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A Study on the awareness level of Youth Customers towards Khadi products with special reference to Patna, Bihar

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Abstract: The study is undertaken with the objective to find out the awareness level of youth customers towards Khadi products with special reference to Patna, Bihar. It highlights the understanding of Khadi products among the youth which got various types of responses from its respondents. It is an attempt to understand the awareness, knowledge, and preferences of the youth of Patna towards Khadi which is essential for promoting sustainable consumption and preserving India's indigenous fabric legacy.

Keywords: Awareness level, Youth customers, Khadi products.

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Introduction:

In the realm of sustainable fashion, 'Khadi' serves as an enduring symbol of dateless fineness and environmental responsibility. Khadi goods hold a deepembedded historical and artistic significance in India, nearly linked to Mahatma Gandhi's vision of self-sufficiency and the advancement of rural industries (Parikh G., 2011).

Lately, there has been an increased emphasis on educating youthful individuals about the significance and advantages of Khadi products. By grasping the significance of Khadi and its consequences on both the economy and the environment, the youth can play a vital part in securing this age-old cultural tradition and promoting a life that is environmentally and ecologically sustainable.(https://www.thepharmajournal.com/archives).

Thus, by embracing mindfulness of Khadi, the youth can contribute effectively to-

- Promotion of sustainable and eco-friendly choices.
- · Promotion of rural employment.

- Support women upliftment in artisan communities.
- · Save indigenous culture.

The word Khadi is deduced from "Khaddar", a term used for the hand spun fabric of India, Bangladesh, and Pakistan.

Majorly made from cotton, but currently it's also made from silk and woolen yarns defined as Khadi silk and Khadi hair. Khadi fabric is popular for its rugged texture.

During our freedom struggle, Mahatma Gandhi saw Khadi cloth as a tool for our country to be self-reliant, independent, and give work to our people.

The first Khadi fabric was woven when the Boycott movement began in India.

As the 'Swadeshi Movement' began, foreign goods were escaped. In this period of heightened environmental knowledge, Khadi has garnered significant attention due to its minimum carbon footmark and biodegradable nature.

This makes it an effective option for those who prefer seeking eco-friendly and sustainable choices when buying.

As youthful consumers increasingly prioritize ethical and sustainable practices, Khadi emerges as an important symbol of responsible fashion. It reflects their fidelity to conserve the Earth's resources (https://www.researchgate.net/publication/326408827_KhadiAwareness_and_Promot ion_among_Youth).

Variety of filaments- While cotton Khadi is the most common, this hand- woven fabric can also be made from other natural filaments like silk and hair. Each type of Khadi has its unique characteristics, making it suitable option of the buyers to opt for it for different purposes.

Dyeing and Printing- Khadi can be paintedand woven in a wide range of vibrant colors and intricate designs making it an attractive choice among the buyers.

Regional Diversity- Different regions in India have their variations of Khadi, with unique weaving patterns, motifs, and color palettes.

Promotion of Rural Employment- The production of Khadi provides employment openings to innumerous pastoral crafters, particularly women thereby uplifting them.

Khadi Fashion- Khadi has set up its way into mainstream fashion encyclopedically. Numerous famed designers incorporate Khadi into their collections portraying that Khadi can serve as a fashion fabric.

Global Recognition- Khadi has received massive recognition and appreciation on the foreign stage, contributing to the global creation of sustainable and hand wrought fabrics.

Beyond its historical context, Khadi is a sustainable choice in today's world, aligning with the global movement towards eco-friendly and ethical fashion. The fabric is handcrafted, minimizing the carbon footprint associated with mass production. It also promotes fair labour practices, providing employment opportunities for skilled artisans and weavers (Preuitt S. & Ram P., 2016). For the youth, Khadi represents a connection to their roots, fostering a sense of pride in cultural identity. It offers an alternative to fast fashion, encouraging a mindful approach t o consumption.(https://www.academia.edu/34264688/K hadi_Awareness_and_Promotion_among_YouthAware ness and promotion of Khadi among youth). Embracing Khadi means supporting local artisans and contributing to the preservation of traditional craftsmanship.

