

Awareness of post graduate students towards the handloom products

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■ **ABSTRACT** : Handloom fabric that belongs to Indian legacy has a unique characteristic as compare to mill made fabric. In this era of climate change it becomes more important to adopt this environmental friendly Indian tradition. Production of handloom fabric is not only helpful to provide the employment but also have an important part in Indian economics. But now in this mechanised era the significance and awareness of this beautiful handloom fabric is being lessened day by day. The present study is an attempt to understand the young adult consumer awareness about handloom products. The present investigation was carried out to assess the awareness level of post graduate students towards *Khadi* and other handloom fabric in an agricultural university of Kumaon region of Uttarakhand, India during the year 2015. G.B. Pant University of Agriculture and Technology, Pantnagar was selected. Total 60 students were taken as respondents. Random sampling was used for this purpose. It was found that awareness is not sufficient and there is need to create a proper awareness tool regarding awareness of handloom products.

■ **KEY WORDS**: *Khadi*, Handloom fabric, Environmental friendly, Random sampling

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Handloom industry is the part of Indian legacy. The Handloom (Reservation and Articles for Production) Act, 1985, defined handloom as “any loom other than power loom”. It is the source of employment for number of people. This sector contributes nearly 19 per cent of the total cloth produced in the country and also adds substantially to export earnings (Kaushik and Jain, 2015). The first national handloom day of India has been launched on 7th August 2015. On the same day the Indian handloom brand has been launched by the prime minister, for better market

positioning of quality handloom products. The Handloom brand signifies high quality defect free, socially and environmentally compliant products for catering to the needs of high end consumers (PIB, 2014). Handloom fabric has a diverse product range. *Khadi* fabric is also the part of handloom fabric. The main difference between *Khadi* and other handloom fabric is that the fabrics made up of hand spun yarn and woven on handlooms are called “*Khadi*”, while the fabric made up of mill spun yarn while woven on handlooms are called “handloom” fabrics (Castelino, 2014). Despite of

its lots of significance handloom industry loses its importance, according to the third and latest handloom census the number of persons engaged in weaving and allied activities was lower than the earlier one (Handloom Census, 2009-10). According to Nadh *et al.* (2013) the lack of awareness about the handloom product features and Lack of availability of market information about these products among consumers is the main reason of the problems of the handloom sector. Insufficient promotion and advertisement of handloom is the another reason for the degradation of this sector. The status of handloom sector is declining day by day; hence there is an urgent need to revive this industry. For the revival of industry government has been taken various initiatives in form of various schemes. Designers and researchers also working for the revival of the industry but if the consumer are not aware about the importance of handloom industry; all other effort to revive this industry will go in to vain. It is necessary to know the awareness of young consumer about the handloom products so that proper initiatives could be taken according to their awareness level. Consumers are individuals who buy products for household consumption or for themselves. Consumer awareness refers to a buyer's knowledge of a particular product or services which he/she is going to consume. The consumer may or may not be conscious about the originality and quality of the products which he is going to consume (Kumudha *et al.*, 2013). Hence, the present study was done to understand the consumer awareness about the handloom products. The objective of this study was

- To study the consumer buying behaviour about handloom fabric
- To know the awareness towards *Khadi* and handloom fabric
- To assess the consumer preference towards *Khadi* and handloom fabric

■ RESEARCH METHODS

An exploratory research was conducted in G.B. Pant University of Agriculture and Technology, Pantnagar in U.S. Nagar, Uttarakhand. All colleges of the university were considered as strata for selection of respondents by using simple random sampling without replacement technique with the help of random number table. Total 60 students were selected as respondents which were

Ph.D. students. For conducting survey, a self-structured questionnaire covering important aspects related to *Khadi* and handloom fabric was employed as a tool. Then collected data was tabulated for the analysis and interpretation. For finding percentage simple comparison was done by using the percentage values, which were calculated by dividing the frequency of a particular cell by total number of respondents and multiplying by hundred. The following formula was employed for calculation of percentage.

$$P = \frac{n}{N} * 100$$

where

n=Frequency of a particular cell,

N=Total number of respondent

P= Percentage, after interpretations findings are drawn.

■ RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The findings of the present study as well as relevant discussion have been presented under following heads :

General profile of respondents :

It is clear from the Table 1 that female respondents (66.67) were more as compared to male respondents (33.33). The reason is that the number of female student enrolled in the university is more as compare to male student. Majority of the respondents were hindu (93.33), only 6.67 per cent respondents were muslim. In case of family income range majority of respondents were in the category of 3-5 lakh per annum family income range. More than half (66.67) of respondents did not get any type of scholarship. Family income range and scholarship of the student may become a factor that can affect the buying practices of consumer.

