.Research Article

The Purchase and Attitude Patterns of Handloom Customers A Gender Based Cross Sectional Study

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Abstract:
The today's customers got familiarized to the low-cost clothing with latest designs and offered available widely in the stores. In such a situation, it has almost become a big challenge for the handloom products, which are traditional, comparably highly-priced, limited designs and less durable. Furthermore, the middlemen/channels are making profits with duplication of the handloom products. Nearly half of the customers can't differentiate handloom products. This made the situation more disastrous for the handloom sector and the weavers. Hence, a study has been conducted to answer the questions: how much the customers are aware of handlooms? How the customers feel, opine and purchase handloom products by considering the four p's (product, price, place and promotion)? And detecting the problems of handloom customers regarding the sector. This paper answers these questions.

Key words: Handlooms, Customers, Attitude, Purchasing Behavior, Problem Detection..

1. Introduction:

Handloom sector has its unique place in terms of its heritage and craftsman skills. But with the advent of the power loom and mill sector, this sector has lost its prominence and its market. Customers are the target of any market. The customers of handlooms shifted to the other two sectors due to their low cost, availability in various designs and latest trends. A channel has to design its strategies according to the tastes and preferences of the customer. Even these channels have shifted as the majority of the customers are from the middle class and below the poverty line. Hence, gradually the sales of the handloom products went down and added to the misery of the handloom weavers. The purchase of handloom products by the customers was

Limited to festive seasons and auspicious days. Taking advantage of the inability of the handloom customers to differentiate the handlooms from power looms, retailers and other channels duplicated handlooms with the power looms, thereby gaining profits. Now it is mostly at the weaver, and the master weaver one can get the genuine handloom products. Adding to this, the promotion of handloom textiles is very meager, and the weavers who are not educated enough has no promotional techniques.So,marketing strategies are attaining primary importance, and the research on consumer purchase and attitude patterns is mandatory.

2.Review Of Literature:

Ali & Mamun Habib (2012)[10] conducted a descriptive study on the current scenario of the

textile industry in Bangladesh and the scenario in terms of supply chain management (SCM). They discussed the constraints of the textile industry in Bangladesh, including ineffective communication, the invisibility of SCM, which would unlock further research to develop this sector. They developed a modified supply chain model for the textile industry in Bangladesh by adopting outsourcing to reduce the cost and concentrate on core business.Annapurna (2006)[15] found that the exhibition marketing allowed producers to produce the product at their own space by controlling their regular production cycles and gauging customer preferences. Gayatri and Kinslin (2016)[1] took a sample of 50 customers of handloom products from Trivandrum district, Kerala to understand the consumer awareness level and the most potent source of information and occasion which influence the consumer to buy handloom products. Seventy-four per cent of the customer could differentiate handloom products from other mill made products; 80 per cent of customers were less aware of marks and logos of handlooms. Some of the reasons identified were: few outlets and high cost of the handloom products compared to other products.Kalyani and Acharyulu (2015)[2] took data from the showrooms in Secundrabad division in Andhra Pradesh and found that product variables, retailer-specific variables, income and age groups were affecting the overall satisfaction of consumers of handlooms in Andhra Pradesh.Kumudha and Rizwana (2013)[5] conducted a study by selecting a sample of 600 customers from five different taluks in Erode District, Tamil Nadu. The study revealed that majority of the customers were male, and there was more scope to attract female population. They found that consumers were not very much aware of the handloom products, minimal customers were aware of shalwai as a product item in handloom product mix, and customers bought handlooms mainly when the individual need arises and during the festive seasons. They suggested sufficient Point of Sale display by handloom weavers cooperative societies, an initiative in creating awareness about handloom products, promotion by government about the regular rebate schemes and special rebate schemes offered during festival times, conduct of awareness programmers about handloom mark label, offering more variety and female-specific products like sarees, dress materials and offer more promotions like exclusive offers, rebates and free gifts during festival times.Malmaraugan (2008)[7] in his study analysed how word of mouth has control in making purchase decisions of the product saree. He had taken 128 sample size and collected the data through a questionnaire and analysed the result through the chi-square method. They found that word of mouth was the most influential power as compared to magazine, banner, TV, newspaper. It was two times efficient as radio advertising, four times as efficient as personal selling and seven times as efficient as newspapers and magazines. Meher (2000)[19] studied marketing practices in some developing countries of South East Asia. The study found that there exists a wide range of cooperative marketing practices concerning the formation, legal status, types, structural patterns, membership criteria, functional management and performance. Mohamed Ismail and Safrana (2015)[3] conducted a study to know the relationship between marketing strategies and customer retention in the handloom industry. They collected data from a sample size of 100 customers in Ampara district. They found that there had been a product and price, product and promotion strong positive relationship with customer retention and the product was the most effective factor of customer retention. Paco (2006)[9], in his study about consumer behavior in shopping, found that the quality of dressing rooms increases sales. Shopper conversion increased by 50 per cent when there was a staff initiated contact and by 100 per cent when there was a staff initiated contact with a dressing room. Pappeswari and Rajalakshmi (2013)[4] found that there existed no significant relationship between demographic variables, monthly income of the respondents, marital status and size of family, place of residence and their level of satisfaction in Thoothkudi region. They identified the need for installment facility, opening more branches, gifts, accepting consumer feedback to maintain good relation and reasonable price range for the marketing of the handlooms. Prasada Rao (2000)[20] in his thesis, found that the shortage of raw material and increase in the prices of various inputs led to increasing in the prices of handlooms and lower sales. Severe competition from the power loom sector as it can produce different varieties of clothes in different designs, colors, suitably to the tastes of the consumers. In a