Likewise, Khadi embodies a distinctive emulsion of tradition and modernity. It has acclimated to suit contemporary fashion trends, appealing to the younger generation's sense of style while conserving the historical and artistic heritage of our country (h t t p s : / / w w w . n e w i n d i a n express.com/thesundaystandard/2018/sep/30/youth-not-aware-of-khadis-history-but-just-find-it-cool).

Various government enterprise and subventions have been introduced to encourage youth involvement in Khadi, promoting entrepreneurship and motivating them to start their start-ups using Khadi as a foundational material.

So, as we enter further into the subject, we'll know the different aspects of how the youth perceive Khadi products. Hence, this will encompass its historical significance and its influence on the profitable development, environmental sustainability and social inclusiveness.

Objectives:

- To measure the awareness of youth related to Khadi and its connection to India's freedom movement.
- 2. To explore the perceptions and attitudes of youth regarding Khadi products.
- 3. To identify the different sources that young people use to learn about Khadi products.
- 4. To determine the factors influencing the choices of youth regarding Khadi products.
- 5. To suggest different policy recommendations on how to effectively promote Khadi among the youth.

Hypotheses:

- Youth awareness of Khadi has no impact on their intention to purchase Khadi products in Patna.
- 2. There is a significant level of awareness among youth customers towards Khadi products in Patna.
- 3. There is a significant relationship between various promotional activities, social media exposure, knowledge of Khadi's historical significance, and the awareness level of youth customers towards Khadi products in Patna.
- 4. Youth who are aware of the positive environmental impact of Khadi are more likely to engage in sustainable fashion choices, such as buying eco-friendly clothing.

Research Methodology:

Research Design: Research is a specific and systematic study undertaken to pile up data and assemble knowledge about favored subject. It specifies fundamental methods for acquiring the records needed to shape and or resolve research problem.

Geared up for this project, structured and formal sketch has been used. The research design chosen was Descriptive lookup design. It consists of three methods-Observation Method, Case Study Method and Survey Method. In this research project, Survey Method was used for gathering data and questionnaires containing

closed ended questions accompanied by some open ended questions were used to conduct the survey. The information accrued was used to do Descriptive and Statistical Analysis.

Sampling Design: The research study is about awareness level of youth customers towards Khadi products with exclusive reference to Patna, Bihar. To fulfill the necessities of the project, a well-structured questionnaire containing 17 questions, out of which 16 were close ended and 1 open ended in nature, was designed. A convenient sampling technique was used to select respondents This method will involve choosing participants who are readily available and accessible, such as those in educational institutions, shopping centers, or public places in Patna.

The pattern size of this study was 500 youth's, which included people of various age classes ranging from 16 to 40 and their awareness level with respect to Khadi, considering both male and female.

Sources of Data:

Data source: This project required current and existing data to support the data collected. Thus, we used both primary and secondary data sources for the study.

Primary data source: A structured questionnaire containing closed-ended and some open-ended questions were used to collect primary data, which was created through google form with questions on awareness level of youth in Patna, related to Khadi .Google forms were sent to them and accordingly they had to fill out the questionnaires.

Secondary data source: Secondary data sources such as internet, magazines, newspapers, and brochures were used to collect existing data to support the research study.

Target segment: A target segment is a collection of elements or objects whose information is sought. The target segments of this research project were youth residing in Patna, Bihar. The segment was further divided based on age group between 16 to 40 years and their level of awareness.

Operation area: The operational area is the area where the sampling procedure is performed. In this research project, the operational area is Patna, Bihar.

Review of literature:

Pradnya P. Ambreand Sugandha Lad (2017) in their paper set-up that the people knew about Khadi and why this movement was started, who initiated it and its impact. Though, the pace of technological development in rural cottage and village industries including Khadi sector in India was extremely slow.

Patil and Surwade (2018) conducted a study which explains the youth demand for Khadi. In the present time, there is surge in demand among youth for wearing Khadi. 38.46% sense nationalism for wearing Khadi and 7.69% sense boring to wear Khadi. Eventually, the study concludes that Consumers are buying products from Khadi stores and feel comfortable to use Khadi products.

Ranjith Paul and Horen Goowalla (2018) set-up that large number of the handloom customers were getting awareness on handloom products through advertisement, trade fairs/exhibitions followed by sales personnel, musketeers, and relatives.

