



ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA FOR MARKETING HANDLOOMS

¹B.A. Karpagam, ²Dr. M.S. Yathish Chandra

¹ASSISTANT PROFESSOR BNMIT, RESEARCH SCHOLAR VTURRC MYSORE

²ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR, VTU RRC, MYSORE

¹bnkarpagam36@gmail.com, ²yethichan09@rediffmail.com

Abstract

India has a rich heritage of handlooms and handicrafts. Handloom is the second largest employment provider after agriculture in India. But handlooms are seeing a decline in their trend Therefore handlooms should, explore market opportunities and increase usage of handlooms

Handlooms must create awareness among target groups. In this paper an attempt will be made to enhance awareness, brand consciousness, increase demand and usage, the effects of usage of social media to increase awareness, usage. Empower weavers to sell their products directly through social media. We will make an attempt to change the attitude and perception of people towards handlooms. Thus, suitable recommendations are made for the ongoing problems leading to decline and uplifting the industry which finally leads to a win-win situation to both the consumer and the producer. Methodology followed is through secondary data sources.

Keywords: Social Media, Handloom, Awareness, Usage.

Introduction

Indian handlooms represent some distinct weaving methods, the usage of different symbols, imagery, color, etc. Most of the Indian handlooms constitute sarees; along with make dress material, shawls and dupattas, furnishings, towels, etc. Weaving has been one of the key occupations of rural India with the finished products often attracting a high price in urban markets; the weavers are always a neglected sector. Weavers lack training in adapting their traditional patterns into attractive designs to suit modern tastes and, escalating costs of yarn, labor, etc. eat into their profits. Although there have been efforts undertaken by the government

and private enterprises and there has been some improvement, a lot more needs to be done.

Integrated marketing communications is a mix consisting of the various elements of the promotional mix – advertising, personal selling, public relations, publicity, direct marketing, and sales promotion – to produce a unified customer-focused message, and, therefore, achieve various organizational objectives (Boone and Kurtz, 2007). Integrated marketing Communications use communication in any form to reach the target audience. Social media marketing is the new tool in IMC now. Social media marketing involves blogs, instagram advertising, face book advertising, social blogging, video sharing sites, we can market handloom products.

In case of Handlooms domestic marketing involves marketing of products within and outside the state in the form of festive fairs, exhibitions, and digital advertisements. With the increase in the usage of internet by common man, now he or she can market their products directly to the customer through social media. Traditional method of marketing involves lot of time, its costly involves associated costs. Female entrepreneurs especially find it easier to reach the target audience easier and in a cheaper way. Woman employees working in the handloom industry have started using mobile phones; usage of these phones helps the women employees to learn the new trends in the business. (Social Media - A Tool for Empowering Women Working in Handloom Industry Dr. Veena R. Humbe, Dr. Pallavi Bhalerao)

Social media is a boon to the handloom Industry as the products can be sold directly to billions of customers. Amazon has a store called crafted in India which curates' authentic handloom and handcraft. Flipkart also has tied up with the

Ministry of Textiles under its Abhiyaan program. (Dr. Veena R. Humbe, Dr. Pallavi Bhalerao 2018 May 31st, vol4, issue5. IJIRMF journal, Social Media - A Tool for Empowering Women Working in Handloom Industry.) The total population of India is 1,283,810,000. Out of which 13% use social media and spend approximately 2 hours 26 minutes daily. The use of social media by mobile users is 57% of total population and time spend is 2 hours 36 minutes per day. (Dr. Veena.R Humbe,2014 July, vol 3 issue 7, Role of social media in marketing of handloom products.) In social media marketing products are marketed through different websites like Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter and Google.

Social networking sets have the ease to connect manufacturers to customers. Electronic word of mouth marketing can create awareness among different communities through friend and relatives on Facebook, WhatsApp, blogs etc. Mobile phones with applications will be given to weavers to purchase yarn and sell their products directly to consumers. (Karam shyam,2017, October 12th New marketing strategy needed to promote state handloom products). Social media is going to help create brand awareness among consumers.

Objectives of the study:

After reviewing the literature, the objectives arrived at are-

- To create awareness of handlooms through social media.
- To enhance brand consciousness, increase demand and usage.
- To change the attitude and perception of consumers towards handlooms.

Methodology:

To understand the problems of handloom industry secondary research was done, going through different research articles, research papers, periodicals, Newsletters, Trends in fashion, Business magazines, articles on the internet is reviewed.

Role of social media in marketing handlooms – Review of Literature

1. **Nivedita Ganguly (2017 August) for the love for handlooms** states social media helps in creating awareness among consumers. Saree groups are made just for handloom wearers so it's a platform to exchange information. Textile trails are set up where women visit weavers, interact with them to create awareness. Due to

celebrity pages and social media the consumers of handlooms include the youth as well. Dresses in ajrakh and bandhani, Ikkat, palazzos and skirts, Benarasi stoles, kalkari dupattas and salwar sets in all kinds of fabric are widely available and appeals to a wider audience locally as well as globally. SandhyaGodey, handloom enthusiast whose social media posts from Vizag on #100 sareepact became very popular. Superstars walking the ramp as show stoppers in Handlooms have all percolated down to the ordinary people through rampant social media strategies. The posts on Facebook about handloom wear also helps in increasing awareness.

