

UNFOLDING CONSUMPTION DYNAMICS OF HANDMADE IN INDIA: A CORRESPONDENCE ANALYSIS

A. Dasgupta and B. Chandra

Department of Management Studies, Indian School of Mines,
Dhanbad-826004, Jharkhand, India
anirban.ani.dasgupta@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Consumer behavior of handicraft products is a relatively unexplored topic in India, which might be a reason for its marketing bottlenecks. Correspondingly, this article has tried to find association among consumers' purposes of handicraft purchases and their purchase criteria. With the help of an extensive literature review, factors of consumer behavior towards handicrafts were explored primarily. Then, with the help of an online survey, primary data were collected to further quantify the exploration. Correspondence Analysis (CA) was used as a cardinal tool for analysis of the data. CA deciphers an association among some goals and assorted means for buying handicraft and handloom products. Finally, the research and market implications have been drawn.

Keywords: Handicraft, Consumer Behavior, Hedonism, Authenticity, Novelty, Correspondence Analysis

Introduction

Handicraft and handloom products are culturally, economically and ecologically sustainable products (Basu, 1995; Oakes, 1995; Pye, 1998; Belk and Groves, 1999; Steinberger, 2002; Vormisto, 2002; Coomes, 2004; Sosola-Banda and Johnsen, 2005; Pearce et al., 2010; González-Pérez et al., 2013). Yet they have been losing grounds from market (Rao, 1965; Keplan, 1977; Nurkse, 1954; Menon, 2010). It has been found that lack of market awareness is the main obstacle for any village enterprises to put up their products in urban markets (Thaimani, 1987). Prajapati (1981) and Tyabji (1994) recommended to regularly collect market information to develop feasible solutions to solve the marketing problems of handicrafts. We assume here that such market information could be about the consumer needs regarding the handicrafts. Studies are scant in India which can explore the consumers' purchase cognitions with respect to handicrafts. For what purposes people purchase handicrafts and what aspects they look for while purchasing them and how these purposes and buying criteria are associated is still largely unclear. In this article we have tried to qualitatively and

quantitatively explore this association through following research questions: What motivates consumers to purchase handicrafts? How the purchase purposes and purchase criteria are associated? Such answers would give a better picture of the consumer behavior of handicrafts and would immensely benefit the demand side of the handicraft and handloom sector. For operationalization of the research questions, we began with the literature review of consumer behavior of handicrafts and moved further with a quantitative exploration.

Theoretical Background Cultural Linkage

Handicraft and handloom products are consumed on account of various factors. One of the chief determinants of their purchase behavior is "culture". Hence, they are also considered as cultural products (Kumphai, 2006). It is believed that handicrafts revive and preserve ethnic identities, provides cultural continuity and strengthens cultural institutions in developing societies (Graburn 1976; Kathuria et al., 1988; Basu, 1995; Belk and Groves, 1999). Religion is one of the main components of culture and in India; people devote a fair amount of time performing

religious rituals and ceremonies. Bal and Dash (2010) found in their research that people in Orissa purchase those handicrafts which depict their religion. Indian people are often engaged in festivals where they find enough opportunities to uphold their traditions. Therefore, they like to wear traditional clothes on such occasions. In most of the situations, traditional norms are rigid and family plays a dominant role in purchase of traditional attires. So, reference group has been found to be a determinant in such consumption (De Silver and Kundu, 2013). People want to feel connected to their own culture and purchase of local handicrafts allows people to express their connection. They sometimes feel nostalgic about their past when they encounter cultural products which remind them about their childhood events (Belk, 1991; Havlena and Holak, 1991; Holbrook and Schindler, 1994).

Ethnocentricity and World-mindedness

When nostalgic connection becomes stronger so much so that people deliberately start purchasing local crafts in order to distinguish them from foreign made products, to preserve, to sustain their own material culture and to support their local economy, such attitude has been identified as ethnocentric consumption (Basu, 1995; Steinberger, 2002). However, showing concern for culture need not be always ethnocentric. There are people who like to associate with other cultures and like to know them in great detail (Basu, 1995; Anderson and Litrell, 1996; Belk and Groves, 1999; Kim and Litrell, 1999; Steinberger, 2002; Wicks et al., 2004; Wiboonpongse et al., 2007) and/or like to provide economic or political support to the producers of such crafts (Slaybaugh et al., 1990, Dickson and Litrell, 1997, 1998; Wiboonpongse et al., 2007) by purchasing them. Such behavior can be attributed to an attitude called world-mindedness (Lee et al., 2009). It's a frame of reference with a value orientation towards the problems of society (Sampson and Smith, 1957). However, even

ethnocentric consumers provide economic and political support to the producers of the crafts of their own culture.