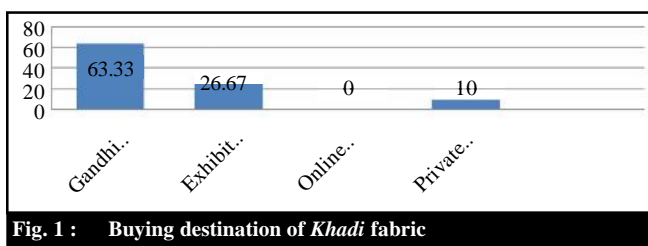
Consumption pattern of *Khadi* and handloom fabric:

It is clear from Fig. 1 that majority of respondent (63.33%) preferred Gandhi Ashram as a buying destination to buy *Khadi* fabric. While 26.67 per cent of respondents preferred exhibition and trade fair as a buying destination for handloom products. This may be due to the reason that Gandhi Ashrams were more easily accessible in the local area as compared to seasonal trade and fair. Only 10 per cent of the respondents preferred private retailer's shops for purchasing handloom fabric.

It is clear from Fig. 2 majority of respondents

Table 1 : General profile of university student

Sr. No.	Parameters	Frequency	Per cent
Gender			
1.	Male	20	33.33
2.	Female	40	66.67
Religion			
1.	Hindu	56	93.33
2.	Muslim	4	6.67
Family income range			
1.	Below 1 lakh	10	16.67
2.	1-3 lakh per anum	16	26.67
3.	3-5 lakh per anum	21	35
4.	5 lakh per anum	13	21.67
Scholarship status			
	Yes	20	33.33
	No	40	66.67



(51.67) have the handloom products within the range of 1 to 5, followed by 45 per cent of respondent that did not possess any type of handloom garments. While very few (1.67 %) respondents fell in the category of 5 to 10 handloom garments. The 45 per cent of respondents did not possess any kind of handloom fabric because they did not know about the unique and important quality of handloom fabric as compare to mill made fabric.



It is clear from Fig. 3 that majority of the respondents (56%) did not possess any type of Khadi fabric followed by 42 per cent respondents possessed only 1 to 2 khadi garments in their wardrobe. Only 2 per cent of respondents were categorised into having 5 to 10 Khadi garments. The reason may be the less awareness and availability of Khadi fabric in local

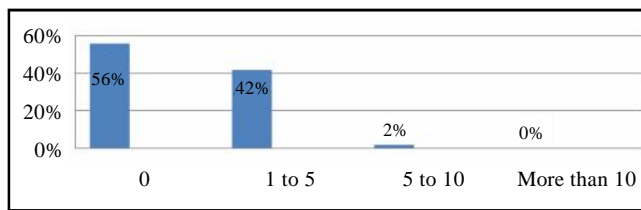


Fig. 3 : No. of Khadi garments in wardrobe

market.

Awareness regarding handloom fabric:

Awareness has been covered in different aspects. These different aspects are as follows :

Awareness about meaning of Khadi:

It is clear from Table 2 that 66.67 per cent respondent were aware about the real meaning of Khadi fabric i.e. Khadi is made up of hand spun yarn and woven on handloom. Only 11.67 considered that Khadi is made up of hand spun yarn and woven on mechanised loom, which is not the real meaning of Khadi. 8.33 per cent of respondents considered that Khadi is made up of machine spun yarn and woven on handloom. This is also not a real meaning of Khadi. While none of the respondent considered that the Khadi is machine spun and machine woven fabric.

Awareness about different types of handloom products :

Table 3 enlightens that majority of the respondents (45%) were aware about the fact that the shawls are the type of handloom products followed by 40 per cent, 33.33 and 21.67 per cent of the respondents that considered that the bed sheets, salwar suits and sarees, respectively are include under the handloom products. While very few respondent were aware about lungis and bath linen. Only 11.67 respondents were aware about that handloom product also comprises the kitchen linen also. Table 3 predicts the consumers are not aware about the each diversified product range of handloom.

Awareness about the significance of handloom fabrics:

Table 4 indicates the awareness of respondents about the significance of handloom fabrics. From the analysis of data it was found that majority of respondent (53.33) were aware about the unique quality of Khadi i.e. cool in summer and warm in winter followed by 48.33 per cent of respondents, who knew that handloom products are environmental friendly and helpful to boost

our country's economy. 46.67 per cent of respondent were aware about that handloom products are less harmful to skin and helpful to reduce unemployment. Very few respondents (28.33) were aware about the fact that handloom products are also helps to save electricity.

