
A Study on Consumer Perception on Packing of FMCG Products

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Abstract: *This paper seeks to discuss the need to understand consumer perceptions in order to correctly design product packing and to achieve the desired position in the minds of consumers. Data collection was divided into two phases. The first, (based on designers' opinions), to determine the key graphic variables in the design of packaging. The second, (based on consumers' opinions), to associate each packaging with respect to some elements. The significance of the study, to discuss the perception of the customer towards packing. The elements include designing, quality, brand name and buying behaviour.*

Keywords: *Product positioning, Packaging, Perception, Preferences, Consumer behaviour.*

1. INTRODUCTION

In nowadays competitive environment the role of package has changed due to increasing self-service and changing consumers lifestyle. Firms interest in package as a tool of sales promotion is growing increasingly. Package becomes an ultimate selling proposition stimulating impulsive buying behaviour, increasing market share and reducing promotional costs.

According to Rundh (2005) package attracts consumer's attention to particular brand, enhances its image, and influences consumer's perceptions about product. Also package imparts unique value to products (Underwood, Klein & Burke, 2001; Silayoi&Speece, 2004), works as a tool for differentiation, i.e. helps consumers to choose the product from wide range of similar products, stimulates customers buying behaviour (Wells, Farley & Armstrong, 2007). Thus package performs an important role in marketing communications and could be treated as one of the most important factors influencing consumer's purchase decision. In this context, seeking to maximize the effectiveness of package in a buying place, the researches of package, its elements and their impact on consumer's buying behaviour became a relevant issue.

Literature analysis on question under investigation has shown that there is no agreement on classification of package elements as well as on research methods of package impact on consumer's purchase decision. Some of researchers try to investigate all possible elements of package and their impact on consumer's purchase decision, while others concentrates on separate elements of package and their impact on consumer buying behaviour. Moreover some researchers investigate impact of package and its elements on consumer's overall purchase decision while others – on every stage of consumer's decision making process. Furthermore the abundance of scientific literature on this issue do not provide unanimous answer concerning impact of package elements on consumer's buying behaviour: diversity of the results in this area depends not only on research models constructed and methods employed, but on the context of the research too. All above mentioned confirms the necessity to investigate this issue in more detail. In the light of these problematic aspects, research problem could be formulated as following question: what elements of a package have an ultimate effect on consumer purchase decision?

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Rita Kuvykaite (2009) has descriptive research. According to Rita package attracts consumer's attention to particular brand, enhances its image, and influences consumer's perceptions about product. Also package imparts unique value to products

(Underwood, Klein & Burke, 2001; Silayoi&Speece, 2004), works as a tool for differentiation, i.e. helps consumers to choose the product from wide range of similar products, stimulates customers buying behavior (Wells, Farley & Armstrong, 2007). Thus package performs an important role in marketing communications and could be treated as one of the most important factors influencing consumer's purchase of package, its elements and their impact on consumer's buying behavior became a relevant issue. He basing on theoretical analysis of package elements and their impact on consumer's purchase decision empirically reveal the elements having the ultimate effect on consumer choice. Research methods that Rita used is systematic and comparative analysis of scientific literature; empirical research There are six variables that must be taken into Consideration by producer and designers when creating efficient package: form, size, color, graphics, Material and flavor. Similarly, Kotler (2003) distinguishes six elements that according to him must be evaluated when employing packaging decisions: size, form, material, color, text and brand. The research result of Rita shows the impact of package elements on consumers purchase decisions can be stronger. He conclude that Package could be treated as one of most valuable tool in today's marketing communications, necessitating more detail analysis of its elements and an impact of those elements on consumers buying behavior. The impact of package and its elements on consumer's purchase decision can be revealed by analyzing an importance of its separate elements for consumer's choice.

