

Importance of Food Packaging and Its Relation to the Consumer's Demographic Profile

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ABSTRACT : *The purpose of this work is to explore the association between the importance of food packaging and its relation to the consumer demographic profile. The study utilized a sample of sixty consumers through using a structured, reliable questionnaire, in Mysore city Karnataka, India. The following outcomes were found through statistical analysis: Income as a demographic factor has a substantial association with important elements of packaging food products. But gender, age and education had no important relation.*

KEYWORDS: *Food Packaging, Demographic Profile, Consumer Behavior.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Packaging today has grown in importance and is seen as a critical marketing tool. Better packaging results in the protection and saved transportation of products, reduces loss, damage and wastage of products and produce. It enhances product value and hence expands markets within and outside the country (Jakhar, 2004). Nowadays; several companies have taken packaging in a positive light. Furthermore, with the increased number of new products available, it is necessary to be ever vigilant regarding the strong promotional values which may be obtained from food packaging. Nowadays, in a competitive environment the role of the packaging has changed due to increasing self-service and changing consumers' lifestyle (Deliya & Parmar, 2012). Firms' interest in packaging as a tool of sales promotion is growing more and more. The package becomes an ultimate selling proposition stimulating impulsive buying behavior, increasing market share and reducing promotional costs.

According to Rundh (2005) packaging attracts consumer's attention to particular brands, enhances its image, and influences consumer's perceptions about the product. Thus the package performs an important role in marketing communications and could be treated as one of the most important factors influencing consumer's purchase decision. For last decades rate of literature has increased and on the other hand, in the competitive oligopoly market, companies have to consider ultimate packaging as a promotional activity due to better marketing and convinced the curious educated customer which they seek the better packaging and more feature as well. Consumer behavior "is the study of the processes involved when individuals or groups select, purchase, use, or dispose of products, services, ideas, or experiences to satisfy needs and desires" (Solomon, 1996). Consumer behavior is influenced by an individual's physical and social environment, the individual's motivation to consume, his or her perception of the product, brand, service, or company, and the goals or needs that he or she may obtain through consumption. People may purchase as a result of their mood and their surroundings (Vani & Babu, 2011).

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

This section provides general literature on role of packaging in consumers' buying behavior. The basic purpose is to find out how such factors are behind the success of the packaging. One of the most important parts of the marketing plan is packaging, and it plays a key role on marketing products and services. A good packaging would be more effective for customers and increases people's intention in purchasing products. These literatures prepared through needs and wants of educated people and the way of making a decision to purchase their own requested food products to gain maximum satisfaction. Bloom (1976) worked on the effect of education on consumer behavior. He explained the recent upsurge of interest in consumer education can be expected to lead, in the long-run, to significant changes in consumer behavior.

This paper contains a brief description of existing consumer education programs and a discussion of several hypotheses about how programs of this type could affect consumer behavior. Vani et al., (2011) studied

on the impact of the demographic profile of toothpaste buying behavior in Bangalore city. The researchers selected 485 respondents from Bangalore city, the descriptive research design was adopted in this study. Regression test was used to determine the association between toothpaste buying behavior and demographic components. The outcome indicated that age, gender, educational qualification, marital status, number of years married, age group of youngsters, household type, and family size influencing the consumer for buying toothpaste. Bakshi (2011) worked on the impact of gender on consumer purchase behavior. It explained Men and women due to their different upbringing and socialization along with various other social, biological and psychological factors depict different types of behavior at various situations. Whether it is decision making in personal life or professional life, whether it is about shopping or eating, both the genders are completely different at every stage of decision making. Right from need recognition through the evaluation of alternatives to the post purchase behavior, men and women work differently with different types of stimuli and different parameters of evaluations. Women seem to have satisfaction and find pleasure while they shop, whereas men appear to be more disdain towards shopping. In this paper an attempt is made to study these differences at various levels of purchase decision.

