

A Case Study on Customer Attitude and Preference towards the Brand of Khadi and Village Industrial Products in Coimbatore District

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ABSTRACT

India is a country with enormous resources which attracted many countries to utilize and enhance their economy at the maximum level. This affects employment opportunities for the most of the people living in rural areas which enable to go for urbanization for employment purpose, to pursue an employment and to manage their day to day life. The rapid development of such a kind of industries in the village area is very much necessary for the development of our nation as well as to make people economically independent. Rural development is the backbone of Indian economy. Government is trying its level best to overcome the problem of rural unemployment. The part of this is the formation of Khadi & Village Industries Commission at central level which is presently known as Commissionerate of Khadi & Village Industries. The Commissionerate of Khadi & Village Industries works at apex level under the close guidance of Central Government. The major research objective was to study the opinion of the customer's reaction towards the pricing and awareness about the usage of the products in terms of the productivity, quality, Profit and better customer orientation. The study, which certain to the field of marketing, was carried out in Coimbatore District to all consumers to find out the perception towards the Khadi and Village Industrial products. The study aims at providing an insight on consumer's attitude also the various factors, which influence to buy the Khadi and Village Industrial products and Preference towards the local brand. It is also aimed at helping the District Supply and Marketing Society a marketing retail outlet in improving the sales and various other Promotional activities.

Keywords: Khadi & Village Industries, Customer Attitude, Preference, Branding.

INTRODUCTION

India is a country with enormous resources which attracted many countries to utilize and enhance their economy at the maximum level. This affects employment opportunities for the most of the people living in rural areas which enable to go for urbanization for employment purpose, to pursue an employment and to manage their day to day life. The rapid development of such a kind of industries in the village area is very much necessary for the development of our nation as well as to make people economically independent. Rural development is the backbone of Indian economy. Government is trying its level best to overcome the problem of rural unemployment. The part of this is the formation of Khadi & Village Industries Commission at central level which is presently known as Commissionerate of Khadi & Village Industries. The Commissionerate of Khadi & Village Industries works at apex level under the close guidance of Central Government.

In India, villages are providing the base for the economic development of the country. The village artisans had command over raw materials, assured demand for their products and services and an assured return . It was the British who destroyed not only the glorious Indian trade but also the rural industries . The East India company pursued a policy which was detrimental to the development of industries in India. The Industrial revolution in England thrived at the cost of India while the artisans of the country were out from the industrial scene. Only at this stage, khadi was introduced by Mahatma Gandhi as an important instrument for remaking the Indian economy. It is well known, that congress movement introduced Khadi in 1920, primarily with a political interest to boycott foreign goods in general and in particular to provide an opportunity for every human being about the self discipline and self sacrifices as a part of non –cooperative movement.

Customer's Attitude have been understood as a learned predispositions, that project positive or negative behavior consistently towards various objects of the world. Attitude influence the way we think and behave and are therefore important for the marketers who study them to understand how a consumer behaves. This study is an outcome for District Rural Development, Coimbatore to study the customer attitude and preference towards the Khadi and Village Industrial products attitudes which have certain characteristics. They are formed as, based on the environment in which we grow up. Attitudes can be either of a high or low degree and the intensity depends on the strength of conviction with which the person believes in them. Attitudes can be either of a high or low degree and the intensity depends on the strength of conviction with which the person believes in them. Attitude models were developed by psychiatrists to understand the relationship between attitudes and human behavior. I incidentally came across the fact that there are only few empirical studies on Khadi and Village Industrial products and there is a great scope as well as need for systematic research on buyer's behavior regarding Khadi and Village Industrial products.

These models help the marketer in understanding how attitudes influence a person's behavior as a consumer. Attitudes are measured using the Semantic differential scale and Likert's scale to understand how the consumer might behave towards a particular product. While it is generally accepted that attitudes influence behavior, attitudes toward a product can be changed by highlighting new functions of the product, or by associating them with celebrities. By changing the beliefs of customer has regarding the products, or by getting the customer more involved in the product. The study, which certain to the field of marketing,

was carried out in Coimbatore city to all customers to find out the perception towards the Khadi and Village Industrial products. The study aims at providing an insight on customer's attitude and also the various factors, which influence to buy the Khadi and Village Industrial products and preference towards the local brand. It is also aimed at helping the District Supply and Marketing Society a marketing retail outlet in improving the sales and various other Promotional activities.