Bed Nath Sharma Dec. 2008 studied New Consumer Products Branding, Packaging and Labeling in Nepal. This paper focuses on existing practice of branding, packaging and labeling of new products in consumer product manufacturing units. The study method was Descriptive presentation of facts collected through questionnaire survey concerned with different section of consumer new products (soap, biscuit, noodles, cigarettes and The study further investigates the new consumer product packaging and labeling status in manufacturing units. They are aware about the value of packaging and labeling. Majority of the consumer products 84.37% (27 out of 32 responses) are using product label as a simple tag attached to the product or an elaborately designed graphic that is part of the package.

Alice Louw (2006) has studied The Power of Packaging the people belonged to Age 20-30 years old University graduates were taken for research. 20 respondents were asked to rank 5 water bottles in terms of their overall appeal. Following this, they were given a questionnaire and asked to rate each of the bottles on 20 statements related their packaging. For the remaining 20 respondents, the order of the process was switched: they rated the bottles first and then ranked them. The statements ranged from functional attributes (e.g. easy to drink from, right size) to more emotive, non-functional attributes (e.g. I like the colors, high quality). For both groups there was a clear winner and a clear loser in terms of the rankings. However, although the top brand chosen was consistent in both groups, the worst brand differed. The group that ranked the bottles first showed more variance in terms of their responses (Variance 1.33) than the second group who rated the attributes first (variance 0.89). This Packaging plays an important role in the marketing context. His research results that right packaging can help a brand carve a unique position in the marketplace and in the minds on consumers.

John ThGersen(2000) worked on The Ethical Consumer. Moral Norms and Packaging Choice published in Journal of Consumer Policy Kluwer Academic Publishers. Printed in the Netherlands. The paper presents a study of a case with these two characteristics: Danish consumers' choice presents a study of a case with these two characteristics: Danish consumers' choice of environment-friendly packaging. With regard to this case, the evidence supports the claim. A majority of Danish consumers have developed personal norms about choosing environment-friendly packaging and the personal norm is a significant predictor of their (self-reported) propensity to choose environment-friendly packaging in the supermarket.

Renaud LUNARDO 2007 has a great research on the influence of label on wine consumption. its effects on young consumers' perception of authenticity and purchasing behavior The main objective of the paper is to identify the effects of authenticity on purchase behavior. They used a repertory grid (RG) approach as a methodological framework in order to know which pattern of features is better at inducing purchase. All the relationships between authenticity provided by the label of bottles and consumer behavior attributes (performance risk, perceived price and purchase intentions) have all been tested by using linear regressions. This study was intended to provide a more complete understanding of the influence of the authenticity perceive from the label of bottled wine. As an attempt to extend the research on the influence label of bottled wine can have on consumers' decisions of buying, the current it is clear from these findings is the major role played by labels.

L Renaud 2007 worked on The Influence of Eco-Labeling on Consumer Behavior. The main objective of this study was to assess the relative importance of the labeling in Packaging compared to other product attributes (like brand, price, etc.) for consumers' buying decisions. The methodological approach that they chose was discrete choice analysis, which is particularly powerful for this kind of analysis. Further this study attempts to analyze if the importance of the labeling and packaging differs between product groups. They surveyed a total of 302 customers; Two thirds of the interviews were conducted in the German-speaking. The Variables chose within this study are , present mood, time, buying purpose With regard to sustainability marketing, Time. The most important result of analysis is the significant willingness to pay for Packaging energy efficient products.

Adelina Broadbridge & Henry Morgan (2007), consumer buying behavior and perception toward retail and brand baby products. A two-stage research methodology consisting of both qualitative and quantitative research techniques was adopted. The population was defined as 'parents of children under the age of five who use baby care products'.

Both the qualitative and quantitative research showed that respondents adopted similar risk reduction strategies in their purchase of baby care products. This research investigated consumer perceptions and buying behavior of baby care products. The results of the primary research indicated that consumers need to feel confident with the product in terms of reliability and performance and packaging.

3. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

- To find out the effect of packaging on the buying behaviour.
- To check the effect of packaging elements on the buying behaviour.
- To measure the relative impact of each packaging element on the consumer.
- To identify the elements which should be highlight while design the packaging.

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

To find the impact of the consumer on the packing of FMCG products. Primary data is collected to do the research process to avoid errors. The data is gathered through administering the questionnaire.

