

CONSUMERS' PERCEPTION TOWARDS GREEN PACKAGING IN NAMAKKAL DISTRICT

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Abstract—Mass marketing has occupied the centre stage in the period of globalization. Marketing policies, practices and scenario are at a new helm than ever before. On the other side the problems and side effects have also grown up in the same proportion. Today marketers are not only working to achieve a fat bottom line but they are also working towards ensuring able to be maintained of the bottom line. This led to the development of new way of marketing called “The Green marketing”. Among the 4P’s of Green Marketing, green packaging assumes great significance. Various steps taken till date to ensure green packaging were very minimal, when compared to the magnitude of environmental threats faced. Also, the manners in which people are accepting and reacting to this step are debatable. Paying sufficient attention to green packaging will pay rich dividend in ensuring the sustainability of the environment. The present study is undertaken to estimate the environmental awareness of the respondents, average number of non-green packages used by them, the reason attributed for using, and to understand their perceptions about green packaging initiatives.

Keywords—Green Marketing, Green Packaging, Green Packaging Initiatives, Mass Marketing, Non-Green Packages.

INTRODUCTION

The last three decades the world of marketing has witnessed phenomenal change. It is no longer restricted to smaller territories. Today economies of large scale are no longer an option, but it is a compulsion. Mass marketing has occupied the centre stage in the period of globalization. Sachet marketing has covered the way to make inroads into unexplored rural markets. Micro marketing has redefined the working dimensions and individualistic appeals of modern marketers. Internet marketing, social media marketing and search engine optimization enhanced the marketer’s ability to go boundary less. Aply supported by the changed dimensions of global trade, policies and politics, attributable to globalization, and strengthened by the new wave of advances made in technology, today marketing policies, practices and prospects are at a new helm than ever before. On the other side of this growth story, the problems and side effects have also grown up in the same proportion as the prospects. Every year medical practitioners are encountering the birth of new unnamed diseases. Environmental degradation and reduction of natural resources are growing as the single most challenge for the mankind for his survival on the earth. These issues are attracting the attention of all stake holders of the planet, and marketers cannot be unfamiliar to it. Today marketers are not only working to achieve a fat bottom line but they are also working towards ensuring the sustainability of the bottom line. This led to the development of new avenue of marketing called “The Green marketing”.

ECOLOGICAL MARKETING

The American Marketing Association (AMA) held the first workshop on "Ecological Marketing" in 1975. The proceedings of this workshop resulted in one of the first books on green marketing entitled "Ecological Marketing" Today, consumers are paying more attention to the environmental efforts of businesses and support companies that excel with their green marketing.

GREEN PACKAGING

Among the 4P's of Green Marketing, green packaging assumes great significance because, once when some products are put to use, the packages will be thrown out as environmental waste and thereby it pollutes the environment. Hence paying sufficient attention to green packaging will pay rich dividend in ensuring the sustainability of the environment. The Sustainable Packaging Coalition® (SPC), is a project of Green Blue, It predict a world where all packaging is sourced responsibly, designed to be effective and safe throughout its life cycle, meets market criteria for performance and cost, is made entirely using renewable energy, and once used, is recycled efficiently to provide a valuable resource for consequent generations.

Accordingly, Sustainable packaging:

- A. Is beneficial, safe & healthy for individuals and communities throughout its life cycle
- B. Meets market criteria for performance and cost
- C. Is sourced, manufactured, transported, and recycled using renewable energy
- D. Optimizes the use of renewable or recycled source materials
- E. Is manufactured using clean production technologies and best practices
- F. Is made from materials healthy throughout the life cycle
- G. Is physically designed to optimize materials and energy
- H. Is effectively recovered and utilized in biological and/or industrial closed loop cycles

These criteria outline a framework for specific actions.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- ✓ To find out the level of environmental awareness among the respondents
- ✓ To analyses the average number of non-green packages used by the respondents
- ✓ To study the reasons for using non-green packages

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Renee Wever (2009)- "Thinking about the Box – A holistic approach to a sustainable design engineering of packing for Durable consumer goods "has presented the holistic way in which the total packing cost and its environmental impacts can be minimized.

Ina landau (2008) Studied about Gaining Competitive Advantage through Customer Satisfaction, Trust and Confidence in Consideration of the Influence of Green Marketing. The study indicated the relationship between eco orientation and company's performance.

Accordingly, trust and confidence are important concepts in green marketing.