Since Customer's Attitude are dynamic and may change , it is possible that a particular attitude may be unstable in nature, that may keep on changing the tastes and preferences. Attitude is Buzz word among marketers Today marketers are emphasizing in a trend which says "attitude is about believing in yourself", to quote some well known brands with the associated attitudes. As customer's also have developed certain attitudes towards products, services, advertisements, other media of communications and choice of retail outlet. Marketers are also interested in analysing and understanding the customer's attitudes towards their products and services . This information about the prevailing attitude amongst their customer will help them to device suitable marketing programmes. The study, is carried out in Coimbatore city to find out the perception towards the Khadi and Village Industrial products. The study aims at providing an insight on consumer's attitude and also the various factors, which influence to buy the Khadi and Village Industrial products and Preference against the local brand. It is also aimed at helping the District Supply, Marketing Society and marketing retail outlet in improving the sales and various other Promotional activities.

Customer

A customer is a purchaser of a product or service. A customer is a person or organization that purchases or obtains goods or services from other organizations such as manufacturers, retailers, wholesalers, or service providers. A customer is not necessarily the same person as the consumer, as a product or service can be paid for by one party, the customer, and used by another, the consumer.

Attitude

A mental position consisting of a feeling, emotion, or opinion evolved in response to an external situation. An attitude can be momentary or can develop into a habitual position that has a long-term influence on an individual's behavior. Attempts can be made to modify attitudes that have a negative effect in the workplace, for example, through education and training. The employee attitude survey is one tool used to assess prevalent attitudes in the workforce. Attitude studies are often done before and after exposure to an advertising campaign to determine the change (if any) in attitude on the part of the consumer. The results of a before and after study will also reflect the success of the campaign. Mental position or emotional feelings about products, services, companies, ideas, issues, or institutions. Attitudes are shaped by demographics, social values, and personality. As the consumer attempts to evaluate a product, service, or the like, he or she will develop an attitude about the thing being evaluated. In advertising, the desire is to generate favourable perceptions towards the thing being advertised, and to promote positive consumer attitudes.

Four Major Customer Expectations

- A. Accuracy
- B. Availability
- C. Partnership
- D. Advice.

Accuracy and availability are actions that your competitors can apply but the other two expectations, partnership and advice, are attitudes that cannot be easily duplicated. Most important and effective attitude to bring customer delight are as follows:

Listen to his voice of feelings.

- Attending customer at his place.
- Best quality lower price.
- Advice him for his growth.

After sales service, at free cost, across the country. Customer must be treated like a V.I.P. customer is to be welcomed on RED CARPET. In the 21st century customer is a real asset.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Day by Day new products are introduced in the Market due to Mushroom growth. Product advertisements are also coming out frequently in all the media such as print, internet, radio, television and out door. While selecting their right products Customer's should be more cautions about the price, quality, profitability and reliability of the product. In order to identify the Rural marketing product they have to visit the exhibitions conducted by Khadi bhavans in the city.

Coimbatore city is the industrially populated city with more middle and upper class people. Coimbatore city is the third largest city in TamilNadu which is also called as Manchester of South India. It is one of the main industrial centre in India. So the study conducted in Coimbatore City is more appropriate.

The Khadi and Village industrial products are to develop the rural and urban marketing. So the government is mainly concentrating in the KVIC to develop the rural marketing. This will help to provide employment, producing saleable articles and creating Self reliance amongst people, building up strong rural community spirit. Through this research the researcher wanted to highlight the Positive and Negative opinion about the KVIC products in the mind of Customer's.

NEED OF THE STUDY

In today's world of rapidly changing technology, customer taste and preferences are also characteristics by fast changes. To meet this changing environment a firm has to constantly innovative and understand the latest customer needs and wants. Customer satisfaction is a function of the products perceived performance and his expectations. Recognizing the high satisfaction leads to high customer who are aiming for "TCS – Total Customer Satisfaction".

Losing customer can dramatically impact a firm's profit. Therefore, the organization main task is customer's retention.

