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N. Kaviya
III B. Com 'C'.
Idhaya College For Women,
Kumbakonam

Priyadharshini.K
III B. Com 'C'.
Idhaya College For Women,
Kumbakonam

Dhivya Lakshmi
III B. Com 'C'.
Idhaya College For Women,
Kumbakonam

Correspondence:
N. Kaviya
III B. Com 'C'.
Idhaya College For Women,
Kumbakonam

A STUDY ON THE MARKETING OF TRADITIONAL HANDLOOM PRODUCTS IN THE DIGITAL ERA

N. Kaviya , Priyadharshini.K, Dhivya Lakshmi

Abstract
This article focuses on the marketing of traditional handloom products in the digital era. Handloom products represent the cultural heritage, creativity and traditional skills of artisans. However, handloom producers face challenges such as changing customer preferences, competition from machine-made products, limited market reach and lack of awareness. Digital marketing provides new opportunities for promoting handloom products through social media, e-commerce platforms and online advertising. The study examines the importance of effective marketing strategies in increasing the visibility, customer reach and market potential of traditional handloom products. It also highlights the role of branding, pricing, promotion and digital platforms in connecting artisans with modern consumers.

INTRODUCTION

Marketing plays an important role in connecting products with customers and creating awareness in the market. Traditional handloom products are an important part of India's cultural heritage and are known for their unique designs, craftsmanship and traditional techniques. Sarees, fabrics, towels, shawls and other handloom products are produced by skilled artisans using traditional methods.

In the modern market, handloom products face competition from machine-made and mass-produced products. Changes in customer preferences and the increasing use of online shopping have also influenced the way these products are marketed. Digital platforms such as social media and e-commerce websites provide opportunities for artisans and businesses to reach customers beyond their local markets.

Therefore, effective marketing is essential for increasing awareness, improving sales and preserving the demand for traditional handloom products. This study focuses on the marketing practices and opportunities available for traditional handloom products in the digital era.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To study the marketing of traditional handloom products in the digital era.
- To understand the factors influencing the marketing and purchase of handloom products.
- To identify the role of digital platforms in promoting traditional handloom products.
- To study the challenges faced in marketing handloom products.
- To suggest suitable marketing strategies for improving the market reach of handloom products.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The study covers the marketing of traditional handloom products in the modern digital environment. It focuses on products such as handloom sarees, fabrics, towels, shawls and other traditional textile products. The study considers important marketing aspects such as product quality, pricing, distribution, promotion, branding and customer awareness.

The study also covers the use of digital marketing methods such as social media, e-commerce platforms and online advertising. It helps to understand how traditional handloom businesses can use modern marketing techniques to reach a wider customer base while maintaining the cultural value of their products.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Traditional handloom products have great cultural and economic importance, but their marketing faces several challenges. Many handloom products have limited **visibility**

outside their local markets and face strong competition from machine-made products.

Another major problem is changing consumer preferences and increasing demand for convenient online shopping. Small artisans and producers may also have limited knowledge of digital marketing, branding and online selling.

Therefore, there is a need to study effective marketing strategies that can improve the visibility, customer reach and sales of traditional handloom products in the digital era.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study is based mainly on secondary data collected from books, journals, articles, websites, reports and other relevant sources related to handloom products and marketing. The collected information is analysed to understand the existing marketing practices, challenges and opportunities in the handloom sector.

SOURCE OF DATA

The information for the study was collected from relevant books, articles, websites, reports, and other sources related to traditional handloom products and digital marketing.

SAMPLE

The study considers 50 consumers to understand their awareness, preferences, and purchasing behaviour towards traditional handloom products in the digital era.

RESEARCH DESIGN

The study follows a descriptive research design. It describes the present marketing practices, consumer preferences, digital marketing methods, and challenges faced in promoting traditional handloom products.

LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

- The study is limited to a selected number of consumers and may not represent the views of all consumers.
- The study focuses mainly on the marketing of traditional handloom products in the digital era and does not cover all types of handicraft products.
- Changes in digital marketing trends and consumer preferences may affect the findings of the study over time.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

1. MohammadZohair(2016) studied the "Marketing Determinants Influencing Retail of Handloom Products in India." The study examined the factors influencing the retail marketing of handloom products and highlighted the challenges faced by handloom products due to competition from power looms, mills and imported textiles.

2. SamiraPatra(2021) studied the "Role of E-Market in Marketing of Handloom Products." The study examined the role of e-market platforms in promoting handloom products and found that online marketing can increase the popularity and market reach of handloom products.

3.PayalMohitKumarTrivedi,FalguniVasavada-OzaandRajneeshKrishna(2023) studied "Tell Me a Story! Antecedents to Purchase of Handloom Products in India." The study examined factors such as story marketing, region of origin and perceived value that influence consumers' attitudes and purchase intentions towards handloom products.