Artisan Linkage

As we came across the fact that some people wanted to show concern and/or offer economic and political support to artisans, it's important to understand the motive behind it. Csikszentmihalyi and Rochberg-Halton (1981) said that the efforts, intelligence, time and attention that the artisans invest are their 'psychic energy' and Belk (1988) argued that this psychic energy can be considered as a part of the person who produced them. Therefore, Litrell (1996) argued that the cultural differences between buyers and sellers can be transcended by an intimate human interchange when travelers directly purchase the crafts from the artisans. In addition, travelers liked interacting with artisans and enjoyed observing them weaving baskets, carving wood, burning wood throwing pots and they also liked to know the stories behind the production of such crafts (Anderson and Litrell, 1996).

Utilitarianism and Aesthetics

Indigenous crafts are generally made in tribal and rural areas and they are consumed mainly for functional or ritualistic purposes (Bal and Dash, 2010). Generally, people in such tribal areas, may purchase a basket made of bamboo to store food or may buy a religious figurine made of terracotta. However, when crafts move to a different market from where they are produced, say urban market, they are bought for different purposes. Mere utility or ceremony is not the factor anymore as status, prestige and snob affect gets associated with purchase criteria of these products (Graburn, 1976). Bal and Dash (2010) too in their study found that place of residence is an important factor determining the purchase behavior of handicrafts. Urban consumers may purchase crafts for many other reasons like aesthetics (Slaybaugh et al., 1990; Litrell, 1990; Litrell et al., 1992; Litrell et al., 1993; Litrell,

1996; Kim and Litrell, 1999; Wicks et al., 2004; Wiboonpongse et al., 2007; Bal and Dash, 2010; De Silver and Kundu, 2013). Aesthetics is a broad aspect for purchasing crafts which includes inclination towards craftsmanship (Litrell, 1990; Litrell et al., 1992; Litrell et al., 1993; Slaybaugh et al., 1990; Litrell, 1996). Craftsmanship is evaluated on the basis of specific aspects like, technique used, time and skill involved, finishing of edges, thread choice, use of fringes, details of appliqué, harmony in color, symmetry, neatness in stitching etc. (Litrell et al., 1992; Hu and Yu, 2007; Steinberger, 2002) and creative expression (Litrell et al., 1999; Litrell and Dickson, 1999). Apart from craftsmanship, aesthetics also covers uniqueness (Litrell, 1990; Litrell et al., 1992; Wicks et al., 2004), originality (Slaybaugh et al., 1990; Litrell et al., 1992) and authenticity (Litrell et al., 1993; Steinberger, 2002; Wicks et al., 2004). Regarding authenticity, MacCannell (1973) said that alienated modern tourist who lost connections from the natural and pristine world and therefore, has been in quest for the same which they found in other objects which is not yet touched by modernity. Authenticity has been measured by several indicators viz. traditional styling, crafter's identity, materials used, regional origin of the craft, method of production, custom-made and uniqueness (Litrell, 1990; Basu, 1995; Steinberger, 2002). Litrell (1990) found that travelers who valued aesthetic satisfaction due to intrinsic beauty in color, design or workmanship, did not consider additional symbolism for the item to be meaningful. Litrell (1992) reported that 'sensuous consumers' in their study desired 'unique, unusual or original' items and they showed a strong sensory involvement with the crafts. Kim and Litrell (1999) said that color and design were the evaluative criteria for travelers for craft souvenirs. Tyagi (2008) said that handicrafts carry an unusual style and nostalgia and a touch of ethnicity which attract consumers. Some consumers have dual purpose for buying handicrafts. They want to show their

individualistic expression as well as extend their support towards the artisans (Litrell et al., 1999). However purchase criteria among urban buyers are not devoid of functional aspects (Slaybaugh et al., 1990; Litrell et al., 1992; Litrell and Dickson, 1999; Steinberger, 2002; Wiboonpongse et al., 2007).