nutshell, the industry is adopting production-oriented selling rather than a marketing concept. There has been no marketing research worth mentioning. The marketing practices adopted by the artisans are unscientific. The socio-economic conditions of artisans, organizational and production aspects, existing marketing practices and the consumers' attitude towards handlooms play a vital role in its development. Prem, Sadika and Mohan (2009)[6] conducted a study by collecting data from customers and exporters and secondary sources. They found that 85 % of the customers to use Handloom Products and most of them visit retail outlet on sale or discount followed by festivals and social occasions. They suggested the need for foreign market share, and innovation of looms and brand management in both of the markets, the opening of showrooms and retail outlet in the domestic market will add value to its marketing communication programme.Rachana and Ruby (2011)[13] conducted a study in Jaipur district. They recommended the exploration of the urban and niche market, implementation of electronic data interchange to reduce the lag periods or lead times, doing trend analysis every six months so that new products can be made. Value addition can be done to the existing product, designing institutions to train the weavers with innovative designs and colour combination, quality testing and colour fastness for every product and improving the packaging of the product. Rajagopalan (2006)[16], in his study, found that television was the dominant medium of promoting goods. The advertisements on television also influenced the middle-class consumers. In such a case, it was difficult to persuade them to adopt a simple lifestyle of wearing khadi and handloom fabrics.Rajeshwari (2009)[14] suggested up gradation of the technology, proper supply chain solution, implementation of a proper action plan for improving the performance of the handloom industry.Rama and Jyoti Kumar (2012)[11], their study was based on the mapping of Thenzawl, a village in Mizoram, developed as a handloom cluster. They analyzed aspects of marketing: share of different products in total sales, channels of distribution, terms of payment for sales, sales promotion techniques and participation in exhibit and fairs. They suggested cluster intervention initiatives to sustain the cluster. Ramachander

(2005)[18] in his study found that the marketer considered brands as the vehicle for superior value delivery. Brands would bind the relationship between the marketer and the user. Ramachandran, Anirvan and Saroj (2012)[12] for enquiring about the engagement of fabindia with Indian handloom artisans, interviewed 20 informants including managers, directors and CEO of the fabindia. They found that fabindia facilitated progression in poverty- the alleviation of handloom artisans. They suggested the threefold classification of substantive outcomes for the base of the pyramid (bop) producers – access to market, organization and ecosystem; the concept of 'bridging enterprise' which reconcile the interests of stakeholders across the pyramid could help on the efficacy of bop.Ravinder Vinayak (1986)[22] examined the marketing practices of handloom manufacturers and dealers in Haryana. It revealed that cost plus profit pricing and the use of direct and indirect channels were significant marketing practices. Sarvani and Balakrishnaiah (2009)[8] in their study aimed to analyse consumer awareness and consumer behavior towards khadi and Handloom products as one of their objectives. They found that, in Andhra Pradesh, 65 % of consumers were aware of Khadi and Handloom fabrics. Irrespective of the religion, communication and education levels, the consumers utilised exhibition, melas and rebate seasons by publicity and advertisements. Seemanthini et.al (2006)[17] studied the cooperatives, master weavers, ngos and major retail stores. They described the handloom industry, its dispersed production base, diversity, organization and nature of handloom market. Seetharaman (1987)[21] studied the marketing practices of Cooptex in Tamil Nadu. The study found that cotton fabrics continued to be an essential product and the product strategies were ineffective, and the cash flow in it was high during festive seasons. It suggested the need for optimization plan for production, marketing and finance.

3.Research Methodology:
The period of collection of primary data is from March 2018- April 2019. The study location was Nellore district (14°26′N80°0′E). The sample size is determined from the Cochran's formula $n = z^2 pq/e^2$, p= q= 0.5 (maximum variability in the

population is taken), q= 1- p = 50% = 0.5, e= 5% = 0.05 (taken), and 95% of confidence level taken for the study. Hence at 5% of significance z value =1.96, sample size n=384 approximately. Purposive sampling technique with equal strata was used for the study to carry out statistical testing. 384 sample handloom customers were mailed with structured questionnaires. The secondary source of data was collected from Digital libraries of SV University, Tirupati and IIM Bangalore were used for accessing the articles. Shodhganga and shodhsindu online platforms were also accessed for the thesis and articles. The Five-point Likert scale, Cranach alpha for reliability, chi-square test for association/relation, Kruskal Wallis and Mann Whitney test for testing significant difference between the medians of samples, Cramer's V for measure of association between the samples (Between 0 to 0.25 are very weak, 0.25 to 0.5 – weak, 0.5 to 0.75- moderate, 0.75 to 1- strong and 1-very strong); are used for the description of information gathered and for the critical analysis of sample study. IBM SPSS statistics 25 software had been used for analyzing the data.

