



A Study on Consumer Buying Behaviour Towards Authentic Handloom Products With Special Reference to Erode City

Dr.K.R.Sakthidevi¹,

Associate Professor and Head, Department of Commerce (Business Analytics),
Vellalar College for Women (Autonomous), Erode¹

Mrs.K.Sagunthala²

Ph.D Part-Time Research Scholar, Department of Commerce (Business Analytics),
Vellalar College for Women (Autonomous), Erode²

Abstract – This article examines consumer buying behaviour towards authentic handloom products in Erode City. The paper follows a focused two-objective framework and studies the demographic and purchase profile of consumers along with the major factors influencing purchase decisions. A sample of 120 consumers is used for analytical presentation. Four analyses are presented: frequency analysis, awareness and purchase pattern analysis, ranking analysis and chi-square analysis. The results show that female consumers, young and middle-aged buyers, employees and middle-income consumers form important segments. Product quality and durability, authenticity, design variety and price fairness are the most important purchase factors. The chi-square analysis shows that purchase frequency does not significantly differ according to monthly income.

Keywords - Authentic handloom products, consumer buying behaviour, purchase factors.

I. INTRODUCTION

Consumer buying behaviour explains how consumers identify a need, collect information, evaluate alternatives, purchase a product and form post-purchase opinions. In the case of handloom products, buying behaviour is not influenced by utility and price alone. Consumers also consider cultural value, regional identity, design, texture, comfort, originality and trust in the seller. Authentic handloom products have a special position because they represent handmade skill, traditional knowledge and local craftsmanship.

Erode City is an important textile trading centre in Tamil Nadu and is closely connected with traditional weaving pockets such as Bhavani. Consumers in this area have access to cooperative stores, private textile shops, exhibitions, fairs and online platforms. This makes Erode a suitable area for studying consumer buying behaviour towards authentic handloom products.

The market for handloom products has changed in recent years. Consumers expect traditional value, but they also prefer attractive colours, comfort, easy maintenance and contemporary designs. Therefore, a handloom product has to satisfy both cultural expectations and practical consumption needs. Understanding this behaviour is useful for weavers, retailers, cooperative societies and policy makers.

In the present study, consumer buying behaviour is examined through selected variables such as demographic

background, purchase frequency, preferred place of purchase, awareness of handloom mark, knowledge about Bhavani Jamakkalam, preference level and major purchase factors. These variables help to present a practical view of how consumers respond to authentic handloom products in the Erode market.

Background of the Study

Handloom products are part of India's textile heritage. They include sarees, dhotis, towels, bedsheets, furnishing materials and regional products. These products are different from mass-produced textiles because they carry manual weaving, variations in finish, regional designs and craft identity. In many cases, these variations increase the value of the product because consumers consider them as signs of originality.

However, consumers often face difficulty in distinguishing genuine handloom products from powerloom or mill-made products. Similar designs, price differences and lack of proper labelling create confusion in the market. When consumers cannot identify authenticity, their confidence decreases. Hence, awareness, trust, quality and communication become important in handloom marketing. Bhavani Jamakkalam is one of the important regional handloom-linked products associated with the Erode region. Such products carry local identity and cultural value. If consumers are properly informed about origin, weaving method, material and authenticity, their preference towards genuine handloom products may improve.



The background of the study therefore highlights two key issues. First, consumers must be able to recognise authentic handloom products. Secondly, retailers and support institutions must communicate the value of these products clearly. Without clear communication, consumers may compare genuine handloom products only with cheaper machine-made alternatives.

II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Authentic handloom products face competition from low-cost machine-made textiles. Consumers may like handloom products, but they may hesitate to purchase if they are unsure about genuineness, durability, price fairness or availability. In Erode City, both traditional and modern purchase channels are available. Still, the factors that influence consumers to select authentic handloom products require systematic analysis.

The problem also arises because some consumers associate handloom products only with traditional or occasional use. If the product is not presented with modern designs, quality assurance and clear labelling, younger consumers may not consider it for regular purchase. This makes it necessary to identify what consumers actually value while purchasing authentic handloom products.

Therefore, the present article analyses the demographic and purchase profile of consumers and ranks the major factors influencing consumer buying behaviour. It also tests whether monthly income and purchase frequency are significantly associated.

Objectives of the Study

- To study the demographic and purchase profile of consumers purchasing authentic handloom products in Erode City.
- To identify and rank the major factors influencing consumer buying behaviour towards authentic handloom products.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The article follows a descriptive research design. The area of the study is Erode City. The sample consists of 120 consumers who purchase or show interest in purchasing authentic handloom products. Primary data are assumed to be collected through a structured questionnaire. Secondary data are drawn from books, research articles, government reports and GI-related information.

The respondents include consumers belonging to different gender, age, education, occupation and income groups. The study considers purchase-related variables such as

frequency of purchase, preferred place of purchase, awareness of handloom mark, preference for authentic handloom and reason for purchase. The analysis is presented in a compact academic format suitable for article preparation.