Zhifenggao et al., (2011) researched on consumer preferences for fresh citrus: impacts of demographic and behavioral characteristics. They demonstrate that freshness, flavor and appearance are the most important attributes of fresh citrus. Heterogeneous preferences exist among consumers and both demographic and behavioral variables have significant impacts on preferences. Results indicate there are no dominant best predictors of consumer preferences. However, it appears there is potential to develop specific marketing strategies based on demographics. Aziz & Nas (2013) worked on demographic segmentation and its effects on customer satisfaction. Segmentation by demographic factors is widely used in marketing, despite the fact that the correlation of such factors with the needs of customers is sometimes weak. Segmentation by expected benefits and attitudes could enhance ability to address the conflict between individual service and cost-saving standardization. Using cluster analysis segments was formed based on combinations of customer ratings for different attitudinal dimensions and benefits of products/services. The clusters generated in this way were superior in their homogeneity and profile to customer segments gained by only referring to demographic differences. Aloomal & Lawan (2013) studied on consumer demographic variables influencing clothes buying behavior in Borno state, Nigeria. Data for the study were gathered through structured questionnaire administered on a sample of 192 clothes buyers, out of which, 174 were duly filled and returned. The data obtained were analyzed using descriptive statistics and chi square. Frequency results revealed that consumers' clothes need recognition was mainly based on basic wardrobe requirement (34.5%) and society (friends, family, neighbors) served as the main information window to most clothes consumers (44.8%). Quality was the main clothes evaluation (choice) criteria (60.3%) and most consumers (66.1%) patronized native clothes. On the contrast influence of gender and marital status was invariably not significant on consumer buying behavior. The study recommended for marketing managers to adopt a market segmentation strategy and segment their clothes markets on the basis of demographic variables since they were all found to have the greatest degree of influences on clothes buying decisions.

Mazloumi et al., (2013) examined the effect of demographic differences on purchasing behavior of Tetra Pak consumers. The study sample of 384 has been selected random clusters sampling based on geographic areas. Sample members have responded to the questionnaire made by the researcher. The validity of above tool was confirmed by experts and researchers and its reliability was measured in the pilot study, then Cronbach's alpha of 0.81 was obtained. Current research uses a survey methodology, the descriptive-type and applied-purpose. Finally, confirming the hypotheses showed that the demographic differences effects on their purchasing behavior.

III. IMPORTANCE OF STUDY

For last decade packaging has vast changes in terms of marketing and nowadays converted to one of the most significant factors in the marketing mix. By enacting the FDI (Foreign Direct Investment) and the entrance of MNC's (Multi-National Companies) in India, packaging has brought a very special importance. Whereby many brands with the same particular products are usable in the market so decision making has got difficult. The reason of selecting Mysore city in this study was that by invading the MNC's into the market, meanwhile employing the most educated young people less than 24 years old, totally life style has changed. This paper attempts to ascertain out whether there is a significant association between Advantages of packaging and demographic profile of consumers or not.

IV. RESEARCH METHOD

In this study a quantitative survey was conducted in order to get experimentally measured and find out the relationship between variables. The survey has done through promoting questionnaire based on perishable groups (PMA) in 2011, comprised of two parts. The first parthas contained demographic information of the respondent. The second part includes packaging characteristics and featureson consumer behavior and it has rated from extremely important to not at all important. Selected sample was sixty consumers consist of 53% women and 47% men, in Mysore city, India. The questionnaires in different days and hours in the range of two weeks were distributed to arrive the most accuracy and involved of the more different range population of consumers.