4. Objectives Of The Study:

The study has been taken up with the following objectives: i) to study the customers' purchase patterns and attitude towards handloom textiles in SPS Nellore district and ii) to identify the handloom marketing leggedness with problem detection.

5.Findings:
i .Demographic Details:
Of all the handloom customers, 45.3% of the respondents had an age between 21-35 years. 46.1% of the respondents were residing in the city. 44.3% of the education of respondents was postgraduate. 63% of the respondents were married. 20.8% of the respondents were employees. 80.2% of the respondents had a family of size 2-4. 33.6% of the respondents had a family income of Rs.3-5 lakhs.

- **Null Hypothesis Testing 1**

H_0: There was no significant difference in the median scores of the annual family income across gender

- **Test Result:**

The p-value for the independent samples Mann-Whitney U test with a test statistic of 12866.5 was 0.000, which was less than 0.05,for the distribution of annual family income across gender, was strong evidence to reject the null hypothesis. Hence, we accept the alternative hypothesis that 'there was a significant difference in the median scores of annual family income across gender'. The observed power was 100%. There was no type II error. The ranks assigned by Mann-Whitney U test to gender concerning the annual family income stated that female customers stood first in the mean rank with value 221.49 (refer to table 1).

Table 1: Mann-Whitney U Test for The Distribution Of Annual Family Income Across Gender:

The rank of annual family income	Gender	N	Mean Rank	Mann-Whitney U test		
				The test statistic	Degrees of freedom	P-value
	Male	192	163.51 (II)	12866.500	1	0.0000
	Female	192	221.49 (I)			
	Total	384				

Source: Researcher's compilation
Note: Rank 1 assigned, with the smallest value.

ii. Awareness About Handloom Textiles:
Of all the handloom customers, 50.5% of the respondents could differentiate handloom products from others. 57.6% of the respondents had an awareness of the Indian handloom day. 56.3% of the handloom customers did not like to have Indo-western touch for handloom products. 50.5% of handloom customers can differentiate handloom products from others, and 38.3% of handloom customers rarely purchased handloom products. 78.6% of handloom customers had 'very high priority' for 'dignified look characteristic', and 33.1% of handloom customers had 'high priority' for 'comfort characteristic' of the handloom products. 33.3% of handloom customers had 'high priority' for 'swadeshi sentiment characteristic', and 78.6% of handloom customers had 'very high priority' for 'traditional

appearance characteristic' of the handloom products. 45.3% of handloom customers had 'medium priority' for the eco-friendly characteristic of the handloom products. 57% of the respondents had liked to purchase handloom textiles online followed by did not like to purchase as they do not know how to purchase online.
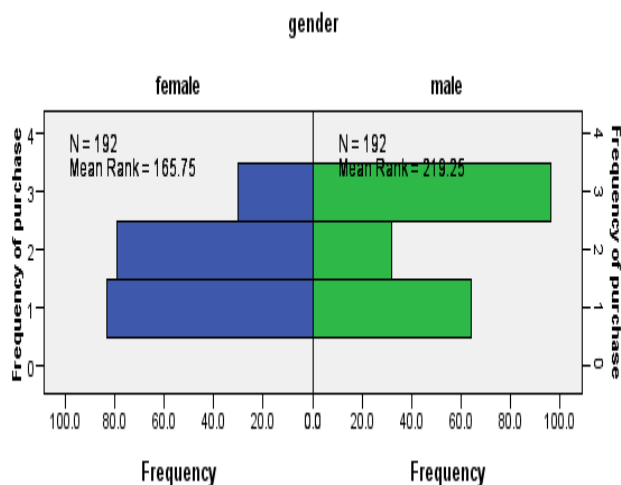
- **Null Hypothesis Testing 2:**

H_0: There was no significant difference in the median scores of the frequency of handloom products purchase across gender

- **Test Result:**

The p-value for the independent samples Mann-Whitney U test of test statistic 13296.00 of was 0.000, which was less than 0.05, for the distribution of frequency of handloom products purchase across gender, was strong evidence to reject the null hypothesis. Hence, we accept the alternative hypothesis that 'there was a significant difference in the median scores of the frequency of handloom products purchase across gender'. The power of the hypothesis test was 100%. There was no type II error.From the ranks assigned by the Mann-Whitney U test for the frequency of handloom products purchase across gender, it was evident that male had first mean rank (refer chart 1).