2. **Vinutha Subramanian (2017) Why handlooms are still an attractive industry for start –up** opines Social media platforms brings together, the discerning, socially conscious handloom-users worldwide giving them a platform to interact, post pictures, flaunt, discuss and showcase their beautiful handloom products thus building awareness and interest in the product. They maintain the heritage of handloom sarees so that it naturally leads to an increase in the demand for the products. Active social media users are quickly turning influencers and collaborating, and having a substantial impact on the market demands.

3. **Tasmayee Loha Roy (2016) April** expressed that the Union ministry of textiles, which promotes the India Handloom Brand, is not limiting itself to increasing retail footprint. One of its priorities is visibility for the brand on e-commerce sites. The office of development commissioner of handlooms has been engaging the likes of Flipkart, eBay, Amazon, Craftsvilla and Gaatha for marketing its products.

4. **Business Standard in (2015, October 19) Governments social media push to promote Indian handloom brand.** News with respect to different brands ,their history ,unique features they hold ,the ranking of handlooms in India and different initiatives taken by government towards the Handloom sector will be shared on Social media .This help in educating the customer about the authenticity of handloom products and generate interest in them. The customers will have an update of various events relating to handlooms organized across the country. Customer feedback is taken on social media. It helps to promote brand faster and handloom sector in general.

5. **India Today, 2016, July 31st depicts. Smriti Irani to launch Selfie with Handloom campaign to boost textile industry** Smriti Irani launching “Selfie with Handloom” on social networking sites like twitter and Facebook.

6 **Gov.in. How to promote Indian handlooms as a brand to ensure quality products to the consumers.** “Handloom Mark” scheme was launched by Ministry of textiles with effect from 28.06.2006 for promoting and preserving the Indian handloom products and securing a premium position in the domestic as well as international market. Hallmark Brand enhances the Identity of hand-woven products originating from the sector of handlooms and ensures the originality of the product.

Analysis of review of literature

Handlooms are gaining importance among youngsters as corporate wear, ethnic wear changing the attitudes and personality of people totally. It may be due to comfort, the aeration capability of the fabric, the designs etc.

Comfort of the fabric, quality, eco-friendliness has to be conveyed to increase usage of the handloom fabric. The fabric has to be marketed to suit most of the climatic conditions in India during summer. Social media plays an important role in design, trend and new fashion applicable to this generation. The women entrepreneurs get an idea of the emerging trend and they design the clothes which is viable to the market. We have chat bots which is a new service using Artificial Intelligence, it addresses complaints from customers, suggests products & services, gives an overview about the product, gets qualifying leads. Chat bots will help you in immediacy of service which most of the consumers prefer. Chat bots save time and resources and maximum lead conversion happens as it is 24*7. The retention of customers is also high. Face book messenger is one more tool in social media, where there is uninterrupted communication of brands you support.

The youngsters have to be targeted for occasional festive wear and casual wear, fusion with western wear can be made viable.

Flipkart has launched “**India art house “for art lovers (2015, july30th)** where it gets products from 15 different regions in India.

Creating Brand consciousness or awareness among customer’s social media plays an important role, the post shared on instagram can be reshared and more number of followers can

be added to that particular instagram group of the weaver or woman entrepreneur to increase sales of handlooms.

Positive quality content also plays an important role in enhancing the trust among the customers who buy Handlooms.

Benefits of the product have to be highlighted in social media and testimony of customers creates brand awareness.

Handlooms are generally bought impulsively (**Market research for Indian handloom brand**). The attitude people have when they wear handlooms is, they look decent, simple and well mannered. Home furnishings have better markets compared to clothing as the perception of consumers is the handloom material is thick because of its weaving.

People also feel the designs are repetitive and designs are dull. Therefore, fashion designers should start promoting handloom fabrics among the youth, the affluent class. Celebrities should start endorsing the handloom brands. Government is encouraging social media and the politicians are encouraging people to wear handlooms and post a selfie, to create electronic word of mouth. This helps in enhancing the brand image. Handloom mark scheme of government enhances brand image of our handlooms not only nationally but internationally also.

The Big giants like Big bazaar, Pantaloons, and FabIndia should launch these products from the local weavers.

The handloom weavers should get a GI (Geographical Indication) certification which reduces perceived information symmetry. This enhances the trust among the customer regarding quality of the product. The Geographical Indication (GI) Act 1999, in India, provides legal backing by providing GI certification for quality/reputation/ other characteristics of agricultural/natural/manufactured products linked with geographic origin.

Conclusion

In this paper we have seen how the handlooms are seeing a decline. How government is helping our weavers by providing help by promoting the handloom products through social media platforms. The handlooms can be promoted through electronic media, word of mouth, create awareness among national and international markets. The brand consciousness can be enhanced among youth, quality of fabric,

designs can be improved, attitude and perception can be changed by suggesting the usage of fabric for different occasions. The weavers can have a one to one interaction between different groups of people and market their product directly to them which can be enhanced. From this study we can say Handlooms can see a sea-change with social media marketing by building brand consciousness, awareness and by becoming global.

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