

Affect of Food Product Packaging on the Perception of Buyers Study Based on Food Product Packaging as an Important Tool from Traditional to Modern World

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Abstract

The study was conducted to investigate food product packaging as an affecting factor over general perception of buyer at purchasing point. This research measured the impact (overall positive or negative) of most important factors; food product packaging attributes over consumers buying behavior. Packaging attributes plays vital role in building perception while customer makes purchasing decisions on different food product categories. A sample of 203 respondents taken from total population was randomly selected on convenience sampling and surveyed using online questionnaire and social media pole. The questionnaire implied to the structured and based on 5 points likert scale questions. The study used simple descriptive statistics, correlation approach and ANOVA table for the analysis. Findings of the research revealed that the highest percentage involved in food product purchasing are female; according to Pakistani market with strong positive correlation (0.592**) between the consumer buying patterns due to the attractive packaging in food items. Overall, the calculation shows the strong positive combination between these two factors. This study clearly identifies the food items package a mean for producing purchasing interest.

Keywords: Perception, Food packaging attributes, Product categories, purchasing interest

1. Introduction

“Packaging” the least significant ‘P’ in modern marketing mix has got the weighted importance in recent past years. In forthcoming challenging era, where clutter is expending and the modern marketers faced difficulties in capturing the heart & mind share of the target customers just by delivering the quality product and attractive and affective promotions, Packaging as ‘P’ has gained its worth. Furthermore, the emerging field of technology and advance marketing has rejuvenated the field of packaging from traditional to modern style. Shared packaging attributes such as size, color, transportability, typography etc. is achieving its fundamental importance and has given the agenda to highlight the core reasons of competition. The modern marketer has now shifted their intent from just gaining portability and protection towards affordable, convenient and attractively projected packages to fix the requirements of the targeted strata.

Today, product packs can be used in different manners and with effective approach to elevate the product to the consumers (Peter and Olson, 2013). It can impact the customer choice to select a particular product or brand over other competitive products. Keeping an eye on the concerns of reference strata regarding their influences of food items, product wrapper designs specifically in the division of food items is considered the most important agenda for discussion. The research also unveiled the subsequence of different packaging properties over consumer recall, retention, purchase intention and actual purchasing behavior correlated to their living standard.

This study went to dig out the significant factors of food items packaging designs that can create influence on buyer’s pattern of choice through being attractive, innovative, and quality oriented in order to support, protect and ease of carrying the product along with. The usefulness of this study will also help organizations to unveil strategies for building and maintaining the effective packaging in terms to achieve healthy relationship with the customers in a competitive business arena.

2. Related Literature

2.1. Consumer buying behavior & their personality traits

Schiffman (2000) explained that “Consumer buying decisions depend upon how actually population makes their decisions regarding product under the accessible resources; such as psychic, time, energy and money on personal or household consumption. Customer’s actions are mostly derives through the packaging attributes at point of purchase; they have got attraction by the stimulating factors of packaging. Buying intension based on packaging can be measured in terms of physical actions that will eventually help the organizations to draw their package designs.

2.2. Packaging as an important “P” of marketing mix

Various researchers has reached to the multiple sets of definition that explains the packaging as an important factor; stretching from protection, communication, and identification. Package colors, shapes and other factors can be one of the reasons to attract consumer’s attention or can be used in order to create association towards any brand; it

strikes the consumer's perceptions and enriches the image of product (Rundh, 2005).

2.3. Packaging develops perception

Now days, Product packaging is considered as a loud tool while building a product to a brand. It has multiple applications and roles; such as the aptness to position a product (as perception builder) in a decent way that ultimately provide support to consumer purchasing decisions; Package also delivers the persuasive information and description about the brand. Without disregarding the fact that packaging is still considered for the basic purpose to protect the product; especially short life products from climatic environment, for the transportability from one end to another and also to enhance the life period of product; such as fresh milk in tetra packs. The emerging nature of today's market and dynamic requirements of customers forced marketers to make packaging as one of the most required factor that must be taken into consideration while designing product promotional strategies. In this regard perception can be used as most powerful marketing tool. According to Silayoi & Speece 2007, the critics involved in driving customer perception with product package that it can lead misperception if package hold incorrect information in typography, and customers would get offended and lost their interest towards product. Spangenberg (2008) studied that consumer's perception also describes the positive and negative characteristics of product.