Chart 1: Frequency Distribution Of Frequency Of Handloom Products Purchase Across Gender:

Source: Researcher's compilation
Note: On the Y-axis; 1-rarely, 2-less frequently, 3-frequently

- **Null Hypothesis Testing 3:**

H_0: the ability to differentiate handloom products from others and gender, were independent

- **Test result**

A chi-square test $(x^2)$with 2 degrees of freedom was performed, resulting in the test statistic of 17.100. This resulted in an asymptotic p-value 0.000, which is less than 0.05, and therefore we have strong evidence to reject the null hypothesis. It was concluded that 'the ability to differentiate handloom products from others and gender, were dependent'. The probability of type II error for testing the null hypothesis was 0.016. The observed power was 98.4%. The Cramer's V value for the measure of association was 0.211, very weak (refer to table 2).

TABLE 2: Chi-Square Test For The Ability To Differentiate Handloom Products From Others Across Gender:

Chi-Square Tests			Measure of association Cramer's V
Pearson Chi-Square test statistic	Df	P-value (2-sided)	
17.100	2	.000	0.211

Source: Researcher's compilation

- **Null Hypothesis Testing 4:**

H_0: There was no association between the frequency of purchase of handloom products by handloom consumers and their ability to differentiate handloom fabrics from that of power loom and mill

- **Test Result:**

The p-value for the independent samples Kruskal-Wallis test of test statistic 21.568 with 2 degrees of freedom was 0.000, which was less than 0.05, the distribution of the frequency of purchase of handloom products with the ability to differentiate handloom fabrics from that of power loom and mill among the handloom product buyers, was a strong evidence to reject the null hypothesis. Hence, we accept the alternative hypothesis that 'there was an association between the frequency of purchase of handloom products by handloom consumers and their ability to

differentiate handloom fabrics from that of power loom and mill'. From the ranks assigned by the Kruskal-Wallis test for the frequency of purchase of handloom products with the ability to differentiate handloom fabrics from that of power loom and mill among the handloom product buyers, it was evident that if the buyers could differentiate handloom products, they would purchase more frequently with a rank of 214.86 (refer to chart 2).

Chart 2: The Association between The Frequency Of Handloom Products Purchase And The Ability To Differentiate Handloom Fabrics
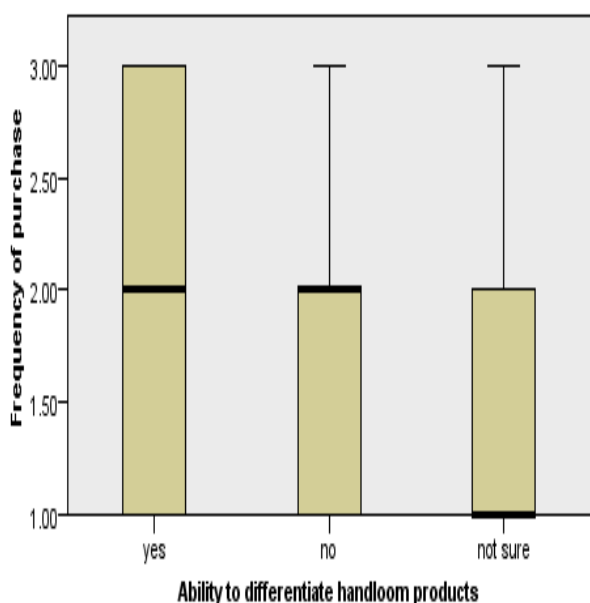
Source: Researcher's compilation
Note: On the Y-axis; 1-rarely,2-less frequently,3-frequently

iii. Attitude And Purchase:
Product:
Of all the handloom customers, 66.9% of them frequently purchased sarees. 13.8% of them like Chanderi, Venkatagiri, Paturu, Dharmavaram and Kota woven handloom products to purchase. 40.9% of them like 'tribal art and mango' design and have high priority during purchase. 48.4% of them did not like the 'triangle' design and not a priority during purchase. 36.7% of them like 'flowers' design and have medium priority during purchase. 41.4% of them like 'peacock' design and have high priority during purchase. 45.1% of them like 'animals' design and have medium

priority during purchase. 47.4% of them like 'plain' and have high priority during purchase. 40.1% of them like 'checks and lines' design and have medium priority during purchase. 63% of them purchased handloom products for personal use. 36.2% of them like light colors for handloom products. 86.7% of them purchased 2-4 years durable handloom products. 56.3% of them purchased 2-4 years durable handloom products. 44.3% of them preferred geographical identification. 50.5% of them got the plastic bag as packaging to the purchased handloom products. 44.3% of them were not so concerned about the type of packaging.