Gift Giving

Urban buyers, in pursuit of happiness try to maintain their age old traditions which they have left behind and try to maintain relationships which are beyond monetary gains and which were hitherto implicit in the rural areas. In doing so, they offer gifts to their friends, relatives and colleagues. These gifts are sometimes in the form of handicrafts and handlooms (Bal and Dash, 2010; Yu and Littrell 2003).

Status, Hedonic and Innovative aspect

Consumerism in post modern era is marked by hedonism, wherein, people purchase products out of sheer joy and pleasure (Berner and Tonder, 2003). Such purchase intentions have nothing to do with functionalism, philanthropy or conspicuous consumption. Handicrafts have also been found to be purchased for hedonic purpose (Hirschman and Holbrook, 1982; Litrell et al., 1999). In this new age, people are trying to maintain values of modernity as well as tradition. Therefore, even in case of handicrafts, there are consumers who look for innovative aspect products which has blend of modernity and tradition (Fillis, 2002; Grimes and Milgram, 2000; Popelka and Littrell, 1991).

Memoirs of Travel

Travelling experience has been found to be connected with cultural consumption in many studies. Handicrafts in tourist destinations are purchased as souvenirs which help in storing memories of unique travel experiences (Gordon, 1986; Belk, 1988; Litrell, 1990; Basu, 1995; Anderson and Litrell, 1996; Kim and Litrell, 1999; Steinberger, 2002; Yu and Littrell 2003;

Wiboonpongse et. al., 2007; Lee et al., 2009).

Contingent Factors

Lastly, there are some contingent factors or controlling factors which govern the purchase of crafts like price of the products and income of the consumers (Bal and Dash, 2010) ease of handling, packing and caring (Gahring et al., 1992; Littrell et al., 1992; Kim and Littrell, 1999; Yu and Littrell, 2003; Wicks et al., 2004) situation of purchase and promotional aspects (Wicks et al., 2004; Vadhanasindhu and Yoopetch, 2006). Shopping involvement and shopper typology also has been considered factors for purchasing souvenir crafts (Litrell, 1990; Havitz and Howard, 1995; Anderson and Litrell, 1996; Selin and Howard, 1998; Kinley et al., 2003; Yu and Litrell, 2003 ; Hu and Yu, 2007; Geuens et al., 2004; Moscardo, 2004; Josiam et al., 2005). All these factors can be collectively termed as contingent factors because they act as controlling or inhibiting factors for handicraft purchase.

Methodology

An online survey was conducted to elicit responses regarding general perceptions of people regarding handicrafts and handlooms. It has been argued that this tool can help explore those attitudes which are 'socially liberal', since, respondents on an average have been found to live lesser in homes and thus are lesser cautious while giving responses (Kellner, 2004). Participants were selected by convenient sampling because this kind of sampling is often used in exploratory research where researcher needs a gross estimate of the results without spending much time and money to select a random sample (Pla, 1999). A *Google Form* was generated and sent to conveniently select 150 people through email and Facebook messages. Out of the 150 forms sent, 112 responses were received in the form of automatically generated spreadsheet on *Google Drive*. Both closed and open ended questions were

kept. Options were given against the questions to guide the respondents. These options were adopted from variables identified in the literature review. As this study was entirely of an exploratory kind, we faced with some variables unknown to us which had to be later incorporated into our study. Also, the techniques which were later adopted for data analysis could not have been determined earlier. Thus, in order to adjust with the techniques and unpredictable situations, using Investigator Triangulation Method (Denzin, 1978) we grouped, renamed, add and omitted some variables as per suitability of the study. For example, options like price, situation of purchase, discount options and purchasing store were separately kept in the questionnaire for the convenience of respondents but were later grouped under a label, contingent factors to suit our literature review. The variables 'new design' and blend of modernity and tradition' in the questionnaire were grouped and renamed as 'innovative aspect' for data analysis.

Data Analysis

The responses helped to identify which purposes govern the handicraft and handloom purchases and which aspects people consider while purchasing. Purpose of buying handicrafts has been coded as 'goals' and the aspects which people consider while purchasing them has been coded as 'means'. Goals contained 10 categories and means comprised of 8 categories. The frequencies of the variables under goals and means were used in correspondence analysis discussed below.