Seeing it; sells it

Package quality carries a direct relation with the quality of product; especially in food items. Most of the time it drives perception, pertaining attention and persuasion to buy specific product and alters the customers brand loyalties. As Kotler et al. (2008) has explained that packaging becomes the most powerful and essential mean to promote the product and position a product. It is also necessary for grabbing the attention of prospective customers via communicating factors of packaging that gradually delivers the brand value.

2.4. Packaging: Considerable affect on consumer behavior

Marketers have to understand the psychology of customers in order to design a product package. In most of the cases it majorly depends on the nature of product to draft a package design because purchasing at the point is of either planned or unplanned; depending upon the product categories. Companies usually design an appealing package to provoke the unplanned purchasing on point of sale. It can also be named as impulse buying considering in account the quick decision making on spot.

2.5. Effect of food packaging traits on buying patterns

Value and quality; the two consequential factors that marketer has to consider in Fast Moving Consumer Goods of all food categories. Abbas et. al (2012) discovered that brand name, packaging, price and quality have a strong impact on purchasing decisions in food items. One of the most considerable factors during the market survey was the customers revamp priorities against the package designs. Kriti Bardhan Gupta (2009) emphasized on the changes that occurred in buying patterns observed with the differences in packaging of different categories of food products; dairy products; vegetables; food grains and Pulses; and processed food.

Product packaging is considered as muscular tool today that is used to great extend in order to convince customers by using attracting shapes, colors, logos and with messages that can convey the products image well (siouthis, 2011). A customer mostly perceives the product quality via its packaging quality; their judgments mostly based upon the material and designs that is used to design a package which ultimately interact at the market place.

Colors possess their own language and impact on consumers mind. Consumer's excitement at the point of purchase associated with warm colors like; pink, red and yellow. On the other hand cool colors such as; like green and blue resembles the connection with relaxing and calm nature. Black is considered as symbol of authority in most of the cases (Johnson, 2005). Colors as an attribute can develop customer's immediate behavior towards food product. It can also used as an activating factor and as brain stimulators whereas can be deactivating in worse instance.

Packaging size strikes the buyer's choice in multiple types of products. Packaging size also draws the priority and attractiveness regarding product. The larger the size the more it enables to fulfill the needs of seeking a product for mass utilization.

Packaging plays a significant role in delivering a message about the product. It can be work as a commuting source of passing the important words in the mind of customers. Customers may not know the product's ingredients, nutrients and usage if it is not perfectly labeled (Zarkin, 1992). Words are necessary in manner to deliver some of the important knowledge in food items like cautions, date of expiry, etc.

Package of product can solely act as a salesperson at purchasing point. Package quality discovers the product's quality in the eye of customers. Marketers therefore need to be apprehensive while plan to design a package for product.

“Low high grade package for extravagant quality product leads to smash success, but high rate packaging for equatorial or mediocre quality product can be the useful strategy in evolving market.”

3. Hypothesis:

Hypothesis for this study developed as:

Ho: Food packaging, as an important 'P' of marketing, does not develop the consumer perception.

H1: Food packaging, as an important 'P' of marketing, develop the consumer perception.

4. Research Method

The research framework adopted to find out the final results was a descriptive research method, which shows the results in both qualitative and in quantitative forms. Descriptive research though clarifies the phenomenon of research. The data in descriptive research collected to test the hypothesis or discover the answer of research question subject to the study (Gay, 1992). In this study, characteristics, thus, descriptive studies are suitable to reveal the phenomenon and it can also offer the profile of factors (Caruana, 2002). Descriptive research allows individual or organizations to put forward the issue in consideration with facts. Furthermore, this type of research methods studies summary of data and measures basics of statistical tools, like central tendencies and correlation between variables. A survey usually includes that type of measurements for analysis, but often goes beyond sometimes the descriptive statistics in order to draw inferences.