- **Null Hypothesis Testing 5:**
  H_0: There was no significant difference in the median scores of the priority for designs during purchase among age groups

- **Test Result:**
The p-value for the independent samples Kruskal Wallis of test statistic 19.867 of 2 degrees of freedom was 0.000, which was less than 0.05, for the distribution of priority for tribal art design across gender, was strong evidence to reject the null hypothesis. Hence, we accept the alternative hypothesis that 'there was a significant difference in the median scores of priority for tribal art design during purchase among age groups'. The power of the hypothesis test was 100%. There was no type II error. From the ranks assigned by the Kruskal Wallis test for the priority for tribal art design across gender, it was evident that the age group of 51-65 years had first mean rank.The p-value for the independent samples Kruskal Wallis of test statistic 32.588 of 2 degrees of freedom was 0.000, which was less than 0.05, for the distribution of priority for peacock design across gender, was strong evidence to reject the null hypothesis. Hence, we accept the alternative hypothesis that 'there was a significant difference in the median scores of priority for peacock design during purchase among age groups'. The power of the hypothesis test was 100%. There was no type II error. From the ranks assigned by the Kruskal Wallis test for the priority for peacock design across gender, it was evident that

the age group of 51-65 years had first mean rank. The p-value for the independent samples Kruskal Wallis of test statistic 19.867 of 2 degrees of freedom was 0.000, which was less than 0.05, for the distribution of priority of mango design across gender, was strong evidence to reject the null hypothesis. Hence, we accept the alternative hypothesis that 'there was a significant difference in the median scores of priority of mango design during purchase among age groups'. The power of the hypothesis test was 100%. There was no type II error.From the ranks assigned by the Kruskal Wallis test for the priority of mango design across gender, it was evident that the age group of 51-65 years had first mean rank. The p-value for the independent samples Kruskal Wallis of test statistic 37.062 of 2 degrees of freedom was 0.000, which was less than 0.05, for the distribution of priority of checks and lines design across gender, was strong evidence to reject the null hypothesis. Hence, we accept the alternative hypothesis that 'there was a significant difference in the median scores of priority of checks and lines design during purchase among age groups'. The power of the hypothesis test was 100%. There was no type II error.From the ranks assigned by the Kruskal Wallis test for the priority of checks and lines design across gender, it was evident that the age group of 51-65 years had first mean rank.The p-value for the independent samples Kruskal Wallis of test statistic 48.986 of 2 degrees of freedom was 0.000, which was less than 0.05, for the distribution of priority of plain design across gender, was strong evidence to reject the null hypothesis. Hence, we accept the alternative hypothesis that 'there was a significant difference in the median scores of priority of plain design during purchase among age groups'. The power of the hypothesis test was 100%. There was no type II error. From the ranks assigned by the Kruskal Wallis test for the priority of plain design

across gender, it was evident that the age group of 51-65 years had first mean rank (refer to table 3).

Table 3: Kruskal Wallis Test For The Distribution Of Priority To Designs Among Age Groups:

The rank of priority to designs	Age group (in years)	N	Mean Rank	Kruskal Wallis test		
				The test statistic (H)	Degrees of freedom	P-value
Tribal art	21-35	174	168.00 (III)	19.867	2	0.0000
	36-50	116	202.62 (II)			
	51-65	94	225.36 (I)			
Peacock	21-35	174	159.57 (III)	32.588	2	0.0000
	36-50	116	212.41(II)			
	51-65	94	228.88 (I)			
Mango	21-35	174	168.00 (III)	19.867	2	0.0000
	36-50	116	202.62 (II)			
	51-65	94	225.36 (I)			
Checks and lines	21-35	174	170.65 (III)	37.062	2	0.0000
	36-50	116	182.22 (II)			
	51-65	94	245.63 (I)			

Plain	21-35	174	162.70 (III)	48.986	2	0.000
	36-50	116	186.53 (II)			
	51-65	94	255.03 (I)			

Source: Researcher's compilation
**Note:** Rank 1 was assigned, with the smallest value

- **Null Hypothesis Testing 6**

H$_0$: The liking of colors for handloom products and gender, were independent

- **Test Result:**

A chi-square test (x^2) with 2 degrees of freedom was performed, resulting in the test statistic of 111.825. This resulted in an asymptotic p-value 0.000, which is less than 0.05, and therefore we have strong evidence to reject the null hypothesis. It was concluded that 'the liking of colours for handloom products and gender, were dependent'. There was no type II error. The observed power was 100%. The Cramer's V value for the measure of association was 0.540, moderate (refer to chart 3).

Chart 3: Frequency Distribution Of The Liking Towards Colors Across Gender
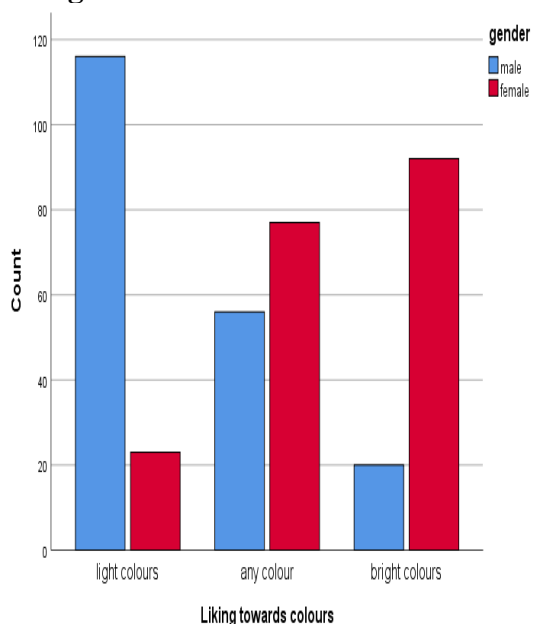
Source: Researcher's compilation
Note: count is the frequency

