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“A Study On The Consumer Preference Towards Khadi Dhotis In Thrissur District, Kerala”

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Abstract: This study focuses on understanding consumers preference towards khadi dhotis in Thrissur district, Kerala with special reference to raising interest in traditional and sustainable clothing. Khadi dhotis appeal to both the elderly and youth bridging generations through cultural pride and traditional value. They are comfortable and versatile suitable for daily wear as well as religious, cultural and ceremonial occasions. The researcher highlights the influencing factors design, comfort, price, quality, availability and cultural attachment to purchase khadi dhotis. Consumers preferences are closely associated with the changes in life style, income levels and fashion trends. Modern consumers especially youth combine the tradition with contemporary design, comfort and affordability.

Index Terms -Khadi dhotis, consumers preference.

I. INTRODUCTION

Khadi wins a vital role in Indias cultural and economic development. Woven from hand spun yarn khadi fabric reflects simplicity, comfort, ecofriendly and it closely associate with the Gandhis vision of rural empowerment and sustainable living. Despite growing influence of western wear and machine-made fabrics khadi continues to hold emotional and cultural value during festivals, ceremonies and traditional functions. The cultural district- Thrissur khadi dhoti remains an integral part of men's traditional wear. This study aims to understand the key factors influencing consumer preference towards khadi dhotis in Thrissur district. Consumers preferences are shaped not only by the tradition, but also by changing fashion trends, digital media and awareness of environmental and ethical problems. In spite of different initiatives khadi introduces wide range of products. Its garments include sarees, shirts, dhotis, kurtas and beddings. Among these garments dhoti shows a complete cultural and traditional touch. It plays a prominent role in Indian tradition and self-reliance.

OBJECTIVES

- To examine the factors influencing consumers preference towards khadi dhotis.
- To know the preference level of consumers towards khadi dhotis.
- To identify the problems faced by the consumers in purchasing khadi dhotis.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Neethu Jha, (2021) “journey of khadi in India: from Gandhi’s signature fabric to fashion garment”. There is a need to improve training facilities in the khadi units. KVIC should maintain the direct contact with weavers and artisans and should register their grievances. The khadi and village industries have a good potential for generating gainful employment opportunities along with avenues of self-employment with less capital investment.

Dr u Archana (2024) “A study on customers perception towards khadi and village industrial products with special reference to Coimbatore city” focuses to find out the satisfaction and various factors that influence the customers to purchase the khadi and village industrial products. It also aimed to help the retailers in the Coimbatore district to improve their sales. It helps the policy makers to decide how KVIC stores are working in the present context.

Dr R Tamil Selvi & Mr. Praveen (2024) “customer satisfaction towards khadi products”. This study aims to find out the factors influencing the respondents to purchase khadi products and to analyse the customer level of satisfaction towards khadi products. It is understood that khadi quality and price are the most influencing factors. This study reveals that the respondents are highly satisfied with price and quality and least satisfied with variety, customer service and offers.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Khadi dhotis hold an important place in our tradition and heritage; hence it is relevant to study about it in the cultural district of Thrissur. People wear khadi dhotis to uplift their political, religious and cultural influences. Understanding the consumers preference towards khadi dhotis essential because as a cultural district in Thrissur khadi’s image is associated with tradition rather than trend.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research methodology is the systematic process used by a researcher to conduct a study. It elaborates how the research is planned, organized and carried out to achieve the result of the study. A descriptive research design is used for this study. Both primary and secondary data are used for this study. Primary data collected through a structured questionnaire in Thrissur district by using convenience sampling method. Secondary data are collected from various books, journals, annual reports, newspapers and websites. The data was analyzed through percentage analysis and mean scores to interpret response.