Correspondence analysis (CA)

Correspondence analysis is an exploratory technique used to analyze categorical data (Benzecri, 1992) for which no specific hypotheses have been formed (Storti, 2010). CA is often used before conducting a more complex study when a researcher wants to develop a general understanding about the population under study (Doey and Kurta, 2011). CA can simplify complex data from

a potentially large table into a simpler display of categorical variables while maintaining all of the valuable information of the data set (Doey and Kurta, 2011). It provides a visualization of the association of variables to determine the number of dimensions prevalent among the associations. It is a geometric technique that uses information from the row and column points in the contingency table, and places categories (levels) of the variables as points in low-dimensional visual space, so as to best fit their associations. CA is a widely used technique in marketing research. In tourism marketing literature too, correspondence analysis is becoming a much popular technique (Gursoy and Chen, 2000). Since, much of the literature for handicraft and handloom products is derived from tourism studies, use of CA for this study seemed well justified to us. Frequencies of Goals with 10 categories and Means with 8 categories were calculated from the spreadsheet of the online survey and numeric codes (ranging from 1 to 10) were assigned to each category. A corresponding dataset was created in SPSS (statistical package for social science) and correspondence analysis was run for the dataset.

Results

SPSS produced a tabulation table called Correspondence Table shown above (Table 1). It depicts the active margin of each variable. For example, all of the frequencies for the variable, craftsmanship sum to 147 and all of the frequencies for the variable, Aesthetics sum to 128. This illustration tells something about the order of the categories. For example, comparing the relative sizes of each cell, we can say that Aesthetics and Craftsmanship were valued most. However, that would be over simplistic and thus, we still need a standardized measure of cell frequency counts to make them comparable. In order to standardize the cell frequency values of the contingency table and to form the basis for association chi-square value is needed. Chi-square value is the standardized measure of association between the row and column categories. (Hair et al., 2006). Looking at the summary table (table 2), we find that the chi-square value for our model was 120.175 which is significant at .000 level at 63 degrees of freedom. That means that our model is fit and there is correspondence among goals and means.

Table 1. Correspondence Table of CA

Goals	Means								
	Craftsmanship (1)	Innovative aspect (2)	Originality (3)	Uniqueness (4)	Authenticity (5)	Religious appeal (6)	Nostalgia (7)	Contingent factors (8)	Active Margin
Aesthetics (1)	32	17	13	15	10	12	8	21	128
Fashion wear (2)	10	7	10	9	7	12	6	8	69
Gift giving (3)	18	14	11	28	7	12	9	15	114
Utility (4)	24	13	12	11	7	1	5	14	87
Status (5)	1	2	11	11	10	8	12	2	57
Novel experience (6)	24	14	11	15	7	3	7	16	97
Hedonic experience (7)	4	6	4	6	10	10	11	4	55
World-mindedness (8)	11	12	9	8	5	12	6	12	75
Ethnocentricity (9)	10	8	9	8	7	2	5	10	59
Traditional norms (10)	13	2	6	8	10	11	10	12	72
Active Margin	147	95	96	119	80	83	79	114	813

Table 2. Summary of CA

Dimension	Singular Value	Inertia	Chi Square	Sig.	Proportion of Inertia		Confidence Singular Value	
					Accounted for	Cumulative	Standard Deviation	Correlation
								2
1	.304	.092			.624	.624	.032	-.133
2	.145	.021			.142	.766	.036	
3	.132	.018			.119	.885		
4	.095	.009			.061	.945		
5	.075	.006			.038	.983		
6	.044	.002			.013	.996		
7	.023	.001			.004	1.000		
Total		.148	120.175	.000 ^a	1.000	1.000		

a. 63 degrees of freedom

The total variance explained by each dimension in the model is 14.8% as indicated in inertia column of table 2. It indicates that association is weak, but it is still highly significant as indicated by the chi square statistic ($\chi^2= 120.175$, $p=.000$). CA provides statistical measures for describing the number of dimensions under the column head singular values, and they should be greater than 0.20 to be accepted as a viable dimension (Hair et al., 1998). Singular values for dimensions 1 have the value of 0.304 and the dimension 2 has the singular value 0.14. By rule of thumb only dimension 1 satisfies the solution. However, Hair et al. (2006) argued that the researcher