- **Null Hypothesis Testing 7:**

H$_0$: The geographical identification preference of handloom customers and gender, were independent

- **Test Result:**

A chi-square test (x^2) with 3 degrees of freedom was performed, resulting in the test statistic of 83.755. This resulted in an asymptotic p-value 0.000, which is less than 0.05, and therefore we have strong evidence to reject the null hypothesis. It was concluded that 'the geographical identification preference of handloom customers and gender, were dependent'. There was no type II error. The observed power was 100%. The Cramer's V value for the measure of association was 0.467, weak (refer to table 4).

Table 4: Chi-Square Test for The Usage Of Handloom Products And Gender:

Chi-Square Tests			Measure of association Cramer's V
Pearson Chi-Square test statistic	Df	P-value (2-sided)	
83.755	3	0.000	0.467

Source: Researcher's compilation

- **Null Hypothesis Testing 8:**

H$_0$: The type of handloom products and gender, were independent

- **Test Result:**

A chi-square test (x^2) with 4 degrees of freedom was performed, resulting in the test statistic of 67.910. This resulted in an asymptotic p-value 0.000, which is less than 0.05, and therefore we have strong evidence to reject the null hypothesis. It was concluded that 'the type of handloom products and gender, were dependent'. The probability of type II error for testing the null hypothesis was 0.004. The observed power was 99.6%. The Cramer's V value for the measure of association was 0.421, weak (refer to table 5).

Table 5: Chi-Square Test for The Type Of Handloom Products And Gender:

Chi-Square Tests			Measure of association Cramer's V
Pearson Chi-Square test statistic	Df	P-value (2-sided)	
67.910	4	0.000	0.421

Source: Researcher's compilation

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A. Price:

Of all the handloom customers, 38.5% of them purchased handloom products of cost Rs.2501-4500. 50.7% of them who purchased sarees, was of cost Rs.2501-4500. 82.8% of them who purchased dress materials, were of cost Rs.501-2500. 51.9% of them who purchased shirts/pyjamas, were of cost Rs.2501-4500. 34.1% of them who purchased bedsheets, was of cost Rs.2501-4500 and Rs.6501-8500 each. 59.2% of them dewana sets, were of cost Rs.2501-4500. 43.9% of them who purchased ready to wear, was of cost Rs.4501-6500. All of them who purchased handkerchiefs, was of cost Rs.1-250. 17.44% of them look for good looking design, high-quality yarn and great finishing to pay the price accordingly. 46.9% of them felt that goods and services tax had a moderate effect. 66.9% of them did not pay to handloom products out of prestige.
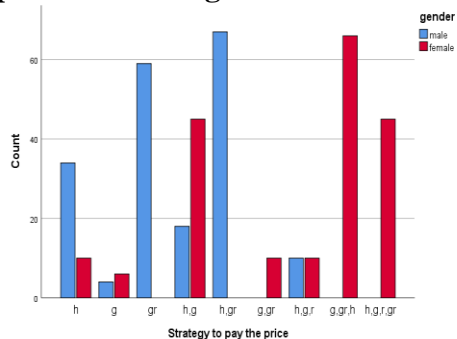
- **Null Hypothesis Testing 9:**

H_0: The strategy of handloom customers to pay the price for the handloom product and gender, were independent

- **Test Result:**

A chi-square test (x^2) with 3 degrees of freedom was performed, resulting in the test statistic of 272.062. This resulted in an asymptotic p-value 0.000, which is less than 0.05, and therefore we have strong evidence to reject the null hypothesis. It was concluded that 'the strategy of handloom customers to pay the price for the handloom product and gender, were dependent'. There was no type II error. The observed power was 100%. The Cramer's V value for the measure of association was 0.842, strong (refer to chart 4).

Chart 4: Frequency distribution of the strategy to pay the price for the handloom product across gender

Source: Researcher's compilation
Note: On X-axis; h is high-quality yarn, g is good looking design, gr is great finishing, r is rich border

B. Place:

Of all the handloom customers, 28.1% of them frequently purchase handloom products from retailers. 97.4% of them did not purchase from the weavers. 68.2% of them did not purchase from the master weavers. 43.2% of them did not purchase from the wholesalers. 62% of them did not purchase from the cooperative societies.

- **Null Hypothesis Testing 10:**

H_0: The channels at which handloom customers frequently purchase handloom products and gender, were independent

- **Test Result:**

A chi-square test (x^2) with 5 degrees of freedom was performed, resulting in the test statistic of 37.585. This resulted in an asymptotic p-value 0.000, which is less than 0.05, and therefore we have strong evidence to reject the null hypothesis. It was concluded that 'the channels at which handloom customers frequently purchase handloom products and gender, were dependent'. The probability of type II error in testing the null hypothesis was 0.026. The observed power was 97.4%. The Cramer's V value for the measure of association was 0.313, weak (refer to table 6).

