
A STUDY ON THE ROLE OF EDUCATION AND ATTITUDE IN SHAPING CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR TOWARDS GI- TAGGED HANDICRAFTS: A PERSPECTIVE ON G.I. TAGGED HANDICRAFTS IN KERALA

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ABSTRACT

This study evaluates the impact of education and consumer attitude on purchasing behaviour towards Geographical Indication (GI)-tagged handicrafts in Kerala. GI tags act as tool to ensure authenticity and quality of the products. The research analyses how educational qualification and attitude of the influence customer to purchase G.I tagged handicrafts by using descriptive and analytical research. Primary data were collected through interview schedules from 317 customers selected by using purposive sampling method. The study reveals that higher educational level and positive attitude are strongly related with increased awareness and preference for GI-tagged handicrafts. This study provides valuable suggestions for Government, artisans, and marketers to strengthen marketing of G.I tagged handicrafts of Kerala's GI-tagged handicrafts.

Keywords: Geographical Indication (GI) tags, Handicrafts, Consumer Behaviour, Education, Consumer Attitude,

1.0 Introduction

The handicraft sector in India embodies the nation's cultural heritage and artistic diversity, with each region contributing unique traditional crafts. Kerala, renowned for its distinctive handicrafts such as Aranmula Kannadi, Kasaragod sarees, and Chenda Mangalam handlooms, has several products recognized under the Geographical Indication (GI) system. GI tagging serves as a mark of authenticity and origin, protecting artisans' intellectual property while enhancing product credibility in the market. However, consumer awareness and appreciation of GI-tagged handicrafts often remain limited, affecting their market potential. Education and attitude play crucial roles in shaping consumer behaviour toward such products—education influences awareness, understanding, and appreciation of GI labels, while attitude determines the emotional and behavioural response toward purchasing them. Understanding how these factors interact is essential for promoting sustainable demand for GI-tagged handicrafts and preserving Kerala's cultural legacy. This study, therefore, seeks to explore the role of education and attitude in shaping consumer behaviour toward GI-tagged handicrafts in Kerala, aiming to provide insights that can inform marketing strategies, policy initiatives, and consumer awareness programs to strengthen the position of these heritage products in contemporary markets.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Geographical Indication (GI) tagging is intended to safeguard the authenticity, quality, and cultural identity of traditional handicrafts, many GI-tagged products in Kerala have yet to achieve the desired level of consumer recognition and market success. Despite the state's rich craft heritage—reflected in products like Aranmula mirror, Kasaragod sarees, and Chenda Mangalam handlooms, Balarama Puram handlooms—consumer awareness, appreciation, and demand for these certified items remain limited. This gap between GI certification and actual consumer response highlights a crucial challenge in translating authenticity into market value. Previous research indicates that education significantly influences consumers' understanding and interpretation of GI labels, while attitude shapes how such awareness is converted into trust, preference, and purchase behaviour. However, there is a lack of comprehensive studies examining the combined impact of education and attitude on consumer behaviour toward GI-tagged handicrafts in Kerala, where variations in cultural orientation, income, and exposure to traditional art forms further complicate buying patterns. Additionally, the prevalence of counterfeit products and inadequate promotional strategies for authentic crafts erode consumer

confidence and diminish artisans' market opportunities. Therefore, this study seeks to address the pressing need to explore how education and attitude together influence consumer awareness, perception, and purchasing behaviour toward GI-tagged handicrafts in Kerala, in order to promote greater consumer engagement, strengthen market performance, and ensure the long-term sustainability of the state's traditional craft sector.