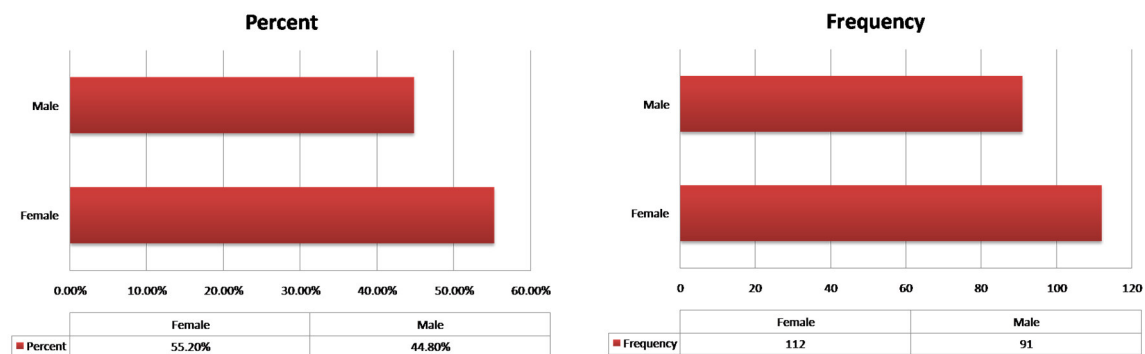
5. Research Instrument

For primary data collection, survey research technique used on random sampling. Strata used to get best possible results for the study was general buyers who opt to go for shopping in Pakistani super stores & markets. Online structured questionnaire on Google form used to gather related responses as well as responses were observed on social media sites. Questionnaire was pre – structured & based on likert scale from 1 much better than expected to 5 much worse than expected in order to collect the accurate responses. The study implied quantitative research approach. Questions were formed to meet the variables taken for initial study and with the tests of reliability, validity on them. Each question in survey addressed the food product packaging as a perception building factor for buyers while purchasing the food items.

5.1. Finding of the study

The total number of respondents taken into account was 203; an online survey has been made to gather their likely responses. The questions derived to discover the positive or negative level of affect on buyers approach due to the food product packaging attributes.

5.2. Descriptive Statistics



Tables show the percentage and frequency of male and female as a purchaser and influencers. According to the survey 55% of the customers usually of females those used to buy food items for their family. It shows the tradition follows in Pakistani market with respect to the traditional family systems. Females are mostly considered as the house hold wives and responsible for dealing with the home stuff. Marketers must have to take this fact in consideration while driving packages for Pakistani market.

5.3. Correlation table: Consumer buying behavior & Perception developed by food packaging:

	Consumer buying behavior	Perception
Consumer Buying Behavior	Pearson correlation	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.592(**)
	N	203
Perception	Pearson correlation	.592(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	1
	N	203

5.4. ANOVA Table of perception on consumer buying behavior due to packaging

Model		Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	15.793	1	15.793	108.25	.000(a)
	Residual	29.323	201	0.146		
	Total	45.116	202			

The degree of freedom shows the total variability around the mean. Fisher's test value reflects strong combination between food product packaging attributes as a perception building box.

6. Conclusion & Future work

Finding shows the collective relation of buyer perceptions with product packaging considered as the driving factor for their choices; in food items. The most revealing finding of this research was a strong positive correlation of perception and food product packaging which ultimately built interest and attraction at point of sale. According to this survey people prefer those food products which contain a quality package; especially in food category because they perceive products quality with its package. It resembles their pattern of choice depending upon the perception develop by food packaging. Results also have shown the favorability in preferences due to the highest quality of food item's due to high grade packaging. The Fisher's Test in number was (108.252) shows the combination of two variables; consumer purchasing pattern & their perception towards product packaging. Altogether, this table resembles the strong combination of independent variable (perception) with dependent variable (consumer buying behavior).

According to the findings, food packaging can be weighed as a tool to develop the perception of buyer at point of purchase. It has been analyzed that buyers showed more comfort with plastic bottles of different beverages and the plastic sachet. The research concentrated on the factors; like transparency, convenience, products resale ability and adequate storage of food items.

Companies strongly can consider these findings to develop their product packaging in order to attract the male & female both genders. It also helps marketers to understand the traditional and modern life styles of Pakistani families in order to design package. It is strongly recommended that these factors be assessed in future more. Further research will be always welcome to establish the validity that food product packaging in food category can create a positive impact on consumer buying attitude.

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