Table 6: Chi-Square Test For Channels At Which Handloom Customers Frequently Purchase Handloom Products And Gender:

Chi-Square Tests			Measure of association Cramer's V
Pearson Chi-Square test statistic	Df	P-value (2-sided)	
37.585	5	0.000	0.313

Source: Researcher's compilation

C. Promotion:

Of all the handloom customers, 70.6% of them had social media as the most influential media that invoke all their purchases. 38.5% of them very frequently exposed to the promotion of handloom products through word of mouth. 48.4% of them never expose to promotion

through tv ads. 52.1% of the customers never exposed to the promotion of handloom products through newspapers and magazines. 44% of them less frequently exposed to the promotion of handloom products through social media. 70.6% of them never expose to promotion through banners. 47.9% of them like cash discounts. 63.3% of them did not purchase from e-commerce. 32.6% of the online shoppers, purchased handloom products from Gocoop and Weave smart. 43.3% of the online shoppers, purchased handloom products because of the less price, more varieties, door delivery and convenience of purchase. 59.6% of the online shoppers, frequently used cash on delivery as a mode of payment. 71.6% of the online shoppers, had no problems faced in e-commerce purchase of handloom products.

• **Null Hypothesis Testing 11:**
H_0: The liking of handloom customers towards sales promotion and gender, were independent

• **Test Result:**
A chi-square test (x^2) with 3 degrees of freedom was performed, resulting in the test statistic of 15.130. This resulted in an asymptotic p-value 0.002, which is less than 0.05, and therefore we have strong evidence to reject the null hypothesis. It was concluded that 'the liking of handloom customers towards sales promotion and gender, were dependent'. The probability of type II error in testing the null hypothesis was 0.128. The observed power was 87.2%. The Cramer's V value for the measure of association was 0.198, very weak (refer to table 7).

Table 7: Chi-Square Test For The Liking Of Handloom Customers Towards Sales Promotion and Gender:

Chi-Square Tests			Measure of association Cramer's V
Pearson Chi-Square test statistic	Df	P-value (2-sided)	
15.130	3	0.002	0.198

Source: Researcher's compilation

D. Problem Detection:
25.5% of them did not have complaints regarding the handloom products purchased. 54.9% of them

felt that handloom products are costly to pay. 36.7% of them felt that the sector was lacking good visual merchandising and timely home delivery facility. 35.9% of them felt that the sector was lacking discount/rebate sales, publicity and advertisements.

• **Null Hypothesis Testing 12:**
H_0: The complaints regarding the handloom product purchased and gender, were independent

• **Test Result:**
A chi-square test (x^2) with 9 degrees of freedom was performed, resulting in the test statistic of 224.076. This resulted in an asymptotic p-value 0.000, which is less than 0.05, and therefore we have strong evidence to reject the null hypothesis. It was concluded that 'the complaints regarding the handloom product purchased and gender, were dependent'. The probability of type II error in testing the null hypothesis was 0.172. The observed power was 82.8%. The Cramer's V value for the measure of association was 0.764, strong (refer to chart 5).

Chart 5: Frequency Distribution Of The Complaints Regarding Purchased Handloom Products Across Gender:
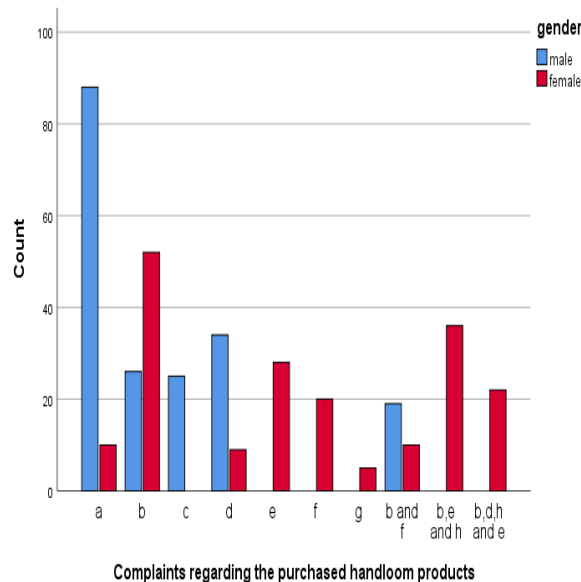
Source: Researcher's compilation
Note: On X-axis; a-no, b-color bleeding, c-lack of wide range of patterns and designs, d-lack of variety of products, e- less quality and durability, f-folding and shrinking of cloth after wash, g-loosening of the fiber interlock and protruding like balls, h-damages; count is the frequency

E. Suggestions:

44.8% of handloom customers were 'neutral' towards the need for direct marketing and e-commerce. 37% of handloom customers 'strongly agree' the need for branding and promotion. 56.5% of handloom customers 'strongly agree' the need for advertisements.38% of handloom customers 'strongly agree' the need for self-help groups. 54.4% of handloom customers 'strongly agree' the need for curtailing duplication of the weave.