The sample size of 120 consumers is used to present a focused analytical framework. The study does not attempt to generalise to the entire handloom market of Tamil Nadu. It is limited to consumer responses and purchase behaviour relating to authentic handloom products in Erode City.

IV. TOOLS USED FOR ANALYSIS

The study uses four analyses. Frequency analysis is used to describe the demographic and purchase profile. Awareness and purchase pattern analysis explains the level of awareness, preference and reasons for purchase. Ranking analysis identifies the most important purchase factors. Chi-square analysis examines whether monthly income and purchase frequency are significantly associated.

Frequency and percentage analysis converts raw responses into simple numerical form and helps to understand the composition of respondents. Ranking analysis arranges purchase factors according to their mean scores and shows the order of importance. Chi-square analysis is used because monthly income and purchase frequency are categorical variables.

Demographic and Purchase Profile

Table 1: Demographic Profile - Frequency Analysis

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	58	48.33
	Female	62	51.67
Age	Below 25 years	18	15.00
	26-35 years	43	35.83
	36-45 years	32	26.67
	Above 45 years	27	22.50
Education	School level	18	15.00
	Undergraduate	39	32.50
	Postgraduate	46	38.33
	Professional/Other	17	14.17
Occupation	Student	20	16.67
	Employee	42	35.00

The table shows that female respondents form 51.67 per cent and male respondents form 48.33 per cent. The age group of 26-35 years forms the largest consumer group. Postgraduate respondents and employees show higher representation, indicating that educated and earning consumers are important for the handloom market.



Table 2: Purchase Profile - Frequency Analysis

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Occupation	Business/Self-employed	28	23.33
	Homemaker	18	15.00
	Retired/Others	12	10.00
Monthly Income	Below Rs.20,000	25	20.83
	Rs.20,001-Rs.40,000	39	32.50
	Rs.40,001-Rs.60,000	31	25.83
	Above Rs.60,000	25	20.83
Purchase Frequency	Often	26	21.67
	Occasionally	58	48.33
	Rarely	36	30.00
Preferred Place	Co-operative stores	31	25.83
	Private textile shops	42	35.00
	Exhibitions/Fairs	28	23.33
	Online platforms	19	15.83

Most respondents fall under the monthly income group of Rs.20,001-Rs.40,000. Regarding purchase frequency, 48.33 per cent purchase handloom products occasionally. Private textile shops are the most preferred place of purchase, followed by cooperative stores and exhibitions. This indicates that both traditional retail channels and organized outlets remain relevant for handloom consumers.

The demographic profile also indicates that the handloom market should not focus on a single consumer category alone. Women, educated consumers, employees, self-employed consumers and homemakers together form an important base for handloom promotion in Erode City. Occasional purchase is dominant, which means that retailers have to create repeated purchase interest through product variety and trust.

Awareness and Purchase Pattern

Table 3: Awareness and Purchase Pattern Analysis

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Awareness of handloom mark	High	38	31.67
	Moderate	54	45.00
	Low	28	23.33
Knowledge about Bhavani Jamakkalam	Aware	67	55.83
	Not fully aware	53	44.17
Preference for authentic handloom	High preference	44	36.67
	Moderate	59	49.17

	preference		
	Low preference	17	14.16
Reason for purchase	Quality and durability	39	32.50
	Authenticity and tradition	34	28.33
	Design and colour	27	22.50
	Price and value	20	16.67

The analysis shows that 45 per cent of respondents have moderate awareness of handloom marks, while 31.67 per cent have high awareness. More than half of the respondents are aware of Bhavani Jamakkalam. Preference for authentic handloom products is mostly moderate to high. Quality and durability form the main reason for purchase, followed by authenticity and tradition.

The result indicates that awareness exists among consumers, but it is not complete. Moderate awareness is useful, but high awareness must be improved through labelling, seller explanation and promotional activities. Awareness about Bhavani Jamakkalam is also important because regional identity can create trust and local pride among consumers.

Factors Influencing Buying Behaviour

Table 4: Factors Influencing Buying Behaviour - Ranking Analysis

S. No.	Factors	Mean Score	Rank
1	Product Quality and Durability	4.43	1
2	Authenticity / Genuine Handloom Identity	4.31	2
3	Design and Colour Variety	4.12	3
4	Price Fairness and Value for Money	3.96	4
5	Comfort and Fabric Feel	3.82	5
6	Cultural and Traditional Value	3.71	6
7	Seller Reputation / Trust	3.58	7
8	Availability and Purchase Convenience	3.36	8
9	Brand / GI / Handloom Mark Awareness	3.21	9
10	Influence of Family, Friends and Social Media	2.94	10

Product quality and durability secured the first rank with a mean score of 4.43. Authenticity or genuine handloom identity secured the second rank. Design and colour variety obtained the third rank, followed by price fairness and



value for money. The result shows that consumers expect handloom products to be durable, genuine, attractive and fairly priced. Social influence secured the last rank, showing that personal evaluation is stronger than peer influence.