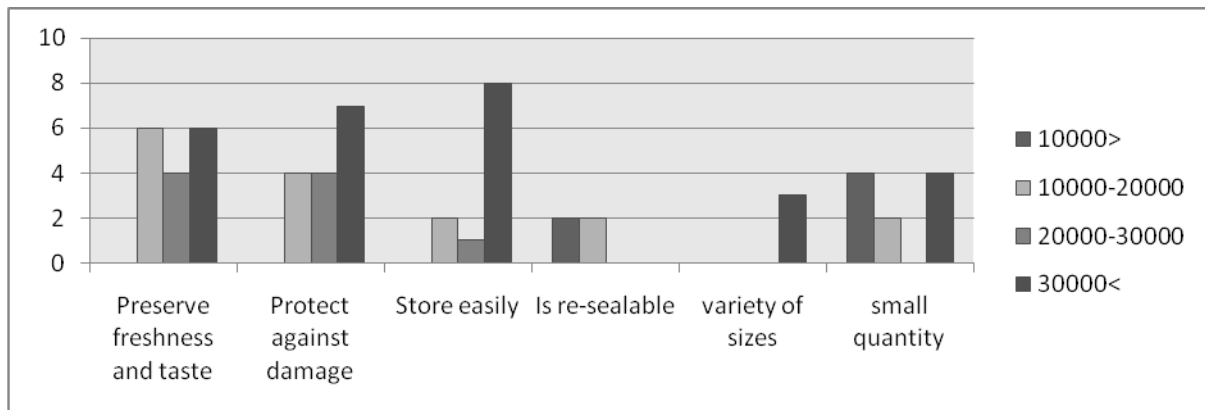
Hypothesis: There is no significant association between demographic profile and advantages of packaging in food products.

V. RESULTS

Table 1: Association between Advantages of Packaging and income

Advantages	Income				Total
	10000>	10000-20000	20000-30000	30000<	
Preserve freshness and taste	0	6	4	6	16
Protect against damage	0	4	4	7	15
Store easily	0	2	1	8	11
Is re-saleable	2	2	0	0	4
Variety of sizes	0	0	0	3	3
Small quantity	4	2	0	4	10
Total	6	16	9	28	59
Test Statistics	Cramer's V = 33.02; p = 0.005				

Figure 1: Association between Advantages of Packaging and income



As it turns out, by the Table 1 and figure 1, there is a significant association between income and advantages of packaging, those respondents which earn more than 30000 rupees monthly cares about all features of packaging. The diversity of sizes was important for those consumers who earn more than 30000 rupees monthly.

Table 2: Association between Advantages of Packaging and Gender

Advantages	Gender		Total
	Male	Female	
Preserve freshness and taste	4	12	16
Protect against damage	10	5	15
Store easily	4	7	11
Is re-saleable	3	1	4
Variety of sizes	1	2	3
Small quantity	5	5	10
Total	27	32	59
Test Statistics	Cramer's V = 7.44 ; p = 0.18		

P>0.05

Table 3: Association between Advantages of Packaging and Age

Advantages	Age				Total
	20>	20-30	31-40	40-50	
Preserve freshness and taste	1	12	3	0	16
Protect against damage	1	10	3	1	15
Store easily	0	9	2	0	11
Is re-saleable	0	2	2	0	4
Variety of sizes	0	1	2	0	3
Small quantity	1	6	3	0	10
Total	3	40	15	1	59
Test Statistics	Cramer's V = 0.37; p = 0.85				

Table 4: Association between Advantages of Packaging and Education

Advantages	Education				Total
	UD	D	M	PhD	
Preserve freshness and taste	2	3	11	0	16
Protect against damage	1	6	8	0	15
Store easily	0	6	3	2	11
Is re-saleable	0	0	4	0	4
Variety of sizes	1	0	2	0	3
Small quantity	1	0	8	1	10
Total	5	15	36	3	59
Test Statistics	Cramer's V = 23.45; p = 0.07				

As shown in the tables 2, 3 and 4, the significant association has not existed between advantages of packaging food products and gender, age and education of consumers. It can be concluded that all demographic factors except of income don't have an impact on consumer perception in terms of food packaging buy.

VI. DISCUSSION

In market segmentation, demographic profile is a helpful data to analyze the behavior of the customers and regularity of their visit to the supermarkets. Income as a demographic factor has a significant association with advantages of packaging food products. But gender, age and education had no important relation. Depend upon the above result, food production companies it would be better to concentrate their marketing strategy in terms of packaging on the target market and loyal customer who can afford it the extra price on enhanced packaging. Targeting these particular segments of society, it could be an end to the brand loyalty as well.

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