Awareness about the type of fibre used in handloom fabric :

It is clear from Table 5 that only 13.33 per cent respondent were aware about the fact that the *Khadi* fabric could be made out of any of cotton, silk and wool fibre. Majority of people considered that *Khadi* can only be made up of cotton fibre, the silk and wool cannot be used.

Awareness towards the brand of handloom :

It is envisaged from the data presented in Table 6 that only 30 per cent of the respondents were aware about the handloom brand.

Awareness towards the use of *Khadi* fabric :

It is clear from Table 7 that only 20 per cent of the respondents agreed on the fact that *Khadi* can be wear in any season, while 66.67 and 16.67 per cent of respondents considered that *Khadi* could be wear only in summer and winter season, respectively.

Preferences regarding the handloom fabric:

Preferences regarding the type of design:

Fig. 4 clearly infers the preference regarding the

Table 2 : Respondent's awareness about meaning of *Khadi*

Sr. No.	Awareness statement	Frequency	Percentage
1.	<i>Khadi</i> is Machine spun and machine woven fabric	0	0
2.	<i>Khadi</i> is Hand spun and machine woven fabric	7	11.67
3.	<i>Khadi</i> is Hand spun and hand woven fabric	40	66.67
4.	<i>Khadi</i> is Machine spun and hand woven fabric	5	8.33

Table 3 : Respondent's awareness about different types of handloom products

Sr. No.	Awareness statement	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Handloom products include sarees	13	21.67
2.	Handloom products include salwar suits	20	33.33
3.	Handloom products include bed sheets	24	40
4.	Handloom products include towels	18	30
5.	Handloom products include lungis	8	13.33
6.	Shawls/scarves/stoles	27	45
7.	Handloom products include kitchen linen	7	11.67
8.	Handloom products include bath linen	8	13.33

Table 4 : Respondent's awareness about the significance of handloom fabrics

Sr. No.	Awareness statement	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Handloom products are environmental friendly	29	48.33
2.	Handloom products are less harmful to skin	28	46.67
3.	Handloom products are unique quality of cool in summer and warm in winter	32	53.33
4.	Handloom products are helpful to reduce unemployment	28	46.67
5.	Handloom products are helpful to boost our country's economy	29	48.33
6.	Handloom products are helpful to Save electricity	17	28.33

Table 5: Respondent's awareness about the type of fibre used in handloom fabric

Sr. No.	Awareness statement	Frequency	Percentage
1.	<i>Khadi</i> fabric is made up of silk fibre	8	13.33
2.	<i>Khadi</i> fabric is made up of wool	6	10
3.	<i>Khadi</i> fabric is made up of cotton	23	38.33
4.	All type of above fibres could be used in <i>Khadi</i> fabric	8	13.33

Table 6 : Respondent’s awareness towards the brand of handloom

Sr. No.	Awareness towards the brand of handloom	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Do you know about the handloom brand	18	30

Table 7 : Respondent’s awareness towards the use of Khadi fabric

Sr. No.	Different seasons for wearing Khadi	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Khadi fabric can be wear summer	40	66.67
2.	Khadi fabric can be winter	10	16.67
3.	Khadi fabric can be rainy season	0	0
4.	Khadi fabric can be every season	12	20

Table 8 : Reason that could increase the buying practices regarding Khadi

Sr. No.	Reason that could increase the satisfaction level of youth about the handloom products	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Reduce the price	36	60
2.	Increase the availability (online and offline both)	33	55
3.	Improved quality /colour /durability	23	38.33
4.	Innovative design	34	56.67
5.	More number of varieties	30	50
6.	As per the latest fashion and trends	23	38.33
7.	More advertising	18	30
8.	Increase awareness	27	45

design in handloom fabric. Majority of respondent (58.33%) preferred the combination of both traditional and western designs. 41.67 per cent of respondents preferred the traditional designs. While western designs were not preferred by any respondent. The reason may be the association of handloom fabric with the nation’s heritage.

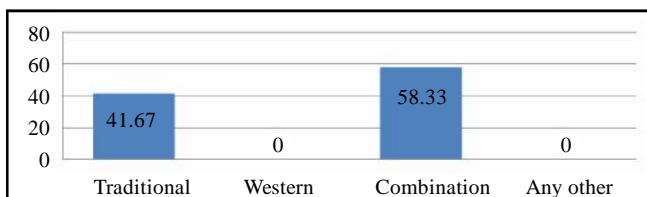


Fig. 4 : Preferences of designs in handloom fabric

Preferences towards value addition of Khadi fabric:

It is clear from the Fig. 5 that 40 per cent of the respondent preferred that there should be the more number of designs in Khadi fabrics to add value in it. Value addition of smooth surface to the Khadi fabric was preferred by 36.67 per cent of respondent. Only 20 per cent of the respondents said that the Khadi fabric was preferred by them if there would be the addition of bright colours into that.

