

A study on Consumer Awareness about the handloom products of Madhya Pradesh with special reference to Maheshwari and Chanderi Handloom products.

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ABSTRACT

Handloom industry is one of the oldest industry and sources of income in rural India second to the agricultural industry. It has a long tradition of exquisite and incomparable craftsmanship passed down from generation to generation from master weaver of the family to his disciples. With a diverse and rich historical traditions and varied influences in the past, handloom sector in India offers a wide range of textile and associated design and products in most part of the country. This completely different and surprisingly rich techniques and styles were developed during various era's under the influence of different cultural influences. Due to varied availability of resources and cultural influences in different part of India in addition to the varied location cultural and climatic influences a wide range of textiles and product of unique designs are manufactured in different states and are unique in comparison to other parts of the world. The weaves are often colorful, and fabrics are frequently worked over with incredibly intricate embroidery techniques which are unique and different part of the nation. Madhya Pradesh has two unique handloom traditions known as Maheshwari Sarees from Khargone district and Chanderi Sarees from Ashoknagar District in Madhya Pradesh. With unique traditional history and rich design diversity both offers unique silk and cotton based sarees. This study is an attempt to understand awareness among the customers in Madhya Pradesh about these products belonging to their state. The data required for the present study is mainly collected from the primary sources via Google form shared on mail, what'sapp and similar sources. Stratified random sampling was used to select a sample of 240 from Bhopal in Madhya Pradesh.

Keyword: Customer awareness, Maheshwari Sarees, Chanderi Sarees, handloom.

1.INTRODUCTION

Consumer is an individual who buys or consume for personal, household or any other consumption requirement. Consumer awareness signifies the understanding about a particular product or service in terms of usage and buying or procurement sources such as retail points or any other service providers through which he/ she is going to consume. The consumer may or may not know the source or the origin of the product but knows how to utilize it for his/ her personal usage or consumption. The present study is an attempt by the researcher to explore the consumer awareness about the Maheshwari and Chanderi sarees as a handloom product in the existing market place. Though these designated handloom products are available at many places the current research is an attempt to understand what is the consumer perception about the sources and authenticity of the handloom product in reference to their social and economic environment and their buying experience of the same in the past in reference to the genuine product of the said category.

1.1. Maheshwari fabric

Maheshwari fabric is a cotton or pure silk based fabric which has been woven with zari or brocade in varied design in traditional regional variety of pit looms in a small town Khargone district of Madhya Pradesh known as Maheshwar. The maheshwari handloom came into existence in early 18th century when the beautiful art was conceptualized under the orders of Queen Ahilya Bai Holker, as she ordered the artisans that she has brought from Malwa and Surat region. These settlers were given instructions to develop a special silk based saree of 9 yards based on the regional design motifs. These sarees were mainly produced for her personal usage and to be utilized as a special gift from royalty to the relatives and guests visiting the palace during the queen's reign. The

design motifs used in the same were basically a combination of symmetrical stripes, checks, and floral patterns, as these sarees were first developed and produced in Maheshwar town thus came to be known as Maheshwari sarees, earlier they were developed only in pure silk but later with the change in market demand they were also getting produced in silk-based, cotton-based and blended cotton silk fabric too in order to meet the budget specific demands.

In addition to the unique sarees, later on, the same techniques were utilized for producing dupatta and dress material for salwar kameez and other related handloom products.

1.2. Chanderi Fabric

Traditionally Chanderi fabric is characterized by its sheer lightweight look and texture which gave it a luxurious uniqueness and feeling. These unique characteristics are achieved with a precise weaving of silk and zari in the traditional cotton yarn that results in the shimmering texture and effect in the final product. Since its inception and recognition, the origin of the fabric has always been believed to be the small town of Chanderi in Ashok Nagar district of Madhya Pradesh where the original weavers are still practicing the art of producing the vivid varieties of textured sarees in silk and cotton adorned with fine zari work. This fabric can be classified based on the blending of three types – Chanderi silk cotton, pure silk, and Chanderi cotton. Initially, the art of producing Chanderi fabric was originally used in producing Sarees and Salwar Kameez material.