Jyoti Goel (2019) in their study set-up that Khadi and rural industries had good capability for generating gainful employment opportunities along with avenues of self-employment with low capital investment.

Research Gap:

From the studies reviewed, it is apparent that very limited studies have been conducted regarding awareness of Khadi among youth. No study has been conducted on youth awareness of Khadi with special reference to Patna, Bihar.

Analysis and Interpretation of data:

Question: Does Khadi continue to hold significance in present-day fashion and lifestyle trends?

OPTIONS	RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
STRONGLY AGREE	90	18%
DISAGREE	28	5.6%
NEUTRAL	132	26.4%
AGREE	239	47.9%
STRONGLY DISAGREE	11	2.1%
Total	500	100%

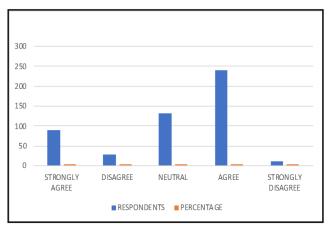


Fig. 1

Interpretation: The above chart shows that the most respondents agree that Khadi is relevant in today's fashion.

Question: How influential do you think social media has been in promoting Khadi among the youth?

OPTIONS	RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
VERY INFLUENTIAL	123	24.6%
SOMEWHAT INFLUENTIAL	58	11.6%
NEUTRAL	167	33.5%
NOT INFLUENTIAL AT ALL	55	10.9%
NOT VERY INFLUENTIAL	97	19.4%
TOTAL	500	100%

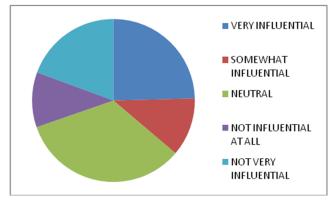


Fig. 2

Interpretation: The above chart shows that most respondents are influenced by the social media.

Question: How is Khadi fabric different from commercially produced fabrics?

OPTIONS	RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
IT IS EXPENSIVE	92	18.5%
IT IS AVAILABLE IN PLAIN WHITE COLOR	32	6.4%
ITIS HANDWOEN AND ECO- FRIENDLY	369	73.7%
IT IS LESS DURABLE AND PRONE TO TEARING	07	1.4%
TOTAL	500	100%

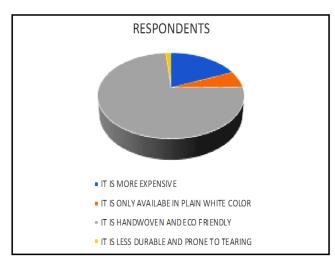


Fig. 3

Interpretation: 73.7% of the respondents are with Khadi fabric is hand-woven and eco-friendly and 18.5% are with Khadi is more expensive.

Question: How often do you come across Khadi products in your daily life?

OPTIONS	RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
NEVER	30	6%
OCCASIONALLY	190	38%
SOMETIMES	200	40.1%
OFTEN	48	9.5%
ALWAYS	31	6.3%
TOTAL	500	100%

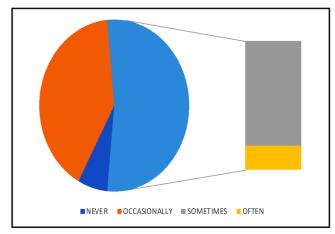


Fig. 4

Interpretation: 40.1% of the respondents come across Khadi product in their daily life sometimes.

Question: Which aspect of Khadi products appeals to you the most as a youth?

OPTIONS	RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
UNIQUE AND HANDCRAFTED DESIGN	153	30.6%
ECO- FREINDLINESS AND SUSTAINABLE	206	41.2%
HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE	105	21.1%
PRICE AND AFFORDABILITY	35	7%
TOTAL	500	100%

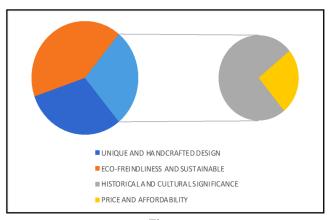


Fig. 5

Interpretation: The aspect of Khadi fabric that appeals most to 41.2% of the respondents is ecofriendliness and sustainability.