1.2 Review of Literature

Several studies have explored the relationship between education, attitude, and consumer behaviour toward products with Geographical Indication (GI) tags, highlighting the interplay of awareness, trust, and cultural perception. According to **Tregear et al. (2007)**, GI labels act as quality cues that communicate authenticity and cultural value, influencing consumers' perceptions of traditional products. **Belletti and Marescotti (2011)** emphasized that consumer awareness of GI certification depends largely on educational background and exposure to information about origin-based products. Similarly, **Bhat and Sinha (2018)** found that higher education levels positively correlate with greater understanding of GI concepts and willingness to pay for certified handicrafts. In the context of Indian handicrafts, **Sinha and Kar (2020)** noted that consumers with higher educational attainment are more likely to associate GI tags with quality, heritage preservation, and artisan welfare. Attitude has also been recognized as a crucial determinant of consumer decision-making; **Ajzen's (1991)** Theory of Planned Behaviour suggests that favourable attitudes significantly influence purchase intention and behaviour. Empirical evidence by **Jena and Grote (2012)** on Indian GI products such as Darjeeling tea confirmed that consumer attitudes toward authenticity and trust strongly predict willingness to pay a premium. Likewise, **Das and Mukherjee (2021)** observed that positive attitudes toward GI-labelled handicrafts enhance purchase frequency and brand loyalty. Studies focusing on the handicraft sector, such as **Kumar and Raju (2019)**, have shown that emotional attachment to cultural heritage and perceived authenticity mediate the relationship between awareness and buying behaviour. In Kerala, research by **Nair and Raj (2022)** indicated that despite the presence of multiple GI-tagged crafts, consumer awareness remains moderate, and attitude-driven appreciation plays a stronger role in influencing purchase behaviour than mere knowledge of the GI label.

Research Gap:

The existing literature provides valuable information into the roles of education and attitude in

purchasing handicrafts consumer behaviour. particularly in the context of Kerala. Moreover, there is limit in availability of data and other variables. So, this study focuses to fill this gap by investigating how education and consumer attitude shape the demand for GI-tagged handicrafts in Kerala.

1.3 Objectives

1.To analyse whether there is a relationship between the educational qualification of customers and their awareness of GI-tagged handicrafts.

2. To examine the relationship between customers attitudes toward purchasing handicrafts and their willingness to pay for such products.

1.4 Hypothesis

1. Ho: There is no significant relationship between education qualification of customer and awareness about GI tagged handicrafts.

2. Ho: There is no significant relationship between attitude of customer towards purchasing of handicrafts and their willingness to pay for handicrafts.

1.5 Research Design and Sampling Techniques

The study follows a descriptive and analytical research design, based on both primary and secondary data. Secondary data collected from various journals, magazines, websites, books and other sources and primary data were collected from customers who purchase handicrafts by using purposive sampling techniques. The customers were introduced by dealers who sell G.I tagged handicrafts. The population is unknown so 317 customers were selected to achieve statistical discrepancy.

1.6 Significance of the study

The study evaluates the role of education and consumer attitude in influencing the purchasing behaviour of GI-tagged handicrafts in Kerala. By examining how educational qualification and customer attitude affect consumer preferences, this research focus on identifying main factors that can improve the market potential of handicrafts. The findings of this study aim to support Government, and its stakeholders like artisans, and co-operative societies in developing strategies to promote GI-tagged products. This study contributes to the understanding of

sustainable consumer behaviour and the importance of cultural identity in purchasing decisions.

1.7 Scope of the study

The scope of this study is an analysis of how education levels and consumer attitudes influence the buying behavior toward GI-tagged handicrafts in Kerala. This study focuses specifically on customers of seven GI-tagged products such as Aranmula Mirror, Alapuzha Coir, Maddalam of Palakkadu, Payyannur Pavithra Ring, Screw Pine Nut Craft of Kerala, Brass Broidered Coconut Shell Craft of Kerala and Cannore Home Furnishing, which represent Kerala's rich tradition and craftsmanship. The study considers consumers from different educational and demographic backgrounds to analyse variations in awareness and purchasing behaviour and the geographic focus is limited to Kerala. The findings of the study expected to provide information that can support awareness-building and marketing strategies to promote the sustainable growth of GI-tagged handicrafts.

1.8 Data Analysis and Discussions

The following table Socio-Demographic Profile of 317 Customers who purchased handicrafts.