For the larger part of the history, Chanderi town was popularly associated with handloom as one of the most booming handloom clusters in Central India and was known for Chanderi fabric where it was produced with a unique technique of handspun cotton warp and weft. If legends and epics are to be believed, Chanderi fabric is known to have its origin way back in the Vedic era when it was founded by Shishupal-Lord Krishna's cousin, but it can never be verified. During the Mughal reign, there are historically referenced Chanderi fabric being the preferred fabric and favored choice of queens that bestowed it a unique recognition and sense of royalty and luxury was associated with that time onwards. The Chanderi fabric with the advent of time evolved around 1890 when the weavers explored the mill yarns and replaced the handspun yarn with the same. Later in 1910 the Chanderi Saree received recognition and was patronized by the Gwalior region's royal family of Scindia. In the 1930s, Chanderi weavers discovered Japanese silk brought by the British empire and the weaver began experimenting by replacing the warps of cotton sarees with it and that's how the Chanderi silk variety was born.

2. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY.

- i. To understand the level of consumer awareness about handloom products Maheshwari and Chanderi Fabric.
- ii. To understand the level of consumer awareness about pricing offers and discount offerings at various occasions in Maheshwari and Chanderi Products.
- iii. To identify the most powerful source of information which influences the consumers to explore Maheshwari/ Chanderi products for consumption or usage.
- iv. To identify the important occasion that motivates customers to use Maheshwari and Chanderi products.
- v. To identify the level of awareness among the consumers about the various sources from where they can procure via offline as well as online mode.

3. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

1. Dr.M Renukadevi & G.A. Hema (2020) said that it is important for handloom product to use proper strategy to be seen as a better unique and potential product option in comparison to power loom and textile sector. In order to compete among these the handloom product need to meet customer expectation in terms of fashion trend based options and to satisfy with the product usage.
2. Jain and Jera (2017), said that handloom sector even after enjoying multiple level Govt. scheme and many societies working for the same has faced many issue at grass root level due to which still weaver associated with the same has to face crisis in finding livelihood. Organized clusters should concentrate on providing marketing tools and insight to weavers to develop and deliver handloom products according to the current trends and expectations of the customers.
3. Rizwana (2015), suggested that societies working towards the development of handloom sector should segregate color coding system as per the market demand in order to deliver better handloom product which can be easily marketable as the color choices selected are based on the demand, which was concluded by segregating the market into three segments in his study.
4. Vaddi and Balakrishnaiah (2009) in their study suggested that consumer are aware about the handloom products and related geographical indications and their study on 65 women about the kota doria sarees and banarsee silk saree shows that the most preferred location of female belonging to a certain level of household income prefers to buy from shop in comparison to any other form of available retail.
5. Jeyakodi (2009) studied the working of rebate and discount features offered by handloom stores in Andhra Pradesh suggested that since the majority of the authentic handloom products are mainly offered by society based stores and Govt. backed stores enjoys the subsidy features which affects the price of handloom

product which in comparison to power loom are much costlier and thus it enjoy a very narrow customer base and limited growth and faces many difficulties even after offering handmade unique products.

4. METHODOLOGY

The study has been conducted in and around the region of Bhopal as it is the capital city of Madhya Pradesh, which offers their unique market offering and platform for handloom products to be showcased for state level presentation and reach. The present study is descriptive in nature and is mainly based on primary data collected via Goolge form distributed among respondents with the help of available electronic communication resources such as mail, whatsapp etc. Structured questionnaire method was used as a main tool for collecting the primary data. The questionnaire was designed in a methodical manner to collect complete information of respondents in order to profile them completely in every factor such as age gender economic and social background, level of awareness about handloom product, and their sources. The secondary data used for deducting variables of observation was collected from books, magazines, journals, newspapers and websites. For the present study Stratified Random sampling technique was used to select a sample of 240 customers from the region. The received primary data has been further sorted tabulated and analyzed with the help of percentage analysis and Henry Garrett Ranking Technique.

$$(i) \quad \text{Percentage of Respondents} = \frac{\text{No of Respondent}}{\text{Total Number of Respondent}} \times 100$$

- (ii) Henry Garrett Ranking Method is used to conclude the most significant factors which has influences the respondent, in the said method respondents are requested to assign rank to various factors and the received data for preference then further gets converted into score in reference to the Garrett Formula and Garrett's ranking conversion table.

$$\text{The Garret's Formula for percentage position} = \frac{100(R_{ij}-0.5)}{N_j}$$

Where

R_{ij} is the Rank given for the i^{th} variable by j^{th} respondents
 N_j is the Number of variable ranked by j^{th} respondents.

5. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

TABLE 1: Socio Economic Profile of Respondents			
Variables	Category	Frequency	Present
Gender	Male	98	40.83%
	Female	142	59.17%
	Total	240	
Age Group	Below 25	30	12.50%
	26-35	70	29.17%
	36-45	78	32.50%
	Above 46	62	25.83%
	Total	240	
Occupation	Private employee	122	50.83%
	Self employed	64	26.67%
	Govt. employee	42	17.50%
	Others	12	5.00%
	Total	240	
Monthly Income	Below 20000	42	17.50%
	20001-35000	84	35.00%
	35001-50000	72	30.00%
	Above 50001	36	15.00%
	Total	240	

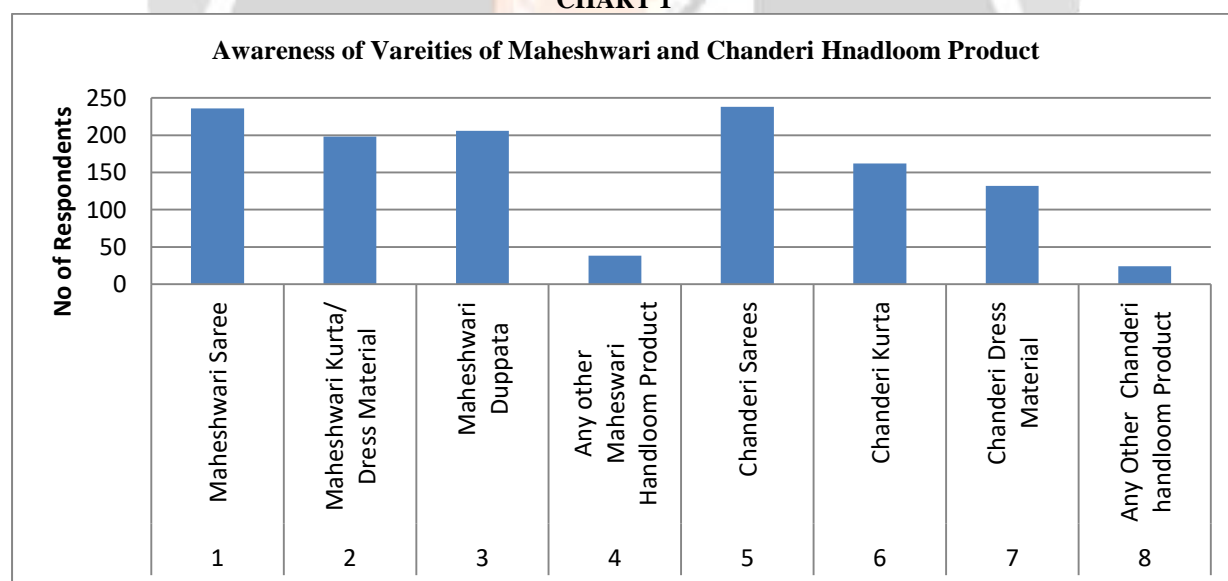
The socio economic profile of the respondents depicts that majority of the respondents (59%) were female and 41% were male, belongs to a mixed set of age segments, whereas, majority of nearly 50 % belongs to private job.

Out of depicted profile in above table overall 65% (35%+30%) within an earning bracket of 30,000 to 50,000 is the biggest group in all of the respondents & only 15 % of the respondents have an income of Rs.50000/- and above.

S.No.	Product	No of Respondents	Percentage
1	Maheshwari Saree	236	98.33%
2	Maheshwari Kurta/ Dress Material	198	82.50%
3	Maheshwari Duppata	206	85.83%
4	Any other Maheshwari Handloom Product	38	15.83%
5	Chanderi Sarees	238	99.17%
6	Chanderi Kurta	162	67.50%
7	Chanderi Dress Material	132	55.00%
8	Any Other Chanderi handloom Product	24	10.00%

From the data depicted in TABLE 2 it can be inferred that almost all the respondent's (98.33% for Maheshwari & 99.17 %) were aware of the Maheshwari and Chanderi Handloom products and 82.50% of the respondents are aware about the availability of Maheshwari handloom dress materials and similarly 67.50% of respondents were familiar to availability Chanderi Kurta material.