4. S.Vanitha,C.B.SenthilkumarandD.Shenbagavalli(2025) studied the "Digital Marketing Role on Promotion of Towards Handloom Sarees in Chennai City." The study examined the promotional role of digital marketing and identified factors such as promotional activities, user experience, information features and risk perception in online purchasing of handloom sarees.

5. SamiraPatra(2025) studied the "Role of Social Media in Marketing of Handloom Products: A Study on Cuttack District of Odisha." The study examined the role of social media in promoting handloom products and reported that online platforms can improve product popularity and marketing reach.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Factors Influencing the Purchase of Handloom Products

S. No.	Factor	Respondents	Percentage
1	Quality	74	37%
2	Artisan Skill	46	23%
3	Location	35	17.5%
4	Comfort	25	12.5%
5	Price	20	10%
Total		**200**	**100%**

INTERPRETATION

The table shows that **quality is the most important factor**, with 37% of respondents considering it in their purchase decision. Artisan skill is the next important factor at 23%. Location, comfort and price account for 17.5%, 12.5% and 10% respectively. This indicates that maintaining quality and highlighting the skill involved in handloom production can be important marketing considerations.

Customer Awareness Towards Handloom Promotion

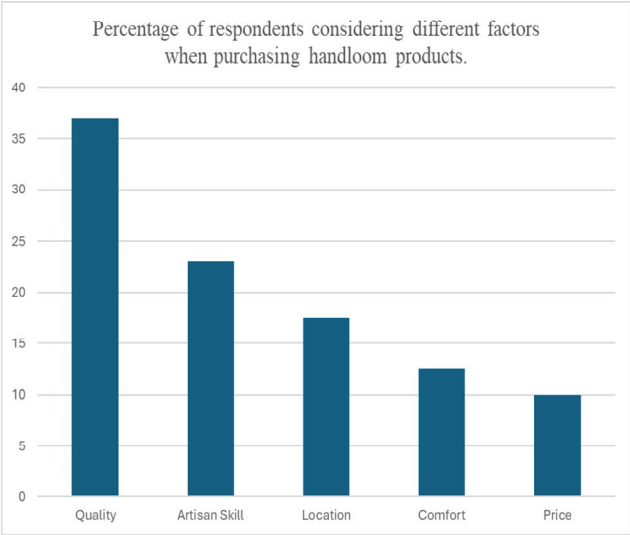
S. No.	Promotional Aspect	Percentage
1	Purchase after print-media advertisement	59.5%
2	Purchase through friends'/relatives' reference	69.5%
3	Preference due to quality and artisan work	70%
4	Purchase at exhibitions or sales	70%
5	Believe social-media marketing can help sales	64%
Average	**Awareness towards handloom promotion**	**66.6%**

INTERPRETATION

The data shows that 70% of respondents gave preference to handloom products because of their quality and artisan work, while the same percentage reported purchasing at exhibitions or sales. About 64% felt that social-media marketing could help in selling handloom products.

Overall, the study reported an average promotional awareness of 66.6%.

Factors Influencing the Purchase of Handloom Products



INTERPRETATION

The secondary data indicates that **product quality and artisan skill are important purchase considerations**, while promotional activities such as exhibitions, recommendations and social-media marketing can contribute to awareness and sales. Therefore, handloom marketers can focus on communicating product quality, craftsmanship and traditional value while using suitable digital promotional methods.

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

- The study found that product quality is an important factor influencing customers' purchase of handloom products.
- Artisan skill and craftsmanship play an important role in creating value and interest in traditional handloom products.
- Customers are influenced by promotional activities such as exhibitions, sales and recommendations from friends and relatives.
- Digital marketing, particularly social media, provides opportunities to create awareness and improve the market reach of handloom products.
- Competition from machine-made products and changing customer preferences remain important challenges for traditional handloom products.
- Combining traditional craftsmanship with modern marketing methods can help handloom products connect with a wider customer base.

SUGGESTIONS

- Handloom businesses should make greater use of social media platforms to showcase their products, designs and craftsmanship.
- Attractive product photographs, videos and informative descriptions can be used to improve online promotion.
- Artisans and small handloom businesses should be provided with basic training in digital marketing and e-commerce.
- Handloom products should be promoted by highlighting their quality, uniqueness, traditional value and handmade nature.
- E-commerce and direct online selling can be encouraged to help handloom producers reach customers beyond their local markets.
- Exhibitions, cultural events and online promotional campaigns can be combined to create greater awareness among younger consumers.

CONCLUSION

Traditional handloom products represent India's rich cultural heritage and the skills of its artisans. However, changing consumer preferences, competition from machine-made products and limited market reach create challenges for the handloom sector.

The study indicates that modern marketing methods, particularly digital marketing, provide opportunities to promote traditional handloom products to a wider audience. Social media, e-commerce platforms, online promotion and attractive product presentation can improve product visibility and customer awareness.

Therefore, combining traditional craftsmanship with suitable modern marketing strategies can support the wider promotion and continued market presence of handloom products in the digital era.

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