

Impact of Packaging on Consumer Buying Behavior

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Abstract

The objective of this study is to determine the role of packaging on consumer buying behavior. The purpose of this research is to examine the essential factors, which are driving the success of a brand. This is the primary research and data has been collected through questionnaire and for analysis represented by using pie diagrams. In this study, samples of 44 respondents have been collected. The study was conducted in the premises of Don Bosco Institute of Management. According to the finding of the research study; it has been observed that the packaging is the most important factor. It is further concluded that the packaging elements like its color, packaging material, the design of the wrapper and innovation are more important factors when consumers make any buying decision. Finally, it has also been concluded that the Packaging is one of the most important and powerful factors, which influences consumer purchase decision.

Packaging color

Color plays an important role in a potential customer's decision-making process, certain colors set different moods and can help to draw attention.

Packaging Material

Any material used especially to protect something- packing, padding. The consumer can change his/her decision regarding Packaging material. High-quality Packaging attracts consumers. So, packaging material has a strong impact on buying behavior.

Design of wrapper

The overall design also plays a vital role in attracting the consumer. Most companies try their best to create attractive package designs for their products.

Innovation

Innovative packaging may actually add value to the product if it meets a consumer's need such as portion control, recyclability, tamper-proofing, childproofing, easy-open, easy store, easy carry, and non-breakability.

Introduction

This brief study refers to the importance product packaging occupies in the consumers' minds and how it affects purchasing decisions, reemphasizing the importance of perception, instead of allowing the customer to position products independently, marketers try to influence and shape consumers' concepts and perception through packaging.

Packaging is often the last impression a consumer will have about the products before their final purchase decision is made, therefore, it is worth ensuring that packaging works as hard as

possible to secure that sale may be in the form of imagery, brand values, product's functionality or pure innovation. There are many ways in which packaging can add value.

Marketers should consider a few things in order to make packaging support their brand positioning, build competitive advantage, maintain innovations or increase their price premium. Packaging development can provide a number of business benefits including:

- Tangible representation of brand or company values
- Significant enhancement of product delivery, experiencing or enjoyment
- Increased impact at point of purchase
- New distribution channels or opportunities

Most of the purchase decisions are made at the shelf since packaging of the product is the first thing that a consumer sees; it plays a vital role in differentiating a brand from its competitors. Consumers are also strongly influenced by the packaging of products that they are considering to buy. Marketers, on the other hand, are well aware of this fact and go to great lengths to create packaging that will draw in consumers and convince them to buy the product. The shift in consumer decision making means that marketers need to adjust their spending and to view the changes that take place at the right time, giving them the information and support they need to make the right decision.

Now, packaging has itself become a sales promotion tool for the organizations. The consumers' buying behavior is also stimulated by the packaging quality, color, wrapper, and other characteristics of packaging. Packaging is a whole package that becomes an ultimate selling proposition, which stimulates impulse buying behavior and it can increase sales and market share and reduce marketing and promotional costs.

According to Rundh (2005) package appeals, consumer's attentiveness towards a certain brand increases its image and stimulates consumer's perceptions about the product. Furthermore, packaging conveys the distinctive value of products (Underwood, 2003; Silayoi, & Speece, 2007), packaging works as an instrument for differentiation, and helps consumers decide the product from a wide range of parallel products, packaging also stimulates customers buying behavior (Wells, Farley & Armstrong, 2007).

The objectives of the study were

- To Find Out the effect of packaging on the buying behavior decision.
- To check the effect of packaging elements on the buying behavior
- To identify the elements, which should be highlighted while design the packaging

Literature Review

Ulrich R Orth et al. (2010) says package design is an integral part of projecting a brand image, which is sometimes designed to convey images of high quality while at other times signaling affordable prices.

Abrams, E. (2010) says in "Brand Identity meets Economics of Scales," "The carton, jar or tube propped on that store's shelf provides the first impression of a brand's product to a consumer, and the brand and product packaging is critical the success of both".

Arens (2007) says the packaging is the container for a product – encompassing the physical

appearance of the container including the design, color, shape, labeling and material used.

Baker (2007) said it is worthwhile for the retailer to understand factors within the retail setting that trigger a consumer's impulsive reaction. Retailers can help the customer to find the right products through focused Merchandising, intelligent store design and layout and other visual merchandising, intelligent store design and layout and other visual merchandising practices, such as product displays, packaging, and signage.

Brewer (2006) found that customers learn color associations from current brands in the market, which lead them to prefer certain colors for various product categories. Using color as a cue for packaging can be a potentially strong association, especially when it is unique to a particular brand. However, people in different cultures are exposed to the different color association and develop color preferences based on their own culture's associations.