selects the number of dimensions based on overall level of explained variance desired and the incremental explanation gained by adding another dimension. The Proportion of Inertia column shows that Dimension 1 explains 62.4 % of the total variance explained in the model. Dimension 2 would further add 14.2 % of the total variance and thus, with the two dimensions, 76.6 % of the variance can be explained. Further addition of dimensions could increase the level of explanation but would also increase the complexity of the interpretation process. Therefore, both, 1st and 2nd dimensions were retained in the solution.

Table 3. Overview Row Points of CA

Goals	Mass	Score in Dimension		Inertia	Contribution				
		1	2		Of Point to Inertia of Dimension		Of Dimension to Inertia of Point		
					1	2	1	2	Total
Aesthetics (1)	.157	-.376	.298	.009	.073	.097	.741	.222	.963
Fashion wear (2)	.085	.310	.291	.006	.027	.050	.401	.168	.569
Gift giving (3)	.140	-.052	-.320	.013	.001	.099	.009	.161	.170
Utility (4)	.107	-.675	-.237	.018	.160	.042	.823	.048	.872
Status (5)	.070	1.222	-.765	.039	.345	.284	.821	.153	.974
Novel experience (6)	.119	-.535	-.222	.012	.112	.041	.877	.072	.949
Hedonic experience(7)	.068	.992	.274	.025	.219	.035	.816	.030	.845
World-mindedness (8)	.092	.022	.501	.008	.000	.160	.002	.442	.444
Ethnocentricity(9)	.073	-.215	-.363	.005	.011	.066	.195	.265	.460
Traditional norms (10)	.089	.418	.456	.013	.051	.127	.351	.199	.549
Active Total	1.000			.148	1.000	1.000			

a. Symmetrical normalization

Next we are interested in naming the dimensions. Naming the dimensions help in interpreting the relative positioning of means and goals on the two dimensions of the perceptual map. Here we focus on the position of means relative to the goals. The dimensions are named according to the category of goals that contribute significantly to the total inertia of each of the dimensions that were retained in the solution (Greenacre, 1993). Hair et al. (2010) provide a rule of thumb for determining which goal contributes significantly to the total inertia of a dimension. Their guideline is based on a proportional contribution for each goal category. We found that any goal category which contributes above average (i.e. >10 %) is considered significant for dimension 1 and those above 12.5% are considered significant for dimension 2. Accordingly, utility (16%), novel experience (11.2%),

status (34.5%) and hedonic experience (21.9%) were significant contributors of dimension 1 and are placed on the horizontal axis of the perceptual map based on their relative score in the dimension. Thus, utility and novel experience scored negatively is named for the left side of dimension 1 while status and hedonic experience which scored positively are used for naming the right side of dimension 1. Similarly, world-mindedness (16%), traditional norms (12.7%) and status (28.4%) are significant contributors of dimension 2 represented by the vertical axis. World-mindedness and traditional norms scored positively and are used for naming the top half of the dimension 2 while status which scored negatively is used for naming the bottom half of the dimension 2. Status is a significant contributor of both the dimensions, so, it was plotted on both dimensions.

