

Customers Perception on Khadi Products in Coimbatore City

Dr. R MAHARAJOTHI PRIYA,
Associate Professor in Commerce with Banking and Insurance,
Kongunadu Arts and Science College,
Coimbatore, India.

L.MUTHU LASKSHMI,
Research Scholar,
Department of Commerce,
Kongunadu Arts and Science College,
Coimbatore, India.

ABSTRACT

This study examines the perception of customers towards Khadi products in Coimbatore City with reference to consumer satisfaction levels and attitudes towards Khadi and Village Industries. Launched by Mahatma Gandhi in 1920, Khadi has been the driving force of rural economic development in India. With 200 respondents, the study uses a descriptive type of research design and conducts customer preference analysis using primary and secondary data sources. The study applies basic percentage analysis, chi-square tests, and ranking procedures in assessing the responses of customers. The study finds that the majority of the respondents are females (60%) aged between 21-30 years. Although customer satisfaction tends to be high, product quality, price, and variety are identified to be the most powerful determinants of customer attitudes. Nonetheless, the respondents have also pointed out areas of improvement in terms of product assortment and price. According to the research, the paper recommends that Khadi industries target the enhancement of their marketing, cost-cutting, and diversifying their products so as to address consumer demands better. The research also stresses the possible contributions of government incentives towards the upgrading of technology in Khadi production.

KEYWORDS: Khadi Products, Customer Perception, Coimbatore City, Consumer Satisfaction, Village Industries

INTRODUCTION

In India, villages have been known to be the driving force behind the nation's economic growth. One of the critical factors in this development has been the Khadi and Village Industries movement, which was brought about by Mahatma Gandhi in 1920. Initially, Khadi was meant to be a symbol of defiance against the colonial powers, but now it has developed into a powerful means of rural employment generation, self-sufficiency, and economic empowerment. The Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC), being a central government department, continues to strive to increase the outreach of Khadi and its products, particularly in rural locations. Customer satisfaction in this regard cannot be emphasized enough. The expansion of new textile industries and mass production has presented both opportunities and challenges for such traditional industries as Khadi. It is important to know how customers in urban areas think about Khadi products if the industry has to be sustained and developed. Coimbatore City with its crowded markets and wide variety of consumers is a suitable location for such a study. This 2025 study aims to analyze the customer satisfaction and perception towards Khadi products in Coimbatore City. The research attempts to examine factors such as product quality, price, availability, and variety affecting the customers while buying Khadi products. The study results will provide a better insight into the present customer tastes and preferences and also suggest concrete measures for enhancing the marketing strategies and product portfolio of Khadi industries.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Customer satisfaction is crucial to the success and development of any product or service, and the same applies to Khadi products in India. Although Khadi is deeply rooted in history and culture, growing competition from mass-produced clothes and new-brand products makes one wonder whether it will appeal to urban buyers. In Coimbatore City, a fast-developing urban city, there is limited extensive research on the perception of Khadi products among consumers regarding quality, price, variety, and availability. With changing consumer expectations, it is essential to know what drives their purchasing behavior. This research intends to fill this gap by examining customer satisfaction and attitude towards Khadi products in Coimbatore, determining the strengths and weaknesses of the prevailing market offerings, and offering insights that can inform improvements in product development, marketing efforts, and customer interaction for future development in Khadi and Village Industries.

OBJECTIVES

- To assess the level of customer satisfaction with Khadi products among consumers.
- To explore and understand consumer perceptions of the Khadi textile industry, focusing on factors such as quality, pricing, and variety.

RESEARCH AND METHODOLOGY

Research Design:

The present study adopted a descriptive approach to research consumer perceptions of Khadi products in Coimbatore City. The aim was to identify the various factors affecting consumer attitudes, satisfaction, and preferences toward Khadi products while emphasizing their perceptions, which further influence their buying behavior in Coimbatore city.