Preferences towards the quality of Khadi fabric:

It is clear from Fig. 6 that the quality of Khadi fabric

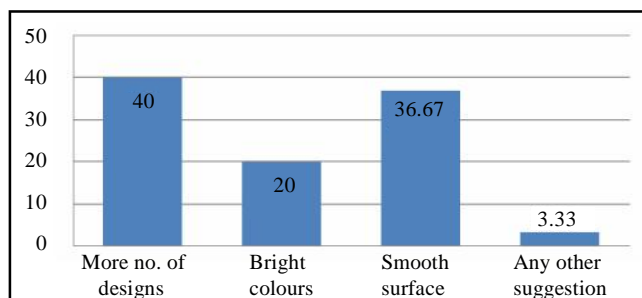


Fig. 5 : Preferences towards the value addition of Khadi fabric

was considered good as compare to other fabric by the majority of respondents (66.67). While the quality of Khadi fabric considered as fairly good and excellent by the 20 per cent and 13.33 per cent of respondents.

Reason for avoiding Khadi fabric:

It is clear from Fig. 7 shows the reasons for avoiding the Khadi fabric. Majority of respondents 38.33 considered that Khadi as a costly fabric because of this they avoided to buy Khadi and other handloom fabrics. 28.33 per cent of respondents considered that the Khadi and handloom fabric are not easily available. While 16.67 and 13.33 per cent respondents avoided to buy the Khadi fabric because of its colour fading and lacking of proper designing according to contemporary style. Only 1.67 per cent of the respondents considered that the poor services and less durability of the fabric was

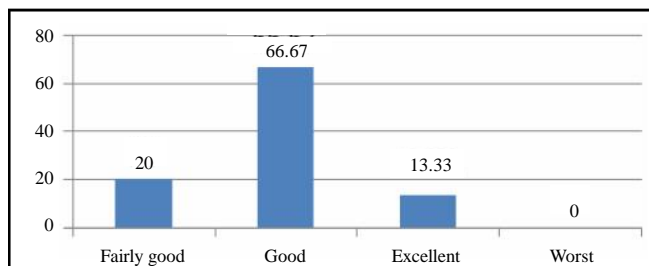


Fig. 6 : Quality of *Khadi* fabric in comparison to other brand

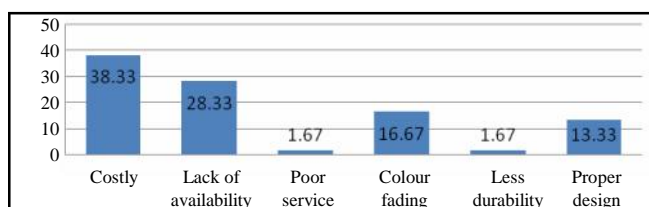


Fig. 7 : Reason for avoiding *Khadi* fabric

the main reason to avoid *Khadi* and handloom fabric.

Reason that could increase the buying practices regarding *Khadi* :

It is clear from Table 8 that majority of respondents (60%) were in the favour that the reduction in price of handloom products could increase the satisfaction level of consumer about the handloom products followed by 56.67 and 55 per cent of the respondents, who considered that the innovative designs and increasing the availability could increase the satisfaction level of the customer. 50 per cent and 45 per cent of the respondents considered that there should be more number of varieties and increment of awareness about handloom products, respectively that could increase the satisfaction level of the customers. 38.33 per cent of respondents agreed that only improved quality and designing of handloom fabrics per the latest fashion could increase the satisfaction level of the consumers. Only 30 per cent respondents considered that the more advertising could increase the satisfaction level of the consumer.

Conclusion :

The above study reveals that majority of respondent are not aware about the handloom products. Online shopping practices of these handloom fabrics are almost negligible among young consumers. There is need to create awareness towards the online shopping of the

handloom fabrics. This can also reduces the cost of product because of the exclusion of middleman. The above study reveals that majority of young consumer are not aware about significance of handloom products, while 70 per cent of the respondent did not aware about the handloom brand. There is need to conduct more awareness programme to increase awareness about the significance of handloom products and about the Indian handloom brand. The problem of this particular handloom sector is interdisciplinary. When each discipline like designers, researchers, engineers and marketers come together and will make a combined effort to solve the problem only then the problem of this handloom sector could be solved for example the value addition of handloom fabric by the researchers and designers helps the marketers to promote the handloom fabric in a unique way. An awareness tool can also be created to sensitise the young consumers so that they become more tend towards the buying of handloom products

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