CHART 1

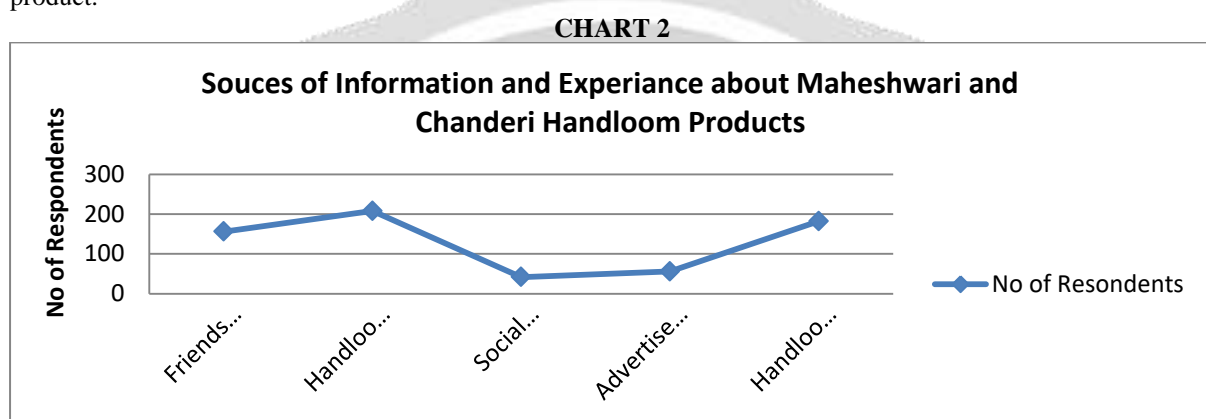


S.No	No of Period	No of Respondents	Percentage
1	Upto 5 Years	15	6.25%
2	6-10 Years	77	32.08%
3	Above 10 years	148	61.67%
	Total	240	

TABLE 3 depicts that more than 90% of the respondents, i.e. 32.08% of respondents knew about Maheshwari and Chanderi Products from more the 6-10 years and 61.67% of the respondents were aware about the same from more than 10 years of duration, this shows that maheshwari and Chanderi variety of handloom products are already known to the respondents.

S.No.	Source of Information	No of Respondents	Percentage
1	Friends and Relative	156	65.00%
2	Handloom Fairs/ Bhopal haat/ Related Exhibitions etc	208	86.67%
3	Social Media	42	17.50%
4	Advertisement	56	23.33%
5	Handloom Exclusive Stores	182	75.83%
Total Number of Respondents=240			

More than 86.67% of the respondents came to know about the product via Handloom Fairs and related exhibition for the first time, 75.83% has visited Handloom Exclusive stores like Khadi and experienced the product.



S.No.	Response	No of Respondents	Percentage
1	Yes	164	68.33%
2	No	54	22.50%
3	May be/ Cannot Say	22	9.17%
Total		240	100.00%

More than 68.33 % of the respondents know how to distinguish the Maheshwari and Chanderi Handloom product from the looks and feel of the same. It depicts their familiarity as well as previous experience with the product.

S.No.	Response	No of Respondents	Percentage
1	Yes	196	81.67%
2	No	44	18.33%

81.67% of the respondent based on their previous experience is able to recognize the Khadi/ Handloom Logo to associate the same with the quality of the product.

S.No.	Response	No of Respondents	Percentage
1	Exhibitions/ Fair/ Handloom festival etc.	182	75.83%
2	Exclusive handloom store /Outlet	142	59.17%

3	Handloom Societies	98	40.83%
4	Online Mode (website/ app or both)	128	53.33%

More than 75.83 % of the respondents know about the possible offers and deal that are available during the Handloom expo/ Fair and any such events.

S.No.	Buying Reason	Total Score	Mean Score	Rank
1	When Need Arises	10210	42.54	IV
2	Festive or any other Occasion	15740	65.85	I
3	Offers Discount during Handloom Expo/ Exhibition	12960	54	II
4	Offer During Online Sale	12790	53.29	III
5	When Salesmen Approaches	8000	33.33	V

The above table shows that “Festive or any other Occasion” is ranked as number I by the respondents, as the reason behind buying Maheshwari or Chanderi Handloom Product, followed by “Offers and Discount during Handloom Expo/ Exhibition. “Offer during Online Sale” has been ranked III which shows the impulse buying factor due to offers on the respondents. “When Need Arises” has been ranked as IV and “When Salesmen Approaches” has been ranked as V by the respondents as the reason behind buying Maheshwari and Chanderi handloom products.

6. CONCLUSION & SUGGESTIONS

- Based on the above analysis of responses it can be concluded that though the majority of respondents are aware of the Maheshwari and Chanderi handloom products, they have the majority of experience of exploring the product only during handloom expo/ art craft exhibition and such events or when they visit the exclusive handloom store.
- In addition to the same based on their source of information and familiarity with the product, majority of the respondents knows the occasions when there will be discount and offer on the product offering and at which platform i.e. expo, retail store, exhibition or any other online/offline platform offering the product.
- It can be concluded that in order to increase demand, more platforms offering discounts for the said product can be created.
- As the price of the Maheshwari and Chanderi products are high in comparison to other available mass-produced options, promotional and marketing activities and related PR activities can give a rise to the demand which in turn can promote better business opportunities and discount offers on the product.

7. REFERENCES

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BIOGRAPHY



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