Gonzalez (2007) said that the primary function of packaging is to protect the product against potential damage while transporting, storing, selling and exploiting a product. Gonzalez mentioned that consequently the role of the package in marketing communications increases: it must attract consumer's attention and transmit the adequate value of the product to a consumer in the short period right in the place of sale. Therefore, there is a necessity to explore the package and its element in more details, in order to understand which of these elements are the most important for a consumer purchase decision.

Hill (2005) said as individual preferences become more complex and diverse, packaging becomes the major means of product branding, packaging also provides the most permanent impression of product brand to the customer.

According to Jugger (2008) brand purchases are being made or broken in the "final five seconds" if a brand is not adequately supported with media advertising, packaging must play a greater role in the brand's marketing efforts. Jugger (2008) specified that the "right" packaging solution is different for each brand and it is important that it works when placed next to the competition on the shelf.

Schlossberg (2008) suggests that the most effective means of attracting attention to a product is by focusing attention on product brand through the use of an appropriate color, size, language, and picture while increasing product availability.

Siloyai (2006) mentioned that behavior of consumers with high involvement towards a product category is less influenced by image and visual stimuli. In such cases, consumers need more information and take more time to make evaluations. For instance, consumers who are more concerned with health and nutrition are more likely to pay attention to detailed label information of food products.

Smith (2006), says there are six variables that must be taken into consideration by producers and designers when creating the efficient package: form, size, color, graphics, material, and flavor.

Method

The data has been collected through primary data sources. In conducting this study, survey

questionnaires were administered for data collection.

Questionnaire Design

There were 7 questions which some of them are further subdivided in the survey obtaining. Participants were approached with the research questionnaire. They were given sufficient time to study the questionnaire, ask questions and obtain clarification if necessary on issues associated with the research and questionnaire before completion.

Response Rate

The response rate was 100% with the sample subject answering all the questions and questions were made easy for accurate responses

Target Population

The target population involves the users, deciders, and buyers of FMCG and various products, consisting mainly students

Sample size and Technique

A sample size of 44 was taken for conducting the survey by using simple random sampling in order to generalize the finding in the particular sector. It denotes the numbers of elements to be included in the study. Due to time constraints, the sample size chosen is small.

Data representation and interpretation

Q1. Occupation

The majority of the respondents were from the Institute premises itself, consisting mainly of students and staff

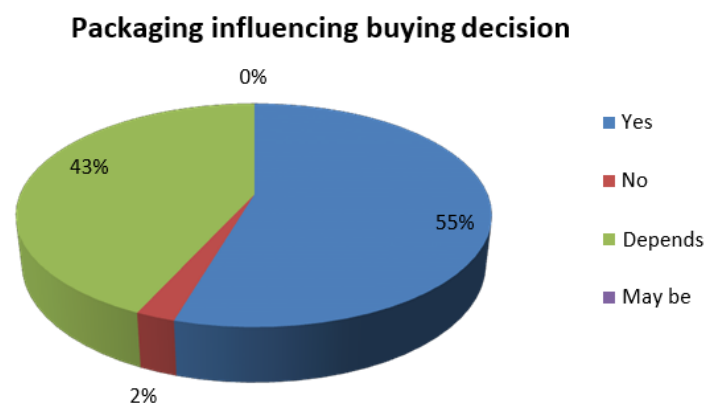
Q2. Age

The age distribution used for this research was in three age slabs: 15-20 21-25 26-30
The majority of the respondents are from the age group of 21-25, with 91 per cent and 9 per cent of the age group 26-30

Q3. Gender

The respondents consist of 61 percent females and 39 percent male respondents

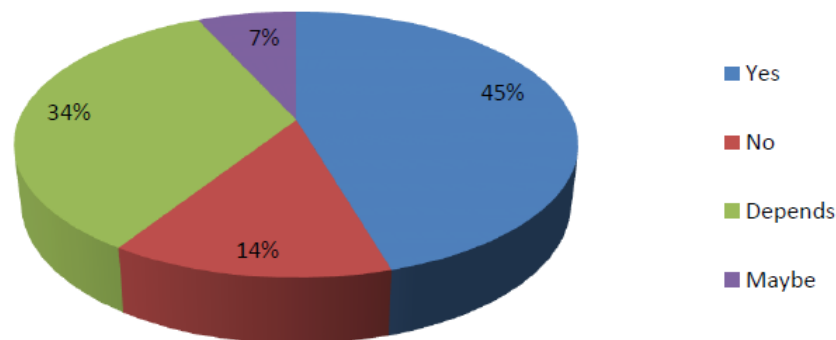
Q4. Does packaging of a product influence your buying decision?