Table 1.1 Socio-Demographic Profile of Customers

Variables		N	%
Age	25-34	67	21.14
	35-44	97	30.60
	45-54	119	37.54
	55 and above	34	10.73
Gender	Male	239	75.39
	Female	78	24.61
Religion	Hindu	208	65.62
	Christian	72	22.71
	Muslim	37	11.67
Marital status	Single	47	14.8A3
	Married	216	68.14
	Divorced	30	9.46

	Separated	24	7.57
Education	Plus, two	9	2.84
	U.G	188	59.31
	P.G	107	33.75
	Professional	13	4.10
Total		317	100.00

Source: primary data

The table 1.1 describes the basic profile of 317 customers across in Kerala. As per this table the majority fall within the middle-aged groups, with 37.54% aged 45–54 and 30.60% between 35–44 years. In terms of gender, the sample is 75.39% males and only 24.61% females. Religion-wise classification shows that 65.62% of the respondents are Hindu, followed by Christians (22.71%) and Muslims (11.67%), reflecting Kerala's cultural diversity. In the case of marital status, most respondents are married (68.14%), while single, divorced, and separated individuals consist smaller proportions. Regarding education qualification, the sample is well-educated, with a significant portion having undergraduate (59.31%) and postgraduate (33.75%) qualifications.

Testing of the hypothesis

HYPOTHESIS 1

Ho: There is no significant relationship between the educational qualification of customers and awareness about GI-tagged handicrafts.

H1: There is a significant relationship between the educational qualification of customers and awareness about GI-tagged handicrafts.

Table 1.2 Awareness of GI-Tagged Handicrafts Among Customers.

	Opinions	n	%
1	Yes	78	24.61
2	No	239	75.39
	Total	317	100.00

Source: Primary data

The table shows that out of 317 respondents, only **78 persons (24.61%)** are aware of Geographical Indication (GI)-tagged handicrafts, the majority of **239 respondents (75.39%)** reported no awareness about G.I tagging. This clearly states that the **overall awareness of GI-tagged handicrafts among customers is very low.**

Table 1.3 Awareness and Perception of G.I. Tagged Handicrafts Across Educational Qualifications

	Education qualification				ANOVA	
Awareness about G.I tagged handicrafts		U.G.	P.G.	Professional qualification	f	Sig
I am familiar with the concept of GI tags.	Mean	4	4.44	4.64	6.677	0.002
	S.D.	0.00	0.50	0.50		
I have seen or heard about GI-tagged products through various sources.	Mean	5	4.55	5	11.480	0.000
	S.D.	0.00	0.50	0.00		
I can identify some specific products that have GI tags.	Mean	3.83	4.38	4.64	3.603	0.032
	S.D.	1.03	0.68	0.50		
GI tags help me trust that the product is authentic.	Mean	4	4.51	5	16.891	0.000
	S.D.	0.00	0.50	0.00		
I believe GI-tagged products are of higher quality than non-GI products.	Mean	4.42	4.53	4.36	0.218	0.805
	S.D.	0.51	0.50	0.50		
I feel that GI-tagged products help preserve cultural heritage and local craftsmanship.	Mean	4.58	4.38	4.64	0.658	0.521
	S.D.	0.51	0.65	0.50		
	Mean	4.42	4.1	4.36	2.084	0.132

Purchasing G.I. tagged handicrafts helps in supporting local artisans and preserving traditional crafts.	S.D.	0.51	0.59	0.50		
al trust the authenticity of G.I. tagged handicrafts more than other handmade products.	Mean	4.58	4.8	4.64	1.114	0.334
	S.D.	0.51	0.40	0.50		
	F	25.240				
	Sig.	0.000				

Source: Primary Data

As per Table 1.3, the mean scores and standard deviations for awareness of Geographical Indication (G.I.) tagged handicrafts among customers with undergraduate (U.G.), postgraduate (P.G.), and professional qualifications. The ANOVA test is used to assess whether differences among groups are statistically significant. The overall F-value is 25.240 with a P value is 0.000, which indicates that the education level of customers affects awareness about GI-tagged handicrafts. So, there is a significant relationship between the educational qualification of customers and their awareness of GI-tagged handicrafts. People with higher education levels have higher familiarity, exposure, and ability to identify GI-tagged products compared to those with lower qualifications.

So, we reject null hypothesis and alternative hypothesis is retained. Therefore, it can be concluded that there is a significant relationship between customers' awareness about handicrafts education qualification of customers.

HYPOTHESIS 2

Ho: There is no significant relationship between attitude of customer towards purchasing of handicrafts and their willingness to pay for handicrafts.

H1: There is significant relationship between attitude of customer towards purchasing of handicrafts and their willingness to pay for handicrafts.

Table 1.4: Customer Attitudes Toward Handicrafts Based on Willingness to Pay.