Companies now- a days concentrate more on rural segment, develop the product on meeting of special needs of customer requirement based on the market segmentation. Rural customer preferences based on the Khadi and Village Industrial products are changing and become highly diversified. The customer behaviour on developing the rural and urban KVI products are always analyze to determine the underlying currents and cross- currents in the customer minds.

So, there becomes a need for understanding the Customer's Attitude and Preferences towards the Khadi and Village Industries, which help the government as well as the companies involving (KVI) in improving the product features like quality, packaging, pricing etc., and also it helps the researcher to understand the positive or negative opinion about their products in the mind of Customer.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

- To identify the satisfaction rates of Customer towards the Khadi and Village Industrial Products in retail outlet.
- To Access the Awareness of Khadi and Village Industrial Products they manufacture.
- To examine the influencing factors responsible in purchasing Khadi and village Industrial Products.
- To find out the Customer's Attitude and Preference towards the Khadi and Village Industrial products in retail outlet.
- To study the problems and difficulties faced by the Customer in purchasing the KVI 's Products in retail outlet.
- Suggest measures to solve the problems faced by the Customer.

LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

- This study is applicable for the Coimbatore city only because the service provided by the Khadi and village industrial products will differ from each district.
- This study is done limited so in future there may be slight variation due to change in Customer mind set.
- As Judgmental sampling technique has been used it has its own limitation.
- This study is an academic effort hence it has its own limitation like cast, time and geographical area.
- The primary data and information were used in the study based on the information supplied by the respondents.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Data Collection

Primary Data Collection

Primary Data are those which are collected for the study first time and they are original in character. The Primary data are collected with the help of structured questionnaire. A Structured questionnaire was prepared and distributed to the customers of Khadi in retail outlet. The relevant information was obtained from various customers of Khadi bhavans retail outlet through a questionnaire.

Secondary Data collection

Secondary data are those which are already collected by someone for some purposes and are available for the present study. Secondary data were collected from the Websites, Company Profiles, Newspapers, Magazines and through general discussion with company personnel.

Questionnaire Design

The relevant information was obtained from 300 customers of Khadi bhavans through a questionnaire. A structured questionnaire was prepared and distributed to the customers. The data were collected from the various Khadi bhavans during October - November 2011. The questionnaire consists of 30 questions which includes demographic factors and study factors of the respondents. The simple percentage method was used to analyze the data.

Analysis and Interpretation

Research data becomes meaningful in the process of being analysed and interpreted regardless of how well the studies conducted appropriately in analyzing the collected data. Analysis of the data is to find out the percentage and value of the data analysis and the interpretation reveals the results of the analysis. Making inferences is the findings related to the research work and will be helpful to contribute suggestions related to the research study.

According to **Mouly** “Research data become meaningful in the process of being analysed and interpreted regardless of how well the study is conducted in, appropriate analysis can lead to appropriate conclusions.

This chapter deals with the statistical analysis of the data with reference to the hypothesis. Interpretations are also made to account for the results. The choice of the statistical techniques for data analysis is largely determined by research hypothesis to be tested. Following are the statistics used for analysis.

Simple Percentage Analysis

Simple percentage analysis is one of the basic Statistical tools which is widely used in analysis and interpretation of primary data. It deals with the number of respondents' response to a particular question in percentage arrived from the total population selected for the study. It is one of the simple forms of analysis which is very easy for anyone to understand the outcome of the research. It is normally used by commercial research organizations and pictorially presented with different diagrams.

Gender

Gender normally plays a vital role as the new age marketers are providing more significance to gender segmentation in offering new products and services. Hence, it is inevitable to consider the role of gender in any research. For this purpose, gender has been classified into two groups Viz., male and female.

Table 1. Gender of Respondents

Sr.no	Gender	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative percentage
1	MALE	142	47.3	47.3
2	FEMALE	158	52.7	100
	TOTAL	300	100	

Source: Primary Data

The above table shows that out of the total respondents taken for the study, 47.3 per cent of the respondents are male and 52.7 per cent of the respondents are female. The majority of respondents are belonging to female category. So compared to females, the male respondents are less.

Age

The Age wise classification of the sample is exhibited in the Table 4.3.2. Age is an important factor in arriving at a good decision and implementing the decision. The respondents are classified into four age groups Viz., below 25, 25-35, 35-45, 45-55 and above 55.