Table 4. Overview Column Points of CA

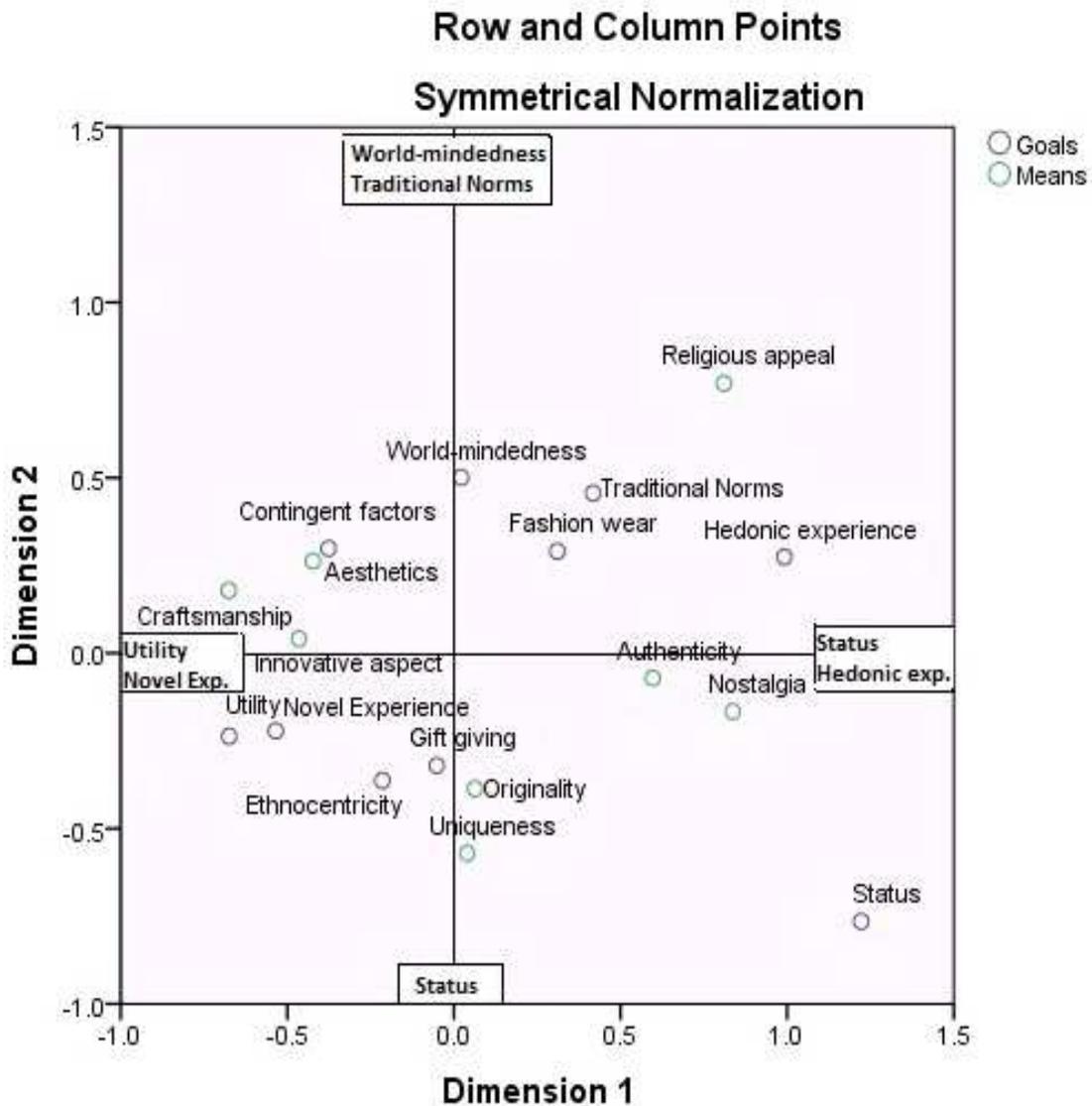
Means	Mass	Score in Dimension		Inertia	Contribution				
		1	2		Of Point to Inertia of Dimension		Of Dimension to Inertia of Point		
					1	2	1	2	Total
		Craftsmanship (1)	.181		-.676	.179	.029	.272	.040
Innovative aspect (2)	.117	-.466	.041	.014	.083	.001	.548	.002	.550
Originality (3)	.118	.063	-.387	.008	.002	.122	.018	.321	.339
Uniqueness (4)	.146	.040	-.571	.014	.001	.330	.005	.482	.487
Authenticity (5)	.098	.597	-.071	.016	.115	.003	.685	.005	.690
Religious appeal (6)	.102	.810	.769	.033	.221	.418	.622	.267	.890
Nostalgia (7)	.097	.836	-.167	.024	.224	.019	.874	.017	.891
Contingent factors (8)	.140	-.423	.262	.011	.083	.067	.708	.130	.838
Active Total	1.000			.148	1.000	1.000			