Sampling Design:

With the great population and variation in Coimbatore City, it was critical to fix upon a workable-sized sample for the study that could stand as a representative. For the exact reflection of the whole population with respect to consumers, the study adopted a simple random sampling technique. This process permits a complete unbiased selection of respondents; hence, each consumer is given an equal chance to be involved in the survey. This assures the ability to study the insights about the customer perception of Khadi products in a broader perspective accurately.

Sample Selection and Sample Size:

The sample for the study was carefully chosen to include a wide gamut of consumers in Coimbatore City. The survey sampled 200 people in all. This sample size is, therefore, considered adequate in gaining some useful insights yet maintaining scope to collect and analyze the data in a manageable manner. The respondents were chosen randomly from a single stage sampling procedure so that the sample would represent and would endorse equity of views from consumers with regard to Khadi-related products.

Area of the Study:

The research study targets Coimbatore City consumers who actively purchase and use Khadi products. The study examines individuals who have used Khadi products at least once through regular usage or occasional purchase. The research achieves its objective through this focused method which gathers precise information about customer perspectives and satisfaction regarding Khadi and Village Industries products.

Source of Data

For the purpose of this study, data were collected from two primary sources:

Primary Data: This data was gathered directly from the respondents through surveys and interviews. The primary data provides firsthand insights into customer perceptions, satisfaction levels, and preferences towards Khadi products in Coimbatore City.

Secondary Data: This data was sourced from existing literature, reports, and relevant publications. It includes industry reports, government publications, and previous research studies that offer contextual information on the Khadi industry, consumer behavior, and market trends.

Tools Used in the Study:

Simple Percentage Method: The simple percentage method is used to calculate the proportion of respondents who selected specific attributes or provided particular responses. This method helps convert absolute figures into percentages, making it easier to interpret and compare the data. The formula used for calculating the percentage of respondents is:

$$\text{Percentage of Respondents} = \frac{\text{No. of Respondents}}{\text{Total Respondents}} \times 100$$

This method allows for clear understanding of the distribution of responses and facilitates comparison between different groups or attributes.

Chi-Square Analysis: The Chi-square test is used to see if there's a meaningful connection between two categorical variables. In this study, it helps us look at relationships like age and satisfaction levels, or how often people buy something and what they think about it. This test gives us a better understanding of how different factors affect each other and helps confirm ideas about customer satisfaction.

Ranking Technique: The Ranking method is applied for determining the relative weights of several factors that can impact customer perceptions about Khadi products. They are required to rank the factors (e.g., quality, price, availability, etc.) according to their preference or relevance. The method provides each factor with a rank, and the output is assessed in order to establish the most effective factors impacting consumer choice. The tool enables prioritizing areas for enhancement in the Khadi product range.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Sample Size: The study is based on a sample of 200 respondents. While this sample size is adequate for understanding customer perceptions in Coimbatore City, it may not fully represent the broader population, limiting the generalizability of the findings.

Geographic Limitation: The research was conducted exclusively in Coimbatore City, which may not reflect the perceptions of customers in other regions or rural areas. Consumer behavior and satisfaction levels may vary across different geographical locations.

Limited Scope for Generalization: Since the study focuses specifically on customer perceptions of Khadi products within a single urban area, the findings cannot be universally applied to all regions or consumer groups. Variations in consumer preferences across different demographics and locations may not be captured in this study.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) has played an important role in promoting rural employment and self-reliance in India. J.C. Kumarappa, in his influential book "Gandhian Economic Thought," pointed out that Khadi is more than just a fabric—it's a way for people to express themselves and gain economic strength. Kumarappa believed that Khadi should help both personal growth and community development; if it doesn't, then it loses its true meaning. This shows that Khadi is not just a product but a symbol of economic freedom and sustainability for rural areas.

In his study, Kumar P.S. (2003) delves into the role of the Khadi and Village Industries Board in addressing rural poverty. The study emphasizes that through financial assistance and the promotion of locally sourced raw materials, Khadi industries contribute significantly to strengthening the rural economy. This focus on village

industries helps empower local artisans, creating wealth and promoting sustainable practices that benefit both the environment and local communities.