The research study employed random sampling technique which randomly selects the respondents.

5. TARGET POPULATION

Sample unit : people of all age groups who buys FMCG products in ANDHRA PRADESH.

Sample size : 165

Sampling method : Simple random sampling

Research tool : Structured Designed Questionnaire

Contact method : Personal interview

6. ANALYSIS

1. Age

Out of 165 respondents 9 respondents (5.45%)from below 20 years of age, 143 respondents (86.67%) from 20-30 years, 9 respondents (5.45%) from 30-40 years and 4 respondents (2.42%) from above 40.

2. Occupation

Out of 165 respondents 119 respondents (72.12%) are students and remaining 46 respondents (27.88%) are employees.

3. Packing is necessary for FMCG products

Out of 165 respondents 123 respondents (74.55%) believe that packing is necessary for FMCG products, 4 respondents (2.42%) believe that packing is not necessary and 38 respondents(23.03%) believe that may or maynot be necessary for FMCG products.

4. Is packing on the product helps to promote the brand name of a company

Out of 165 respondents 137 respondents (83.03%) said that packing of a product helps to promote the brand name of the company, 2 respondents (1.21%) said that packing on the product does not help to promote the brand name of the company and 26 respondents (15.76%) said that it may or may not that is depend on the situation packing helps to promote the brand name of the company.

5. Factors of packing mostly effect to purchase the product

Out of 165 respondents 31 respondents (18.79%) said that design of the packing, 119 respondents (72.12%) said that Quality of the packing effect to purchase the product and 15 respondents (9.09%) said that price of the packing mostly effect to purchase the product.

6. Is packing of a product influences the buying behaviour of the customer

Out of 165 respondents 94 respondents (56.97%) said that product packing influences the buying behaviour of the customer, 11 respondents (6.67%) said that product packing does not influences the buying behaviour of the customer and 60 respondents (36.36%) said that sometimes that is based on the product, product packing influences the buying behaviour of the customer.

7. Customers priority towards packing

Out of 165 respondents 119 respondents (72.12%) prefer Eco friendly packing, 29 respondents (17.58%) prefers attractive colours in the packing and 17 respondents (10.30%) prefers other elements in the packing.

8. Importance of the printed information of the packing of the product before customers buying.

Out of 165 respondents 101 respondents (61.21%) check the information on the packing of the product, 9 respondents (5.45%) does not notice the printed information on the packing of the product and 55 respondents (33.33%) of respondents said that depend on the product type information on the packing is checked.

9. Age group of the people who attract towards packing

Out of 165 respondents 92 respondents (55.76%) said that children between 5-15 years mostly attracts towards packing, 59 respondents (35.76%) said that Teenagers between 12-22 years of people attract towards packing and 14 respondents (8.48%) said that Adults above 25 years will attract towards packing.

10. Design of the packing on the product helps to purchase the product

Out of 165 respondents 60 respondents (36.36%) said that design of the packing helps to purchase the product, 18 respondents (10.91%) said that design of the packing does not helps to purchase the product and 87 respondents (52.73%) said that sometimes design of the packing helps to purchase the product.

11. Is information on the packing of a product help the customers to evaluate the product

Out of 165 respondents 88 respondents (53.33%) said that information present on the packing of a product help to evaluate the product with competitors product, 14 respondents (8.48%) said that information on the packing of a product does not help to evaluate the product and 63 respondents (38.18%) respondents said that depends on the type of the product packing helps to evaluate the product.

7. FINDINGS

1. About half of the people does not know the importance of the packing for FMCG products.
2. It is observed from analysis that the consumers increasingly prefer the paper boards for packaging in the first priority while considering the various types of packaging materials on the production in view of non-environmental pollution.
3. The analysis of benefits of packaging, it is revealed that the packing should help the consumers for choosing the product at the first instance of seeing the product besides helping the manufactures for brand image and differentiation among their own products either between the manufacturers or with the same manufacturer. It is

enabling the manufacturer to market their product at the first instance of the attention of consumers by attractive colouring or designing the package of products.