As seen above in the figure, which shows whether packaging of a product influences buying decision, 55% of the respondents agree that it does influence their buying decision. Packaging can be the most important tool for a marketer to promote the product as it is the point of contact customers face and it creates an impression of the product itself. 43 % say that it depends on which type of product they purchase, as it may be a relatively cheaper FMCG product or a highly sophisticated product.

Q5. Does color of the packaging influence your buying decisions?

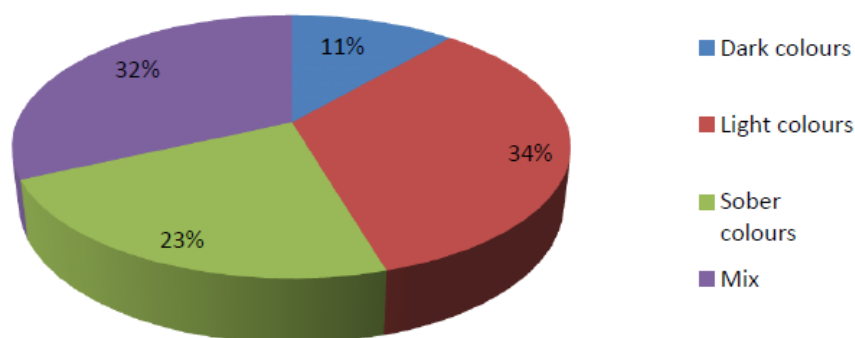
Colour of packaging influencing buying decision



As seen in the figure above, color does influence the buying decision of a product. Color plays an important role in a potential customer's decision-making process, certain colors set different moods and can help to draw attention. 45 % of the respondents say that it does impact their decision making, whereas 34 % say that it depends entirely on the product they are involved with. 14 % say it does not affect their buying decision as the color of the packaging does not have to do anything with the product itself and consumers shell out their money for the product and not the packaging.

5 (a) Which type of color you prefer more in the packaging?

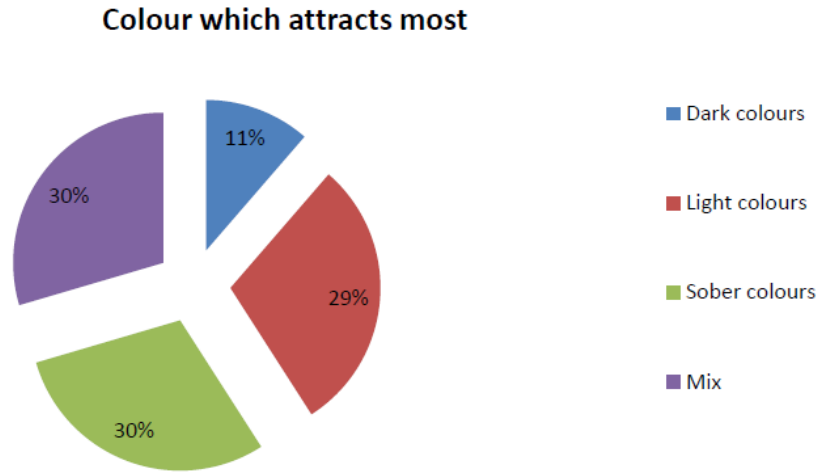
Type of colour preferred in packaging



As seen in the figure above, there are different types of colors which suit different people and 34% prefer light colors. This may be representing the product in such a way that it is the product is easy to use and to handle, whereas 34% prefer a mix of colors where it attracts people who love different colors and are more open to different products. The respondents do not prefer much of darker colors may be due to the personalities where they do not prefer darker colors

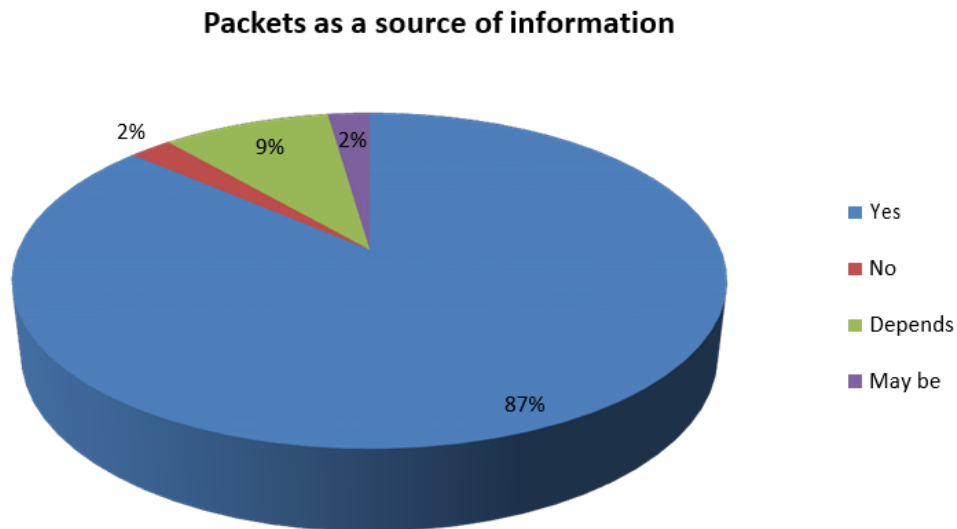
over soft and sober ones. Whereas, 11% prefer dark colors as it represents the idea of how the product is sophisticated and complex.