Table 2. Showing Age of Respondents

Sr.No	Age Group	No. of Respondents	Percentage	Cumulative percentage
1	Below 25 Years	24	8.0	8.0
2	25-35 Years	85	28.3	36.3
3	35-45 Years	115	38.3	74.7
4	45-.55 Years	47	15.7	90.3
5	Above 55 Years	29	9.7	100.0
	TOTAL	300	100	

Source: Primary Data

From Table 4.1, it is clear that, 8 percent of the respondents fall under the age group of below 25 years, 28.3 per cent of the respondents fall under the age group 25-35 years, 38.3 of them belongs to 35-45 years, 15.7 per cent of them belong to 45-5-40 years and remaining 9.7 per cent of the respondents are in above 55 years of age. Thus, majority of the respondents are of the age between 35 to 45 years.

Marital Status

In today’s world both men & women are working in a family, so risk & returns are shared by them. But the unmarried category has a certain limit to take risk because they can’t share

their risk. So mainly married category people invest more. Marital status of sample respondents are classified into groups namely married and single respectively.

Table 3. Showing Marital Status of Respondents

Sr. No	Marital Status	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative percentage
1	SINGLE	64	21.33	21.33
2	MARRIED	236	78.67	100.0
	TOTAL	300	100.0	

Source: Primary Data

From the above table, it is observed that 21.33 percent of the respondents belong to single category and 78.67 percent of the respondents belong to married category. Numbers of married are more in comparison to the number of unmarried respondents. The majority of respondents belong to married category.

Occupational Status

Occupation wise distributions of sample respondents are classified according to their employment position. Occupation is a status symbol in society. Hence the respondents are classified into groups namely Business /self employed, student, employed professional, Government service, Public sector and Housewife.

Table 4. Showing Occupational Status of Respondents

Sr. No	Occupational Status	No. of Respondents	Percentage	Cumulative percentage
1	Business /self employed	7	2.3	2.3
2	Student	26	8.7	11.0
3	Employed professional	61	20.3	31.3
4	Govt. service	63	21.0	52.3
5	Public sector	120	40.0	92.3
6	Housewife	23	7.7	100
	TOTAL	300	100	

Source: Primary Data

Table 4.3.4 reveals the occupation wise distribution of respondents. Out of 300 respondents, 120 who account for 40 percent of the total are public sector. Next are Govt. services at 21 percent, followed by employed professional at 20.3 percent, student at 8.7 percent and Business /self employed at 7 percent. The majority of the respondents are belongs to public sector.

Income

Income is important for all human beings, because each and everything is based on income. It induces individuals to spend their hard earned money on different products and services. In this study, the income has been studied closely to see its relationship with Commercial banks. The respondents income was studied under four different categories. For this purpose

the annual income level of the respondents are classified into four levels Viz., Less than Rs.50,000, Rs.50,001 to Rs.1,00,000, Rs.1,00,001 to Rs.1,50,000 and above Rs.1,50,000.

Table 5. Showing Annual Income of Respondents

Sr. No	Annual Income	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative percentage
1	Less than Rs.5,000	9	3.0	3.0
2	Rs.5,001to Rs.10,000	81	27.0	30.
3	Rs.10,001 to Rs.15,000	102	34.0	64.0
4	Rs.15,001 to Rs.20,000	52	17.3	81.3
4	Above Rs.20,000	56	18.7	100.0
	TOTAL	300	100	

Source: Primary Data

The annual family income of the respondents is considered for the study. The above table clearly shows that 9 percent of the respondents belong to income level of less than Rs.5, 000, 27 percent of the respondents belong to income level Rs.5,000- Rs 10,000, 34 percent of the respondents belong to income level Rs.10,001-Rs 15,000, 17.3 percent of the respondents belong to income level Rs.15,001-Rs 20,000,and remaining 18.7 percent of the respondents belong to the high income level of above Rs.20,000. Majority of the respondents belong to the level of Rs.10,001-Rs 15,000.

Educational Status

Education is important for all human beings. It is very important in the modern electronic world to adapt to modern principles and techniques. For this purpose the Educational Status of the respondents are classified into four groups Viz., primary level, Higher secondary, Graduation, Post-Graduation and professional. Education plays an important role in improving knowledge, attitude, tendency and temperament of the customers.