4. The buying behaviour of the consumer is also influenced by the packaging design and material which could be observed from the analysis. Stimulating the consumer to buy a product among a host of commodities by its attractive colour, shape, design, texture, language and appearances and packaging acts a silent salesman in marketing a product.

5. The study has further revealed that due attention has to be given on first priority at the time of designing a package in such a way as influencing the buying behaviour of the potential consumer.

6. The respondents stated that it is mandatory to furnish certain details on packaging such as price, date of expiry, date of manufacturers etc., which vary from product to product. Further, it is also observed that the consumers are particular during the period of sale and also after sale about prescription/usage of certain product in order to keep away from harmful effects of packaging to the society by the packaging industries.

7. The study has also revealed that the social factors like the health awareness, environmental awareness, changing life styles, changing shopping habit, time pressure in buying a product and consumer awareness are contributing factors to determine the progress of particular group or size of the industry involving in packaging activities through selection of standardized materials.

8. The most important factor influencing the decision of packaging is consumer view point. Also the legal aspect, easy conveyance, environmental aspects, product safety, value addition and appearance followed by as cost effectiveness.

9. Children age group of people will attract the packing of the products compared to other groups.

8. SUGGESTIONS

1. The consumers while buying a product want to be more aware of the price, date of manufacture and expiry given on the packing of any product. Hence they should be made mandatory.

2. The marketability of any product depends upon consumers' acceptance, which determines the existence or survival of any packaging units. So, the consumer expectations need to be taken into consideration while designing the packaging in such a way atleast to meet out the minimum requirements of the consumers.

3. The paperboards may be given top priority wherever possible among the other packaging materials in view of its eco-friendly nature of the material, relatively lesser cost of packaging as compared with availability of materials in the market and also recycling process associated with paperboards.

4. It is suggested that the designing of the packaging should help the consumers to identify the product, contents of the product on seeing the product in the first instance but reasonably presumed that no one will want to add to the cost of packaging materials by using something unnecessarily and this would be possible by intelligent packaging methods.

5. It is generally accepted that the role of packages is its ability to sell the product and build a brand image for which advancement have been made in most of packaging technology, like engineering, graphic design and materials used.

6. Designers can take action through sustainable and intelligent designs which focus on reducing the environmental impact of packaging materials and improving efficiency.

7. Packaging technology development ensures now a days an attractive appearance and gaining more market. In the lights of the above, it is suggested that there should be a shift in the materials mixture used through technological developments like removing layers of packaging, changing materials, using biodegradable materials.

8. Since consumer is playing vital role in the marketability of a product, at the first instance, the packaging units should identify the expectations of the consumers about the packaging of a particular product which may basically requires ease conveyance, furnishing details, non-toxic, long life and less cost of the product, with minimum environmental impact and satisfy them to the extent possible.

9. CONCLUSIONS

Results of research on role of packaging on consumer's buying behaviour stipulated following conclusions:

1. The impact of package and its elements on consumer's purchase decision can be revealed by analysing an importance of its separate elements for consumer's choice. For this purpose main package's elements could be identified: graphic, color, size, form, and material of packaging are considered, wrapper design, printed information, innovation while product information, producer, country-of-origin and brand are considered as important ones. Moreover, the impact of package elements on consumers purchase decisions should be evaluated depending on the consumer's involvement level, time pressure or individual characteristics of consumers.
2. It has revealed that elements of package are the most important for consumer's purchase decision. For a major part of consumers' a size and material are the main visual elements, while product information is also the main verbal elements when purchasing milk and food products.
3. Research into packaging has found that different packaging cues impact how a product is perceived. Often the packaging is perceived to be part of the product and it can be difficult for consumers to separate the two (the concept of gestalt). Aspects such as packaging color, typography, illustrations and graphics can influence how a product is perceived.

SUMMARY

Summarizing, it could be stated that detail evaluation of package elements and their impact on consumer's purchase decision, taking into consideration involvement level, individual characteristics of consumers, is necessary in order to implement efficient packaging decisions.

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