Kanupriya Gupta and Rohini Somanathan, (2011) studied the appropriate policies that could help control the use of plastic bags in Delhi. Their results showed a dilution in the efficiency of the ban on plastic bags forced by Delhi Government within one year, due to widespread lack of enforcement. They concluded that in developing countries with little enforcement capacity, a blanket ban may not be the best possible solution. Instead, low cost information intervention, availability of substitutes to plastic bags, and subsidies (taxes) on the use of reusable bags (plastic bags) could constitute an important policy-mix.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

QUESTIONNAIRE DESIGN

The study is descriptive in nature. The researcher used questionnaire schedule to collect data from the samples. Questionnaire is divided into three parts. The first part contains questions related to demographic profile of the respondents. The second part is concerned with environmental awareness of the respondents and the last part discusses the respondent's perception about green packaging initiatives.

SAMPLING DESIGN AND STATISTICAL TOOLS

The study was confined to **Namakkal District** in Tamil Nadu. The sample consists of 100 consumers **Convenience sampling** was used. The study was conducted during the month of July 2014. The collected data were tabulated and analyzed by using **Simple Percentage** and **Chi Square Test**.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The data collected from the respondents were systematically analyzed and presented under the following heads. Deals with analysis of the data relating to respondents by using percentage analysis.

Table 1: Respondents Demographic Profile

<i>Gender</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>Environmental Awareness</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Male	56	Very High	8
Female	44	High	33
<i>Age</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	Neutral	38
Less than 20 years	18	Low	20
20-40 yrs	34	Very Low	1
41-60 yrs	28		
61 yrs and above	20		
<i>Education</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>Economic Status</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Plus 2 and below	16	Normal	26
UG or PG	61	Middle	48
Professional	23	Elite	26

INTERPRETATION

Majority (56%) of the respondents were male Majority (34%) of the respondents are in the age group of 21-40 years. Majority (61%) of the respondents are having UG or PG education. Majority (48%) of the respondents are from the middle class. And majority of respondents (38%) are having neutral level of environmental awareness.

Table 2: Respondents Perception About Green Packaging Initiatives

<i>Avg. No of Non-green packages used in a month</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>Perception towards Green Packaging initiatives</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Less Than 5	4	Dissatisfied	14
6 to 15	42	Satisfied	30
16-30	40	Satisfied but insufficient	56
More than 30	14		
<i>Reasons for using Non-green packages</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>Responsible person</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Cheap	15	Government	8
Easy Availability	34	Environmental organizations & NGO' s	5
Protects the product	21	Manufacturers	41
Attractive	7	Distributors & Retailers	35
Convenient	23	Consumers	11
		<i>Preferred Green Packaging Strategy</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
		Reducing packages	9
		Reusing used packages	42
		Recycling Packages	34
		Restricting Non-Green Packages	15

INTERPRETATION

Majority (42%) of the respondents are using average of 6 to 15 non-green packages in a month. Majority (34%) of the respondents are using the non-green packages because they are easily available. Majority (56%) of the respondents are saying that they are satisfied to a limited extent with the steps taken. Majority (41%) of the respondents fix manufacturers as the primary person responsible for initiating green marketing activity. And majority of respondents (42%) are preferring the reuse strategy.

FINDINGS

- ✓ Majority (42%) of the respondents are using average of 6 to 15 non-green packages in a month.
- ✓ Majority (34%) of the respondents are using the non-green packages because they are easily available.
- ✓ Majority (56%) of the respondents are saying that they are satisfied to a limited extent with the steps taken.
- ✓ Majority (41%) of the respondents fix manufacturers as the primary person responsible for initiating green marketing activity.
- ✓ Majority of respondents (42%) prefer the reuse strategy.

SUGGESTIONS

- ✓ Governments, Environmental organizations and NGO's should take sufficient steps to increase the level of environmental awareness among consumers.
- ✓ Consumers with higher level of environmental awareness are appreciating the problems and the steps taken in the right sense.
- ✓ Easy availability of non-green packages should be limited. Instead of pricing the non-green packages at the retailer's end, steps should be taken to reduce the manufacturing and distribution of non-green packages on the whole.
- ✓ Suitable subsidies and assistance could be provided for manufacturing green packages.

CONCLUSION

Marketing starts and ends with the consumers. In the long run marketers can ensure the sustainability of profits only by ensuring the well-being of the consumers and their environment. Green packaging is the need of the hour to ensure sustainability of the earth and its ecosystem. Green marketers should understand the essence of green packaging in sum and substance and should implement it in its true spirit. Consumers, retailers, regulators, scientific community and environmental education groups should provide the necessary support for stimulating, maintaining and safeguarding the earth's eco system.

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