Jha and Bansal (2018) expands on how consumer preferences have shifted, noting that customers today have a diverse set of motivations when choosing products. Their study highlights that Khadi consumers are influenced by various factors, including quality, price, availability, and the cultural significance of the product. As urbanization progresses, especially in cities like Coimbatore, customers have become more discerning in their choices. Marketers, therefore, need to adapt to these evolving consumer demands by offering products that align with modern expectations while maintaining the traditional values that Khadi represents.

Sharma and Gupta (2020) found that while Khadi products still resonate with a large section of the population due to their heritage and eco-friendly nature, younger consumers in urban areas are more skeptical about its relevance. They tend to prefer contemporary brands that align with their lifestyle preferences, such as convenience, trendy designs, and affordability. This shift in consumer behavior poses a challenge for the Khadi industry, pushing it to reimagine its marketing strategies and product designs to cater to the evolving urban market.

In Coimbatore City, one of the major industrial towns of Tamil Nadu, little research on customer attitudes to Khadi products has been conducted over the last few years. This suggests the necessity of a recent study on current levels of satisfaction and purchasing motivation of Coimbatore consumers as they become more familiar with contemporary retailing and global brands. Recognizing the drivers of consumer behavior and perceived value of Khadi will enable companies operating in the industry to streamline marketing efforts and enhance product lines according to contemporary consumer demands.

This study aims to contribute to the ongoing discourse on Khadi by focusing on the customer perception towards Khadi products in Coimbatore City in 2025, an area largely unexplored in recent studies. The findings of this research will provide valuable insights into how Khadi can revitalize its image, attract new customer segments, and remain relevant in the fast-evolving urban markets of India.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

TABLE NO: 01

Classification of the respondents based on Gender

Particulars	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Male	80	40%
Female	120	60%
Total	200	100

(Sources: Primary data)

Interpretation:

The table indicates that 60% of the respondents are female, while 40% are male. This suggests a higher representation of female consumers in the study sample, which may reflect the purchasing behavior or engagement with Khadi products in Coimbatore City. The gender distribution shows a significant proportion of women expressing interest in Khadi products, which could be a key insight for targeting specific consumer groups in future marketing strategies.

TABLE NO: 02**Opinion of the Respondents Regarding perception of before Buying Khadi Product (product Variety)**

Particulars	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Excellent	31	15.5%
Good	60	30%
Fair	34	17%
Poor	50	25%
Very poor	25	12.5%
Total	200	100

(Source: Primary data)

Interpretation:

The table reveals that 15.5% of respondents rated the variety of Khadi products as excellent, while 30% rated it as good. Additionally, 17% considered it fair, 25% expressed a poor opinion, and 12.5% rated it as very poor. This suggests that while a significant portion of customers are satisfied with the variety, there is still room for improvement, with a notable percentage expressing dissatisfaction. The findings highlight the need for the Khadi sector to focus on enhancing the product range to better meet consumer expectations.

TABLE NO: 3**Opinion of the Respondents Regarding satisfaction of Buying Khadi Product**

Particulars	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Highly Satisfied	74	37%
Satisfied	44	22%
Moderately	24	12%
Dissatisfied	32	16%
Highly Dissatisfied	26	13%
Total	200	100

(Source: Primary data)

Interpretation:

The table shows that 37% of respondents are very satisfied with Khadi products, while 22% are somewhat satisfied. Additionally, 12% reported a moderate level of satisfaction, 16% said they were dissatisfied, and 13% were very dissatisfied. This means most customers are happy with the products, but a significant 29% are not satisfied to some degree. These results suggest that although Khadi products have many happy customers, there is still a need to address the concerns of those who are dissatisfied to improve overall satisfaction.