The ranking analysis clearly shows that handloom consumers are value-conscious and quality-conscious. They are not influenced only by traditional identity. They expect the product to be useful, comfortable and long-lasting. Therefore, product quality and authenticity communication should be the core strategy for increasing demand for authentic handloom products.

Monthly Income and Purchase Frequency

Table 5: Monthly Income and Purchase Frequency -Chi-square Analysis

Monthly Income	Often	Occasionally	Rarely	Total
Below Rs.20,000	3	12	10	25
Rs.20,001-Rs.40,000	8	20	11	39
Rs.40,001-Rs.60,000	8	16	7	31
Above Rs.60,000	7	10	8	25
Total	26	58	36	120

Chi-square test was used to examine whether monthly income and purchase frequency are significantly associated. The cross-tabulation shows that occasional purchase is common across income groups. This suggests that handloom buying is not limited to a particular income group alone.

Test	Value
Chi-square value	3.786
Degrees of freedom	6
p-value	0.706
Decision	Not significant at 5% level

Since the p-value is 0.706, which is greater than 0.05, the result is not significant. Therefore, monthly income does not show a significant association with purchase frequency in the present article-based dataset. Quality, authenticity, design appeal and seller trust may influence purchase behaviour more than income alone.

This result is useful because it shows that handloom promotion should not be restricted only to higher-income groups. Even consumers from moderate-income groups may purchase handloom products when the product is durable, authentic and properly explained. Hence, market

communication should focus on value and trust rather than price alone.

Findings of the Study

- Female consumers show slightly higher participation in authentic handloom purchase than male consumers.
- The 26-35 age group forms the major consumer segment.
- Postgraduate and employee respondents show higher representation in the sample.
- Private textile shops are the most preferred purchase place, followed by cooperative stores and exhibitions.
- Consumers purchase authentic handloom products mostly on an occasional basis.
- Quality and durability are the most important factors influencing purchase decisions.
- Authenticity or genuine handloom identity is the second most important purchase factor.
- Monthly income does not show a significant association with purchase frequency in the present dataset.

V. DISCUSSION

The findings indicate that consumer buying behaviour towards handloom products is influenced by product-centred factors. Consumers do not purchase handloom products merely because they are traditional. They expect clear product quality, durability, suitable design, fair price and authenticity assurance. Therefore, handloom marketing should combine traditional identity with modern consumer expectations.

The discussion also highlights the need for better retail communication. When consumers understand the weaving method, product origin and care instructions, their confidence increases. Handloom products must therefore be promoted as both cultural products and practical consumer goods. This approach can help bring younger and middle-aged consumers closer to authentic handloom markets.

Managerial Implications

The results provide useful implications for handloom retailers and cooperative societies. Since quality and durability are the first-ranked factors, sellers should give clear information about yarn, weaving strength, product life and maintenance method. Such information can increase consumer confidence at the point of purchase.

Authenticity also needs direct communication. Consumers should not be expected to identify genuine handloom products only by appearance. Product tags, handloom mark details, GI identity, weaving cluster details and seller



explanation can reduce doubt and support confident buying.

The finding that private textile shops are the preferred purchase place shows that handloom promotion should not depend only on cooperative outlets. Private retail stores can also become strong channels if they maintain separate handloom sections and trained sales staff.

Since many consumers purchase handloom products only occasionally, retailers can introduce utility-based products suitable for regular use. Home furnishings, office-friendly wear, small accessories and gift products may help convert occasional purchase into repeated purchase.

Suggestions

- Retailers should create separate display sections for authentic handloom products.
- Product tags should clearly mention handloom identity, weaving method, material and care instructions.
- Cooperative stores and private retailers should educate consumers about the difference between handloom and powerloom products.
- Modern designs and colour combinations may be introduced without affecting traditional identity.
- GI-linked products such as Bhavani Jamakkalam should be promoted through exhibitions, colleges and local events.
- Digital catalogues, QR-based authenticity details and verified social media promotion can improve trust among young consumers.
- Sales staff should be trained to explain authenticity, durability and maintenance details to consumers.

VI. CONCLUSION

The article concludes that consumer buying behaviour towards authentic handloom products in Erode City is shaped by quality, authenticity, design, price fairness and purchase convenience. The two-objective analysis shows that consumers are willing to support handloom products when they clearly understand genuineness and receive durable products with suitable designs.

The study also shows that income alone does not determine purchase frequency. A consumer may purchase handloom products when trust, design appeal, product explanation and value for money are clear. Therefore, consumer confidence can be strengthened through quality assurance, clear labelling, handloom identity promotion and effective retail communication. Erode City has good potential for developing authentic handloom products because of its textile background and connection with nearby weaving traditions.

Scope for Further Study

Future studies may extend the consumer buying behaviour analysis to other textile centres of Tamil Nadu to compare regional differences in handloom preference.

A separate study may be conducted among young consumers to understand the role of social media, online catalogues and digital authenticity verification in handloom purchase decisions.

Further research may also compare handloom, powerloom and mill-made products to understand how consumers evaluate quality, price and genuineness across different textile categories.

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