- **Null Hypothesis Testing 13:**

H$_0$: There was no significant difference in the median scores of the suggestions to improve the handloom sector's marketing strategies across gender

- **Test Result:**

The p-value for the independent samples Mann-Whitney U test of test statistic 11738.500 of was 0.000, which was less than 0.05, for the distribution of need for direct marketing and E-commerce to improve the marketing strategies of the handloom sector across gender, was strong evidence to reject the null hypothesis. Hence, we accept the alternative hypothesis that 'there was a significant difference in the median scores of the need for direct marketing and E-commerce to improve the marketing strategies of the handloom sector across gender'. There was no type II error, and the power of the hypothesis test was 100%The p-value for the independent samples Mann-Whitney U test of test statistic 12725.000 of was 0.000, which was less than 0.05, for the distribution of need for advertisements to improve the marketing strategies of the handloom sector across gender, was strong evidence to reject the null hypothesis. Hence, we accept the alternative hypothesis that 'there was a significant difference in the median scores of the need for advertisements to improve the marketing strategies of the handloom sector across gender'. The probability of type II error for testing the null hypothesis was 0.002, and the power of the hypothesis test was 99.8%.The p-value for the independent samples Mann-Whitney U test of test statistic 14653.000 of was 0.000, which was less than 0.05, for the distribution of need for self-help groups to improve the marketing strategies of the handloom sector across gender, was strong

evidence to reject the null hypothesis. Hence, we accept the alternative hypothesis that 'there was a significant difference in the median scores of the need for self-help groups to improve the marketing strategies of the handloom sector across gender'. The probability of type II error for testing the null hypothesis was 0.034, and the power of the hypothesis test was 96.6%.The p-value for the independent samples Mann-Whitney U test of test statistic 15936.000 of was 0.000, which was less than 0.05, for the distribution of need for curtailing duplication of the weave to improve the marketing strategies of the handloom sector across gender, was strong evidence to reject the null hypothesis. Hence, we accept the alternative hypothesis that 'there was a significant difference in the median scores of the need for self-help groups to improve the marketing strategies of the handloom sector across gender'. There was no type II error, and the power of the hypothesis test was 100%.From the ranks assigned by the Mann-Whitney U test for the need to improve the marketing strategies of the handloom sector across gender, it was evident that female had first mean rank in all the priorities (refer to table 8).

Table 8: Kruskal-Wallis Test For Suggestions To Improve The Handloom Sector's Marketing Strategies Across Gender

Suggestions to improve the handloom sector's marketing strategies	Gender	Mann-Whitney U test		Mean Rank	
		The test statistic (U)	P-value		
Direct marketing and E-commerce	Male	11738.500	0.000	157.64	(II)
	Female			227.36	(I)
Advertisements	Male	12725.000	0.000	162.78	(II)
	Female			222.22	(I)
Self-help groups	Male	14653.000	0.000	172.82	(II)
	Female			212	(I

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	ale			.18	)
Curtailing duplicatio n of weave	**Mal e**	15936. 000	0.00 0	179 .50	(I I)
	Fem ale			205 .50	(I)

Source: Researcher's compilation
Note: Rank 1 was assigned, with the smallest

1. Limitations Of The Study:

The study is confined only to Nellore district. The prevailing conditions may differ from place to place. The study is focused only on one aspect, i.e. marketing strategies and hence does not include finance, human resource and other aspects.

2. Conclusion:

This study on the target customers revealed that they were not much aware of how to differentiate the handloom products from others, the benefits of wearing it in a tropical climate. There was no much promotion. They felt the need for Indo-Western touch to the handlooms, which is lagging. Majority of them felt that handloom products are costly to pay and was lacking good visual merchandising and timely home delivery facility, lacking discount/rebate sales, publicity and advertisements. Hence, there is a need to work on these aspects.

3. Recommendations:

Funding to be provided by the government for market research to assess the product, price, place and promotion preferences of the consumer. Accordingly equip the weavers with machinery, skills and support by increasing the budget allocation for the handloom sector. There is a need to make promotional interviews and advertisements on the uniqueness and eco-friendliness of handloom sector by the Indian celebrities of different fields like film actors, yoga gurus, physicians and sportspersons, and making one of the renowned people of India as the brand ambassador for the handloom weaves and publicizing in all their public appearances by wearing handlooms. Awareness can be created among the consumers by creating advertisements and campaigns on how to differentiate handloom products from that of power looms to identify the Duplicates in the market.

Contribution Statement:
The study will help us to know the attitude and purchase patterns of handloom customers. This will also help us to know about their awareness levels on the recent trends like national handlooms day, their ability to find the difference in fabrics from other sectors. The preferences in choosing colours, designs and the type of products, the price paid, the frequently visited channel and the promotions that attract the most are well discussed. The problems customers feel that the handloom sector has to overcome is also discussed.

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