a. Symmetrical normalization

The cumulative total of variances explained by a point along the two dimensions is illustrated in the final column titled “total”. It can be observed that with the exception of gift giving, world-mindedness and Ethnocentricity amongst Goals (17 %, 44 % and 46% respectively), all other goal components explained dimensions above the range of 50% of the variance. Hair et al. (1998) suggest that points that do not contribute to the dimension over and above 50% should be removed from the joint plot. In this case, it was decided to remove gift giving, world-mindedness and Ethnocentricity completely from the analysis. Table 4 illustrates all 8 means of handicraft purchase. Except Uniqueness (48.7 %) and Originality (33.9 %), all points explain more than 50% of the variance. Therefore, uniqueness and originality were removed from the joint plot. Having named the dimensions we identify where the means are located on the perceptual map relative to the two dimensions. Following the guidelines of Greenacre (1993), the positions of categories of means are interpreted along each dimension from the points located in each quadrant to the axes. We see that except religious appeal all other means are located not far from the centroid.

Hence, it indicates that these means share a lot of similarities to one another. Considering those similarities, we next examine each mean’s relative correspondence or association with each of the dimensions described previously. We find that the category contingent factors plots closer to utility and novel experience on the left side than to status and hedonic experience on the right side of dimension 1. It is also closer to world-mindedness and traditional norms on the upper half than to status on the lower half of the dimension 2. Craftsmanship is more closely associated with utility and novel experience than status and hedonic experience on dimension 1. Innovative aspect is more associated with utility and novel experience, the reason being people looking for innovative handicrafts look for some new design features with some blend of modernity with tradition which enhances functionality within the bounds of tradition. Religious appeal is closely associated with traditional norms of dimension 2. Nostalgia is found to be closely associated with hedonic experience of dimension 1. Authenticity is found to be associated with hedonic experience on dimension 1 and with traditional norms on dimension 2.

Figure 1. Perceptual Map showing association among goals (purpose of buying) and means (criteria for buying)



Discussion

In the perceptual map, we find that the category contingent factors plots closer to utility and novel experience. It might be so because, contingent factors includes factors like price, discount offers, situation of purchase and shopping involvement which are economic considerations for a buyer, so, it is quite obvious that it will not be a function of purchases which have hedonic or status considerations for hedonism has negative relation with economic considerations and status is more associated with conspicuous consumption which have less to do with utilitarian values associated with contingent factors. Shopping

involvement has been associated with souvenir purchase behavior giving a hint for its association with novel experience by tourist consumers.

In the perceptual map, craftsmanship is more closely associated with utility and novel experience than status and hedonic experience. Many respondents perceived handicraft product to be something unique and rare artifact with skillful artistry embedded in them. Also at the same time, they wanted those products to be useful at home serving some functional aspects.

Innovative aspect is more associated with utility and novel experience, the reason

being that people looking for innovative handicrafts look for some new design features with some blend of modernity with tradition which enhances functionality within the bounds of tradition.

Religious appeal seems to be closely associated with traditional norms in the perceptual map. This can be attributed to the fact that Indian people are very religious and they sometimes purchase handicrafts depicting religious figurines made of terracotta or bronze or wear *khadi* (cotton) handlooms on festivals due to traditional norms.

Nostalgia is found to be closely associated with hedonic experience. This can be explained by a research done by Holbrook and Schindler (1994) on hedonic aspects of cultural products where they found association among nostalgic emotions, age and music (music is a cultural product).

Authenticity is found to be associated with hedonic experience, the reason being that, authenticity is a multi-dimensional aspect having been linked with traditional style as well as uniqueness by some scholars

(Litrell, 1990; Basu, 1995; Steinberger, 2002). Uniqueness can be considered as an attribute of hedonism for Litrell (1990) found that travelers who valued aesthetic satisfaction due to intrinsic beauty in color, design or workmanship, did not consider additional symbolism for the item to be meaningful. Also many respondents in our research expressed their attraction towards unique handicrafts without any justification for it. Traditional styling can be considered as an attribute of traditional norm in India, thus, justifying the correspondence of traditional norm with authenticity.

Conclusion

This article tries to extend the knowledge of consumers of handicrafts in India by quantifying it through correspondence analysis. Although, the findings may not be generalizable, can be an input for a qualitative study where the reasons of such associations can be explored. Such direction can be important in segmentation studies so that handicraft marketers can target their consumers more efficiently.

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