Table 6. Showing Educational Status of Respondents

Sr. No	Educational Status	No. of Respondents	Percentage	Cumulative percentage
1	SSLC	25	8.3	8.3
2	HSC	31	10.3	18.6
3	Under Graduate	75	25.0	43.6
4	Post Graduation	169	56.4	100.0
	TOTAL	300	100	

Source: Primary Data

The above table 4.3.3 indicates that, 8.3 percent of the respondents are having SSLC, 10.3 percent of sample respondents are having higher secondary level education, 25 percent are Graduate level and 56.4 percent are post graduate level. Hence, it is concluded that a majority of the sample respondents are Post Graduates. They can be a guiding factor for others.

Table 7. Showing Frequency of Purchase of KVI Products

Sr. No	Opinion	No. of Respondents	Percentage	Cumulative percentage
1	Frequently	7	2.3	2.3
2	Moderately	183	61.0	61.0
3	Whenever I come across	104	34.7	34.7
4	Not interested	6	2.0	100.0
	TOTAL	300	100.0	

Source: Primary Data

From the table it is clear that 61% of the respondents buy KVI products moderately, 34.7% whenever they come across it, 2.3% buy frequently and 2% are not interested in buying KVI products.

Table 8. Showing Quality of Products – Customers Perception (Q12)

Sr. No	Opinion	No. of Respondents	Percentage	Cumulative percentage
1	Very Good	32	10.7	10.7
2	Good	208	69.3	69.3
3	Average	60	20.0	100.0
	TOTAL	300	100.0	

Source: Primary Data

From the above table clear that, 69.3% of respondents perceive that KVI products are good, 20% feel they are average and 10.7% of respondents perceive that the quality of KVI products are Very good.

Table 9. Showing Satisfaction of KVI Products (Q13)

Sr. No	Opinion	No. of Respondents	Percentage	Cumulative percentage
1	Yes	265	88.3	88.3
2	No	35	11.7	100.0
	TOTAL	300	100.0	

Source: Primary Data

The table shows that 88.3% of respondents are satisfied with KVI products and 11.7% are not satisfied with the same.

Table 10. Showing Comparison of Quality of KVI Products & Other Market items (Q15)

Sr. No	Opinion	No. of Respondents	Percentage	Cumulative percentage
1	Excellent	16	5.3	5.3
2	Good	146	48.7	48.7
3	Moderate	130	43.3	43.3
4	Bad	3	1.0	1.0
5	No Idea	5	1.7	100.0
	TOTAL	300	100.0	

Source: Primary Data

It is inferred that, 48.7% of respondents feel that the quality of KVI products are good, 43.3% perceive it is moderate, 5.3% feel it is excellent and 1% of respondents perceive the quality is bad compared to other market items.

Table 11. Showing perception about packing of KVI Products (Q16)

Sr. No	Opinion	No. of Respondents	Percentage	Cumulative percentage
1	Attractive	21	7.0	7.0
2	Moderate	182	60.7	60.7
3	Not attractive	97	32.3	100.0
	TOTAL	300	100.0	

Source: Primary Data

The table reveals that 60.7% of respondents perceive the packing to be moderate, 32.3% feel it is not attractive and 7% perceive it to be attractive.

Table 12. Showing preferred allocation of funds for buying KVI products (Q17)

Sr. No	Income	No. of Respondents	Percentage	Cumulative percentage
1	Rs 500-Rs 1000	215	71.7	71.7
2	Rs 1000- Rs 2000	75	25.0	25.0
3	Rs 2000-Rs 3000	8	2.7	2.7
4	Above Rs 3000	2	.7	100.0
	TOTAL	300	100.0	

It's clear that, 71.7% respondents would allocate Rs.500- Rs.1000 for purchase of KVI products, 25% Rs.1000- Rs.2000, 2.7% would allocate Rs.2000-Rs.3000.

Table 13. Showing loyalty towards a Specific Product (Q18)

Sr. No	Opinion	No. of Respondents	Percentage	Cumulative percentage
1	Yes	135	45.0	45.0
2	No	165	55.0	55.0
	TOTAL	300	100.0	100.0

Source: Primary Data

The table reveals that 45% of respondents are loyal towards a specific product and 55% of respondents are not loyal towards a specific product.