Question: In your opinion, how important is it to promote and support the Khadi industry in modern times?

OPTIONS	RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
NOT IMPORTANT AT ALL	123	24.6%
SLIGHTLY IMPORTANT	10	2%
MODERATELY IMPORTANT	6	1.3%
EXTREMELY IMPORTANT	123	24.6%
VERY IMPORTANT	237	47.5%
TOTAL	500	100%

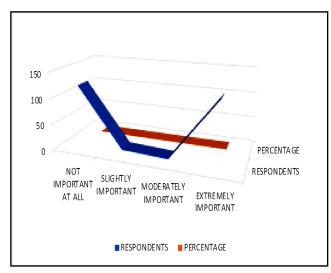


Fig. 6

Interpretation: Most of the respondents think that it is important to promote and support the Khadi industry in modern times.

Question: How well do you think Khadi products fits into modern fashion?

OPTIONS	RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
NOT WELL AT ALL	10	2.1%
NOT VERY WELL	98	19.7%
NEUTRAL	44	8.8%
QUITE WELL	204	40.8%
VERY WELL	142	28.5%
TOTAL	500	100%

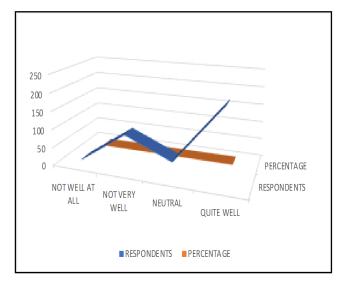


Fig. 7

Interpretation: A total of 69.3% of the respondents thinks that Khadi product fits (quite well and very well) into modern fashion.

Question: How likely are you to purchase Khadi products in future?

OPTIONS	RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
VERY UNLIKELY	10	2.1%
UNLIKELY	27	5.3%
NEUTRAL	102	20.4%
LIKELY	304	60.8%
VERY LIKELY	57	11.4%
TOTAL	500	100%

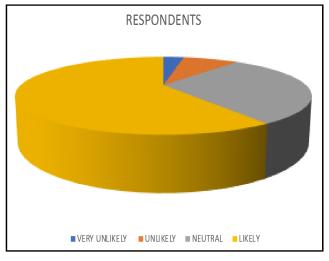


Fig. 8

Interpretation: Majority of the respondents thinks that they are likely to purchase Khadi products in future.

Question: Do you believe that Khadi has the potential to become a global fashion trend?

OPTIONS	RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
STRONGLY DISAGREE	10	2.1%
DISAGREE	11	2.1%
NEUTRAL	100	20.1%
AGREE	357	71.4%
STRONGLY AGREE	22	4.3%
TOTAL	500	100%

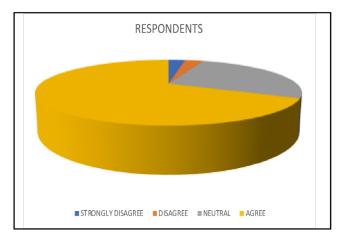


Fig. 9

Interpretation: Most of the respondents agree that Khadi has the potential to become a global fashion trend.

Question: How interested are you in learning more about the process of Khadi production and its impact on rural livelihoods?

OPTIONS	RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
NOT INTERESTED AT ALL	16	3.2%
SLIGHTLY INTERESTED	72	14.4%
MODERATELY INTERESTED	153	30.6%
VERY INTERESTED	181	36.3%
EXTREMELY INTERESTED	77	15.5%
TOTAL	500	100%

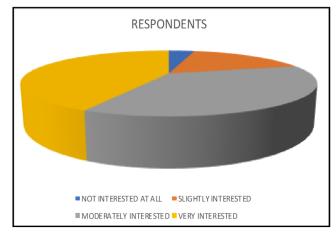


Fig. 10

Interpretation: 36.3% of the respondents are 'very interested' whereas 30.6% of the respondents are 'moderately interested'. Thus, majority of the respondents are interested in learning more about the process of Khadi production and its impact on rural livelihoods.

Question: How likely are you to recommend Khadi products to your friends or family?