CHI-SQUARE TEST

Hypothesis: There is no significant relationship between Age of the respondents and period of using the products by the respondents

Table-1

AGE	Period of using the product					
	Below 1 Year	1- 2Year	2- 3Year	3- 4Year	Above 4 Y ear	Total
Below30	10(6)	14(7)	7(6)	5(8)	2(7)	38
31-40	13(7)	9(8)	2(5)	5(7)	3(9)	32
41-50	9(8)	11(9)	8(7)	7(8)	5(8)	40
52-60	5(11)	3(8)	11(8)	19(10)	12(13)	50
Above60	3(8)	6(11)	4(6)	3(6)	24(9)	40
Total	40	43	32	39	46	200

Result:

The calculated Chi-square (X^2) value is much higher than the table value, showing a strong relationship between the variables studied. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. This means that the age of the respondents and the length of time they have used Khadi products are connected, suggesting that customer usage patterns differ across age groups.

Hence there is significant relationship between an Age Period of using products.

Table-2

Ranking factor Influencing By the respondents

Factor	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	total	Mean	Rank
Price	31	33	28	24	29	15	40	200		
Score	217	198	140	96	87	3-	40	808	4.04	2
Quality	30	29	31	27	26	27	30	200		
Score	210	174	155	108	78	54	30	809	4.05	1
Durability	33	28	22	21	37	29	39	200		
Score	231	168	110	84	111	58	39	801	4.00	4
Availability	21	27	23	28	33	30	38	4.000		

Score	147	162	115	112	99	60	38	733	3.67	6
Design	12	36	27	26	38	29	32	200		
Score	84	216	135	104	114	58	32	743	3.72	5
Discount	9	25	21	34	25	41	43	200		
Score	63	150	105	136	75	82	45	656	3.28	7
Others	37	21	28	31	23	28	32	200		
Score	25	126	140	124	6	56	32	806	4.03	3

Result:

The table shows the main factors that affect how customers view Khadi products. Quality came out on top, with price in second place. Durability was fourth, design fifth, and availability sixth. Discounts were the least important, ranking seventh. This tells us that customers care most about quality and affordability, while design and discounts matter less when deciding to buy.

FINDINGS

Gender Distribution: A significant portion of the respondents, accounting for 60%, identified as female.

Age Group: The largest group of respondents, making up 64%, falls within the 21-30 age range.

Overall Opinion: When asked about their general opinion, 30% of the respondents expressed a positive view, describing it as "Good."

Satisfaction with Khadi Products: A notable 37% of participants reported being highly satisfied with their experience of purchasing Khadi products.

SUGGESTIONS

Enhance Product Appeal: Focus on making a stronger impression on customers by offering a wider variety of products.

Lower Costs: Consider reducing the product prices to make them more accessible, which could help boost customer satisfaction and loyalty.

Diversify Ingredients: Experiment with different ingredients to innovate and expand the product range, offering more choices to meet various tastes and preferences.

Increase Advertising: Invest in more advertising campaigns to increase brand visibility and attract a larger audience in the future.

CONCLUSION

The customer perception study of Khadi products in Coimbatore City shows revealing findings of consumer satisfaction and the deciding factors in purchasing. The research indicates that most respondents are females (60%) and mostly within the 21-30 age range (64%). Customer satisfaction with Khadi products is largely positive, with 37% of the respondents expressing high satisfaction. But product variety, quality, and pricing were also recognized as key determinants of consumer perceptions, with the respondents presenting concerns over these, especially product variety and price. Khadi is seen to have a robust customer base in cities like Coimbatore through the analysis but then also suffers from increased competition from modern, mass-produced textiles.

Major recommendations for Khadi industries are to diversify the product line, make better price strategies, and initiate better marketing strategies to address changing consumer requirements. In addition, the study suggests that Khadi producers should address the costs, expand the product offerings, and enhance the overall customer experience through focused advertisements and outreach. Moreover, there is a possibility of government assistance in providing incentives for technology development, which would help in the simplification of production and enhancing product quality. In summary, though Khadi products still have a strong appeal to a large number of urban consumers, continued flexibility with consumer wants, especially with younger

generations, is needed to sustain growth and success within the competitive market. The research findings in this study are tangible suggestions that can assist Khadi industries to become more attuned to contemporary consumer demands, thereby remaining relevant and successful in the years to come.

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