	Willingness to pay							
Attitude of the customers		SA	A	N	D	SD	ANOVA	
							F	Sig.
Handicrafts offer a special feel than other products.	Mean	4.79	4.7 0	4.88	4.6 0	4.5 0	1.07	0.37
	S.D.	0.41	0.4 6	0.35	0.5 2	0.7 1	1	1
Handicrafts have authentic value.	Mean	3.94	4.1 5	4.25	4.1 0	4.0 0	2.75	0.02
	S.D.	0.50	0.4 6	0.46	0.7 4	0.0 0	0	8
The uniqueness and handmade quality of handicrafts make them worth the higher price compared to other products.	Mean	4.03	4.2 0	4.00	3.9 0	4.5 0	3.25	0.01
	S.D.	0.34	0.4 8	0.00	0.5 7	0.7 1	9	2
The cultural or artistic significance of a handicraft is higher than other product	Mean	4.28	4.0 8	3.88	4.3 0	4.5 0	1.89	0.11
	S.D.	0.45	0.7 1	0.35	0.4 8	0.7 1	7	1
It helps to support poor artisans.	Mean	2.07	1.8 9	2.00	1.8 0	2.5 0	1.88	0.11
	S.D.	0.49	0.6 3	0.53	0.4 2	0.7 1	0	4
There is a story behind this handicraft that adds to its value	Mean	1.86	1.8 6	2.00	2.0 0	2.5 0	0.79	0.53
	S.D.	0.35	0.6 6	0.53	0.4 7	0.7 1	1	2

It will improve status in society	Mean	3.76	3.7	3	3.75	3.6	4.0	0.25	0.90
	S.D.	0.66	0.5	8	0.46	0.8	0.0	4	7
MANOVA	F	1.978							

Source: Primary data

As per Table 1.3, used test the hypothesis that there is a significant relationship between customer attitudes toward purchasing handicrafts and their willingness to pay for this purpose ANOVA and MANOVA tests were conducted. The ANOVA results showed that among the various attitude statements, two showed statistically significant differences across willingness-to-pay groups: "Handicrafts have authentic value" ($F = 2.750$, $p = 0.028$) and the uniqueness and handmade quality of handicrafts make them worth the higher price ($F = 3.259$, $p = 0.012$). These p-values are below 0.05, indicating that perceptions of authenticity and uniqueness influence willingness to pay of the customers. Along with the MANOVA F-value was 1.978, based on these values we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis.

Therefore, it can be concluded that there is a significant relationship between customers' attitudes toward handicrafts and their willingness to pay for them.

1.9 Findings of the study

1. The majority of customers who purchased handicrafts in Kerala fall within the **middle-age group**, with most respondents aged **45–54 years (37.54%)**, followed by **35–44 years (30.60%)**.
2. The customer base is **male-dominated (75.39%)**, while females constitute **24.61%** of the total respondents.
3. In terms of religion, the majority are **Hindus (65.62%)**, followed by **Christians (22.71%)** and **Muslims (11.67%)**, indicating a culturally diverse sample.
4. Most respondents are **married (68.14%)**, while a smaller proportion are **single, divorced, or separated**.
5. The customers are generally **well-educated**, with **59.31% undergraduates** and **33.75% postgraduates**, showing that the handicraft market attracts an educated consumer segment.

6. Only **24.61%** of customers are **aware of GI-tagged handicrafts**, while **75.39%** are **unaware**, indicating a **low level of awareness** about GI certification among consumers.
7. **Educational qualification** has a **significant influence** on awareness about GI-tagged handicrafts, as shown by the **ANOVA test** ($F = 25.240$, $p = 0.000$).
8. Respondents with **higher education levels (postgraduates and professionals)** have **greater familiarity, exposure, and ability** to identify GI-tagged products compared to undergraduates.
9. Thus, the **null hypothesis is rejected**, confirming that there is a **significant relationship between educational qualification and awareness** about GI-tagged handicrafts.
10. In terms of attitude, customers generally have a **positive perception** toward handicrafts, appreciating their **authenticity, uniqueness, and cultural value**.
11. The **ANOVA and MANOVA results** show that **customer attitude significantly influences willingness to pay** for handicrafts (MANOVA $F = 1.978$).
12. Two attitude factors — **authentic value** ($p = 0.028$) and **uniqueness/handmade quality** ($p = 0.012$) — were found to **significantly affect willingness to pay**, meaning customers who value these attributes are ready to pay more.
13. Therefore, the **null hypothesis is rejected**, confirming a **significant relationship between customers' attitudes and their willingness to pay** for handicrafts.
14. Overall, the findings highlight that **education and positive perceptions** are key determinants of both **awareness and purchasing behavior** in the handicraft market.
15. There is a strong need for **awareness and promotional initiatives** to educate consumers about the importance and benefits of **GI-tagged handicrafts**, which can, in turn, enhance support for **local artisans and traditional craftsmanship**.