LIMITATIONS

- There is a possibility of unauthorised information.
- Samples are limited to hundred numbers of consumers in Thrissur district
- There is a chance of personal bias.
- The busy respondents require a lot of time to fill the questionnaire

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**Table-1 Influencing factors to purchase khadi dhotis**

Factors	Highly influencing	Influencing	Neutral	Less influencing	Not influencing	Percentage (highly influencing + influencing/total respondents) X100
Design & style	40	30	15	10	5	70
Price	35	25	20	10	10	60
Comfort	45	35	10	5	5	80
Cultural value	45	30	15	5	5	75
Better quality assurance	50	30	15	10	5	80
Availability	30	40	15	10	5	70

The table indicates quality and comfort are the main factors influencing consumers to purchase khadi dhoti in Thrissur district. Consumer place high value on quality and its comforts. Cultural value got the 75% influences towards khadi dhotis. It shows emotional and cultural attachment among older and traditional consumers. Stylish designs and availability are also 70% influences. From these factors price got 60% influences on khadi dhotis.

Table-2 The level of preference on using khadi dhotis

Attributes	Highly preferred	Preferred	Neutral	Partially preferred	Not preferred	Mean score	Rank
Quality	35(175)	38(152)	17(51)	6(12)	4(4)	3.94	1
Durability	25(125)	34(136)	22(66)	13(26)	6(6)	3.59	2
Price	15(75)	30(120)	25(75)	17(34)	13(13)	3.17	5
Varieties	30(150)	20(80)	35(105)	8(16)	7(7)	3.58	3
Availability	37(185)	22(88)	12(36)	19(38)	10(10)	3.57	4

The table illustrates the preference level of consumers towards khadi dhotis. Among the evaluated factors the attribute quality got the highest mean score with top rank. Quality is the most influential factor in shaping the consumers preference towards khadi dhotis. Durability and different varieties got the second and third rank. So, these attributes also influence the preference of khadi dhotis. The least preferred attributes are availability and price. Comparatively khadi dhotis have high prices.

Table-3 The problems faced by the consumers towards khadi dhotis

Problems	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	mean score	rank
Low accessibility	25(125)	33(132)	22(66)	14(28)	6(6)	3.57	3
Poor quality	3(15)	7(28)	17(51)	44(88)	29(29)	2.11	7
High price	15(75)	32(128)	21(63)	16(32)	16(16)	3.14	6
Problem of home delivery	70(350)	13(52)	12(36)	3(6)	2(2)	4.40	1
Lack of modern designs	31(155)	20(80)	19(57)	11(22)	19(19)	3.33	4
Lack of awareness among youth	26(130)	44(176)	18(54)	9(18)	3(3)	3.81	2
Low influence on social media	29(145)	23(92)	16(48)	10(20)	22(22)	3.27	5

The table depicts the challenges faced by the consumers towards khadi dhotis purchase. Analyzing the various challenges ‘problem of home delivery’ received highest mean score, thereby securing the top rank. It indicates the main challenge was the problem of home delivery. Following closely ‘lack of awareness’ is the second most problem faced by the khadi dhoti consumers. Low accessibility got the third rank. Lack of modern designs and low influence on social media got fourth and fifth rank respectively. High price and poor quality are the least problems associated with khadi dhoti consumers.

FINDINGS

- Quality and comfort and cultural attachment are the dominant factors motivating khadi dhoti purchases in Thrissur.
- Quality gained the first preference among the consumers towards khadi dhotis. Durability and varieties are the two other preferencing attributes. The least preferencing attribute is price.
- The main problem faced with the consumers towards khadi dhotis are home delivery and lack of awareness among youth. The least problems are poor quality and high price.

SUGGESTIONS

- Maintain the quality while improving the product designs.
- Khadi organisations should focus on home delivery and enhancing accessibility to attract both younger and traditional customers.
- Fix the reasonable prices to on khadi products because high price is the least preferred factor among the consumers towards khadi dhotis.

CONCLUSIONS

khadi dhotis are the symbol of simplicity, purity and cultural heritage. Older individuals often wear dhotis during daily routines as well as on religious and ceremonial occasions. Devotees also play an important role in sustaining the practice of wearing dhoti. In recent times the younger generation showing renewed interest in wearing dhotis. The researcher conducted to know the preference level and challenges associated with the consumers. This study reveals the various factors influencing the purchase of khadi dhotis. Quality assurances and comfort are the most influencing factors. The researcher concludes that quality maintenance, home delivery and reasonable price could improve the sales of khadi dhotis among future consumers.

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