p-value is 0.001. Hence, the hypothesis is rejected.

The unstandardized co-efficient beta value indicates the strength of relationship between dependent and exploratory variables. It is expressed by the equation as follows;

$$\text{Customer satisfaction} = 0.106 + 0.274 (\text{aesthetic appeal}) + 0.256 (\text{environment friendly}) + 0.225 (\text{Authenticity}) + 0.142 (\text{Product}) - 0.090 (\text{alternative / new material})$$

The equation indicates that aesthetic appeal influences by the 0.274 levels, environment friendly influence by the 0.256 levels and Authenticity influence by the 0.142 levels on Customer satisfaction. But, alternative / new material influenced by -0.090 levels on Customer satisfaction.

It is inferred that aesthetic appeal, environment friendly, Authenticity, Product, are positively influence the customer satisfaction but, alternative / new material is negatively influence the customer satisfaction. Risna Nona, Suharno, Sri Mintarti, & Yohannes Kuleh (2021) Product quality has a significant positive effect on consumer satisfaction. Comfort is related with quality perception and which ultimately leads to satisfaction (Rodriguez, M. C., Ooms, A., & Montañez, M., 2008). Loyal customers are comfortable with the quality service and they became satisfied. Nishat Nigar (2021) Purchasing from store which are next to the door minimize time, cost and effort, even there may work personal relationship. Customers are fascinated by new design, which are uncommon and avoid obsolete one.

Conclusion

The satisfaction with the handicraft product is quite high. The attention to detail and craftsmanship put into creating the product is evident and impressive. The unique design and skilful execution showcase the artisan's dedication to their craft. The quality of materials used also contributes to my satisfaction. The product not only looks appealing but also feels sturdy and well-made, suggesting that it will withstand the test of time. This durability adds value to my overall experience with the handicraft. Furthermore, the product's ability to evoke a sense of cultural or artistic appreciation enhances my satisfaction. Knowing that this item was created

with traditional techniques or embodies a particular artistic style adds a layer of meaning to my ownership of it. However, there are a few areas that could be improved. For instance, if there were more customization options available, it could cater to individual preferences and make the product even more personal. Additionally, any potential issues related to maintenance or care instructions would be valuable to know to ensure the product's longevity. The satisfaction with the handicraft product is predominantly positive. Its exceptional craftsmanship, quality materials, and ability to evoke cultural or artistic significance contribute to a fulfilling and enjoyable ownership experience.

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