1.10 Suggestions of the Study

Based on the findings, the following suggestions are proposed to improve awareness, attitudes, and purchasing behavior toward handicrafts, especially GI-tagged products, among consumers in Kerala:

1. Enhance Public Awareness about GI-Tagged Handicrafts:

Awareness about GI certification is very low among customers. Government agencies, NGOs, and craft development organizations should conduct awareness campaigns,

workshops, and exhibitions to educate consumers on the meaning and benefits of GI tags.

2. Educational Outreach Programs:

Since education significantly influences awareness, colleges and universities can include discussions or short courses on intellectual property rights, GI tags, and cultural heritage to build knowledge among younger consumers.

3. Strengthen Marketing and Promotion Strategies:

Handicraft cooperatives and marketing boards should adopt modern marketing tools, including social media, influencer campaigns, and digital storytelling, to reach a wider audience and highlight the authenticity and uniqueness of GI-tagged handicrafts.

4. Improve Product Labeling and Certification Visibility:

GI-tagged handicrafts should carry clear and standardized labels or logos to help customers easily recognize authentic products, ensuring transparency and trust in the marketplace.

5. Promote Online Sales Platforms:

Establishing e-commerce portals dedicated to verified GI-tagged handicrafts can help artisans access broader markets and attract tech-savvy and educated buyers who prefer online shopping.

6. Training and Capacity Building for Artisans:

Artisans should receive training in branding, pricing, packaging, and customer communication to improve the presentation and perceived value of their products in both local and global markets.

7. Integrate Handicrafts into Tourism Promotion:

The Kerala Tourism Department can promote “Craft Tourism” by linking handicraft centers with tourist destinations, offering visitors opportunities to purchase authentic local crafts directly from artisans.

8. Highlight Cultural and Emotional Value in Advertising:

Marketing campaigns should focus on the heritage, cultural stories, and craftsmanship behind each product to strengthen the emotional connection between consumers and handicrafts.

9. Encourage Consumer Loyalty through Quality Assurance:

Ensuring consistent quality and authenticity of handicrafts will help build long-term trust and loyalty, encouraging customers to pay premium prices for genuine products.

10. Policy Support for GI-Tagged Handicrafts:

The government should introduce policy measures and financial incentives to support artisans involved in producing GI-tagged handicrafts, such as subsidies, marketing grants, and export facilitation.

11. Collaborative Initiatives:

A joint framework involving government bodies, NGOs, educational institutions, and private enterprises should be established to coordinate awareness, production, and marketing efforts for GI-tagged products.

12. Consumer Education through Media:

Use of mass media, documentaries, and local influencers can help spread awareness about GI-tagged handicrafts among rural and urban consumers alike.

13. Encourage Purchase through Social Impact Messaging:

Campaigns should emphasize that buying GI-tagged handicrafts supports local artisans and preserves cultural heritage, appealing to the social responsibility of educated consumers.

1.11 Conclusions

The study reveals a gap in consumer awareness regarding the Geographical Indications (GI) tag. This study focuses on GI-tagged handicrafts in Kerala. As per this study, only a small number of consumers are familiar with GI-tagged products. This limited awareness affects consumer choices, reduces the market potential of GI-tagged handicrafts, and adversely affects

the preservation of cultural heritage. Education acts as a major factor, positively influencing consumers' understanding, attitude, and purchasing behaviour towards GI-tagged handicrafts. Through awareness, information about GI tagging and handicrafts can be disseminated to more people, thereby paving the way for the comprehensive growth and development of this sector.

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