OPTIONS	RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
VERY UNLIKELY	10	2.1%
UNLIKELY	09	1.8%
NEUTRAL	98	19.7%
LIKELY	253	50.7%
VERY LIKELY	128	25.7%
TOTAL	500	100%

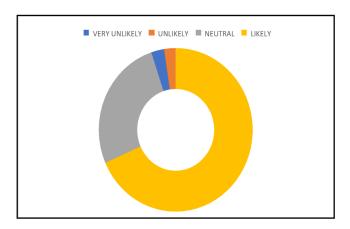


Fig. 11

Interpretation: Majority of the respondents are likely to recommend Khadi products to their family or friends.

Question: In your opinion, how accessible are Khadi products in terms of availability and affordability?

OPTIONS	RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
NOT ACCESSIBLE AT ALL	10	2.1%
NOT VERY ACCESSIBLE	86	17.3%
NEUTRAL	135	27.1%
QUITE ACCESSIBLE	197	39.4%
VERY ACCESSIBLE	70	14.1%
TOTAL	500	100%

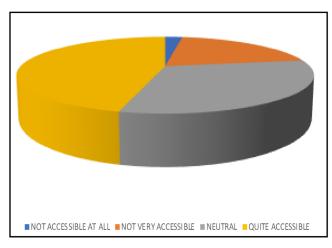


Fig. 12

Interpretation: In terms of affordability and availability most of the respondents are with accessible and 27.1% are neutral.

Question: How well do you think the contemporary designs of Khadi products cater to the tastes of the younger generation?

OPTIONS	RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
NOT WELL AT ALL	16	3.2%
NOT VERY WELL	82	16.5%
NEUTRAL	176	35.2%
QUITE WELL	162	32.4%
VERY WELL	63	12.7%
Total	500	100%

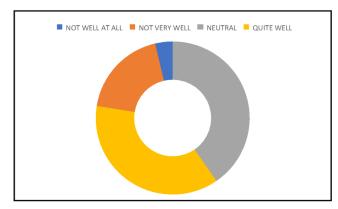


Fig. 13

Interpretation: About 45.1% believes that Khadi fits 'quite well' and 'very well' with the taste and preferences of the younger generation while 35.2% of the respondents are neutral.

Question: Do you think Khadi can play a significant role in promoting sustainable fashion practices?

OPTIONS	RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
STRONGLY DISAGREE	07	1.4%
DISAGREE	09	1.8%
NEUTRAL	93	18.7%
AGREE	371	74.2%
STRONGLY AGREE	20	3.9%
Total	500	100%

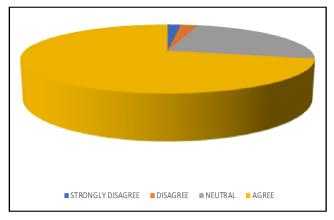


Fig. 14

Interpretation: Most of the respondents agreed that Khadi can play a significant role in promoting sustainable fashion practices.

Question: How much do you believe that the affordability of Khadi products affects its adoption by the younger generation?

OPTIONS	RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
NOT MUCH	26	5.3%
TO A SMALL EXTENT	53	10.6%
TO SOME EXTENT	178	35.6%
TO A CONSIDERABLE EXTENT	156	31.3%
TO SOME EXTENT	178	35.6%
TOTAL	500	100%

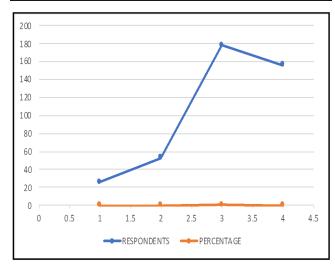


Fig. 15

Interpretation: A considerable number of respondents believe that the affordability of Khadi products affect its adoption by the younger generation.

Question: I know that Khadi products are handspun and hand-woven.

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OPTIONS	RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
NEUTRAL	76	15.1%
AGREE	278	55.6%
STRONGLY AGREE	146	29.3%
TOTAL	500	100%

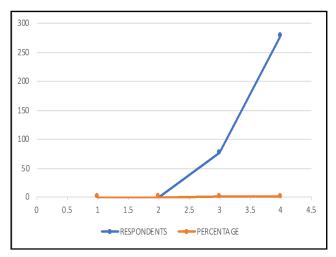


Fig. 16

Interpretation: Most of the respondents agreed that Khadi products are hand-spun and hand-woven.