Table 14. The source of information about KVIP

Sr. No	Source	No. of Respondents	Percentage	Cumulative percentage
1	News paper	57	19.0	19.0
2	Fellow worker/friend	81	27.0	46.0
3	Relatives	69	23.0	69.0
4	Government	93	31.0	100.0
	TOTAL	300	100.0	

From the table, it is inferred that 19 % of respondents came to know about the KVI product through Newspaper, 27% of the respondents through fellow worker/ friend, 23% of the respondents through relatives and remaining 31% of the respondent through government.

Table 15. Availability of KVIP

Sr. No	Opinion	No. of Respondents	Percentage	Cumulative percentage
1	Yes	244	81.3	81.3
2	No	56	18.7	100.0
	TOTAL	300	100.0	

It is clear that, 81.3% of respondents' have revealed that KVI products are available all over the city whereas 18.7% of respondents tell that they are not available.

Table 16. Frequency of purchase of KVIP

Sr. No	Frequency	No. of Respondents	Percentage	Cumulative percentage
1	Twice a month	58	19.3	19.3
2	Once in a month	194	64.7	84.0
3	Weekly	48	16.0	100.0
	TOTAL	300	100.0	

It is clear that, 19.3% of respondents purchase KVIP once a month, 64.7% of the respondents twice a month and 16% of the respondents purchase KVI products weekly.

Table 17. Influences to the Purchase Decision

Sr. No	Source	No. of Respondents	Percentage	Cumulative percentage
1	Parents	15	5.0	5.0
2	Husband	10	3.3	8.3
3	Personal experience	220	73.3	81.7
4	Advertisement	40	13.3	95.0
5	Any other	15	5.0	100.0
	TOTAL	300	100.0	

The table reveals that 5% of parents influence purchase decision, 3.3% are influenced by husband, 73.3% by personal experience and 13.3% by advertisement and remaining 5% by other reasons.

CONCLUSION

Khadi and Village Industries play the crucial role in the part of marketing the products. KVI concept itself formed to bring the social reform in the Below Poverty line people and up lift them. So based upon the needs and taste of the Customer the Products are manufactured by the KVI. Those products are found to be reasonable and affordable by the Customer. Khadi has gained worldwide appreciation as it is handmade, durable, long lasting and organic in nature. The fabric is produced by the masses for the masses. It is associated with Gandhian philosophy as well as makes a fashion statement. Through the medium of khadi weaving, the weaver expresses art and designing by the spindle and loom. It is widely accepted in the Indian fashion circle. Leading fashion designers now include it in their collection by designing clothes with khadi material. There is huge demand for it in international market, especially in western countries.

This study reveals that the overviews about the products manufactured by the KVI are Satisfactory. The Customer Attitude towards the purchase decisions are influenced more by the way of trust worthy, service, price and quality. It is an attempt to study the KVI product and its awareness and preference towards the KVI products is being surveyed to make this study complete. As a result, it has been observed from the respondent that the KVI products are qualitative and pricing is reasonable and affordable. But the customer also expressed the need of improvement in packing. It is an idea of bringing a social change in the economy exclusively for the middle class community.

SUGGESTIONS

- The products manufactured by the KVI do not have high marketing potential for the customers are not widely using these products. While, the products are not attractive packing's, catchy advertisements and comparatively user friendly therefore improvements are an essential requirements on all these aspects.
- The main aim of the people who buy these products is to help and promote social reform. To alleviate this hurdle, the KVI should be more active in explaining the quality their products to the customers. Door to door canvassing will go in along way to mass sale of the products.

- The products made are mostly handicraft items, Honey, food items, leather and khaddar products etc. KVI should develop innovative ideas in bringing out new varieties of products.
- KVI should concentrate more on the quality of products and improve the attractive packing.
- The Government is to take special initiative to sell these products through department stores.
- The KVI should strive hard to be more customers – friendly in order to make customer to frequent them instead of buying once a month.

The KVI shops that sells these products should be have prominent place and with attractive sign boards. In addition displaying the products with catchy words.

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