Findings:

- It was found that about 48% of respondent think that Khadi is relevant in today's fashion and lifestyle trends.
- About 36.2% of respondents felt that social media is influential in promoting Khadi among youth. Out of which 24.6% felt that it is highly influential and 11.6% felt that it is somewhat influential. Whereas 33.5% were neutral about it.
- Most of the respondents felt that Khadi is distinct from commercially produced fabric due to its hand-woven and eco-friendly nature. This data suggests a promising level of awareness and appreciation for environmental conscious choices, reflecting the preference of youth for products with lower environmental impact.
- About 40.1% of respondents feel that they come across Khadi products in their daily life sometimes. This suggests a moderate level of exposure with Khadi items among the surveyed individuals.
- Most of the respondents feel that the ecofriendliness and sustainable nature of Khadi appeals to them the most as a youth. This indicates a strong alignment between the values of youth and the environmental conscious choices, emphasizing a notable

- preference for products that contribute to sustainability.
- Majority of the respondents think that it is important to promote and support Khadi industry in modern times. This indicates that the respondents recognize the significance for promotion and sustenance of Khadi sector, showcasing a positive attitude towards contributing to its growth and preservation in the modern era.
- Nearly 69.3% of the respondents think that Khadi product fits into modern fashion. On the other hand, around 21.8% hold the opinion that Khadi does not align well with modern fashion. Overall, the data reflects diverse opinions on the compatibility of Khadi with modern fashion among the respondents.
- Majority of the respondents think that they are likely to purchase Khadi products in future. This suggests a favorable consumer outlook indicating a potential market interest and willingness to support Khadi industry among the surveyed individuals.
- Majority of the respondents believe that Khadi has the potential to become a global fashion trend. This indicates a positive outlook among the respondents that Khadi possesses qualities that could resonate with a broader international audience.
- Majority of the respondents are interested in learning more about the process of Khadi production and its impact on rural livelihoods. This indicates a curiosity among the respondents for the intricacies of Khadi manufacturing and its socio-economic implications.
- It was found that majority of the respondents are likely to recommend Khadi products to their family or friends. This suggests a high level of satisfaction among the respondents, reflecting a potential for word-of-mouth promotion and increased adoption of Khadi within their socialcircles.

- About 53.5% of respondents felt that Khadi products are accessible in terms of availability and affordability whereas 27.1% are neutral about it. This generally indicates a positive outlook on accessibility of Khadi among the surveyed individuals.
- It is found that a substantial portion of the respondents; about 45.1% believes that Khadi aligns well with the taste and preferences of the younger generation whereas 35.2% are neutral about it. Overall, the data reflects diverse perspectives on the alignment of Khadi with the taste of younger generation.
- It is found that majority of the respondents believe that Khadi can play a significant role in promoting sustainable fashion practices. This suggests that the respondents recognize Khadi as a potential contributor to environmentfriendly and sustainable fashion trends; emphasizing its impact in fostering ecoconscious choices within the fashion industry.
- A considerable number of respondents believe that the affordability of Khadi products affect its adoption by the younger generation. This indicates recognition among the respondents that that affordability is the key consideration for adoption of Khadi; indicating factors influencing consumer choices.
- It is found that majority of the respondents are aware of the fact that Khadi products are handspun and hand-woven. This reflects an awareness and appreciation among the respondents for the hand-woven craftsmanship involved in Khadi production, emphasizing the importance of artisanal aspects of Khadi.
- It is found that there is substantial awareness of Khadi among the respondents and this awareness centers on the distinctive handwoven quality and eco-friendly nature of Khadi, reflecting a positive perception of these aspects among the respondents.

Suggestions:

 Attracting More Customers: Distribution is a key factor in increasing Khadi's accessibility. Placing products in popular shopping areas and malls ensures that Khadi is readily available to a larger consumer base. Implementing competitive pricing strategies and occasional promotions can attract price-sensitive customers.

- Consumer Perception: Rebranding and Messaging: Help people see Khadi as not simple and traditional but also as something that fits with modern styles. Develop Marketing messages highlighting its simplicity as strength, emphasizing its traditional roots while adapting to modern tastes.
- Fashion and Design: Embrace innovation in designs, styles, patterns, and textures to align with evolving fashion trends. Regularly update the product range based on consumer preferences and fashion forecasts to stay relevant in the fast-changing market.
- Technology Adoption for Marketing: Digital Presence: Establish a strong online presence through e-commerce platforms and social media to reach a wider audience.

Digital Marketing: Utilize digital marketing techniques such as social media campaigns, influencer collaborations, and targeted online advertisements to promote Khadi among the youth.

- Staff Training: Employee Training Programs:
 Conduct training programs for Khadi staff to
 enhance customer service skills. Ensure that
 staff members are knowledgeable about the
 product range, fabric details, and can guide
 customers effectively.
- Feedback Mechanism: Implementing a structured feedback mechanism is crucial for understanding customer preferences, concerns, and expectations. Regular customer feedback surveys can provide valuable insights. Equally important is the implementation of feedback received, making necessary improvements in product range, customer service, or store ambiance based on the customer input. This process ensures a

- continuous enhancement of Khadi's offerings and customer satisfaction.
- Sustainable and Eco-Friendly Messaging:
 Emphasize the eco-friendly and sustainable aspects of Khadi in marketing campaigns.
 Given the increasing awareness and preference for sustainable fashion, promoting Khadi as an environmentally conscious choice can appeal to environmentally aware consumers.
- Youth Engagement Events: Organize events targeting youth, such as fashion shows, workshops, or pop-up stores at college campuses or youth-centric locations. These events can provide hands-on experiences with Khadi products and create buzz among the younger demographic.
- Educational Campaigns: Launch educational campaigns about the traditional and cultural significance of Khadi. This can be done through online content, workshops, or collaborations with educational institutions. Educating the youth about Khadi's heritage may foster a sense of pride and connection with the fabric.

Limitations:

Following are the limitations of the study:-

- The research is conducted on small sample of 500 respondents. Therefore, a clear idea about the pattern cannot be confirmed. If sample size is increased, then the results may vary.
- Time is the second limiting factor as the research period was restricted to 2 months.
- Since the data is collected from just one place i.e., Patna with about 500 respondents, the result is not absolute in consideration to the awareness level of youth customers towards Khadi products with exclusive reference to Patna, Bihar or to the whole of Bihar.
- The sampling was done to a particular target audience, so there are chances of biasness in the findings. On increasing the size and including more variations in sampling, the results may vary.

Conclusion:

Consumer awareness about Khadi is essential for its recognition and sustainability. Khadi, known for being eco-friendly and culturally significant, benefits from informed consumers. Awareness campaigns should highlight its versatility, encouraging people to choose Khadi over other fabrics. Informed consumers contribute to this traditional textile, supporting its continued significance in the textile industry.

The study concludes that while there is a high level of awareness of Khadi products among the youth population in Patna District, but there must be improvement in terms of their perception of quality and affordability. Expanding the range of products offered and marketing them in innovative ways will be the key to increasing their appeal to young consumers.

As a part of this project work, the visit in Patna's Khadi stores was quite informative and illuminating, supporting in learning about the subject in a beneficial and clear manner. The visit helped to put theoretical understanding into practice by studying consumer attitudes about Khadi items.

The paper has studied the level of awareness about various aspects of Khadi products in the study area. The study found that the respondents had high level of awareness on the factor 'Today's fashion and lifestyle trends' followed by 'Khadi fabric different from commercially produced fabrics', 'How well Khadi products fits into modern fashion', 'Khadi has the potential to become a global fashion trend', 'Khadi products availability and affordability', and 'Khadi in promoting sustainable fashion practices'. Increasing the degree of public knowledge about Khadi goods in the

study region will support the industry's growth and create more job possibilities in the area.

The research reveals areas for improvement in marketing, distribution, and consumer education to elevate the perception and popularity of Khadi. Implementing targeted awareness initiatives, addressing consumer preferences, and adopting innovative strategies can significantly contribute to fostering a greater appreciation for Khadi products in Patna District, thereby supporting its sustainable growth and cultural significance.

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