5 (b) When you look at a stack of similar products, which colored packaging attracts you most?



In the above figure, respondents are attracted by the mix of colors and sober colors and 60% of the respondents opted for this option. Whereby, 29% opted for light colors. This shows that the scores are almost same and we can come up to a decision where colors such as white, light blue, yellow, brown and so on influence consumers to purchase a product due to the color of the package especially if products have to be differentiated through their package.

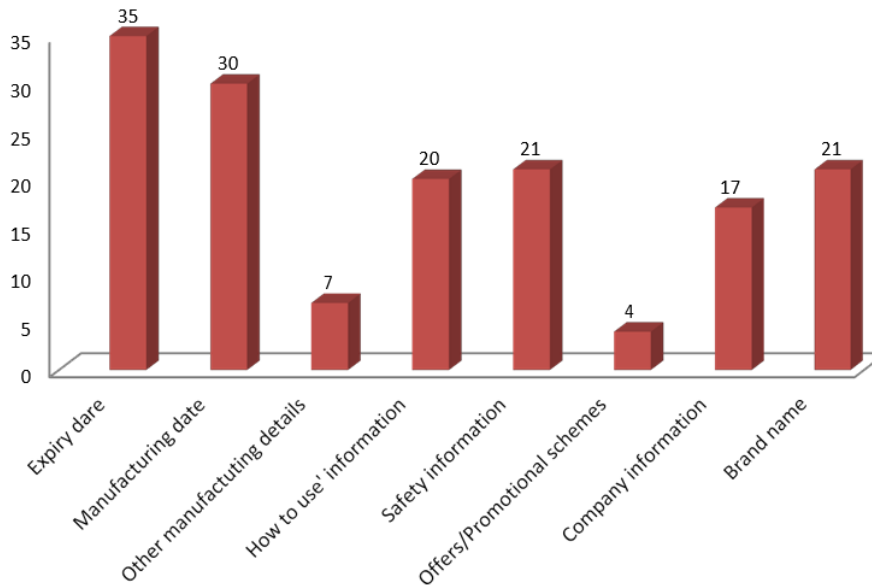
Q6. Do you think the packets are a source of information?



In this figure corresponding to question number 6, we can see that 87 % of the respondents agree that a package can be used to avail information on the product which means people are more conscious of the information being given on the package itself. As packaging acts as a tool for promotion of a product, companies have to give their best shot in getting the consumer involved. They need to list out the benefits of the product, its ingredients/contents, and potential

threats if there are any.

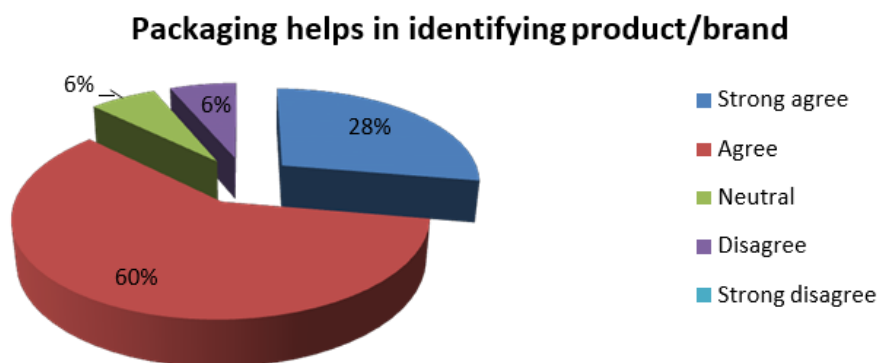
6 (a) What is the information that you normally look for in packets?



The figure corresponding to question 6 (a) show that 35 respondents out of 44 respondents look for the expiry date on the information given in the package. So, it is very important to list down the necessary information and if failed to do so, the potential customer might not purchase the product. In addition to this, 30 respondents also look for the manufacturing date. Here we can see what is most important for customers, whereby expiry date and manufacturing date are important, the following are safety information with 21 respondents who opted for it and “how to use” information with 20 respondents. By looking at the data we can safely assume that almost every information should be given by the company since it is necessary for consumers to learn and study the product and to look for safe ways to use it. This is the importance of giving information on the package of the product.

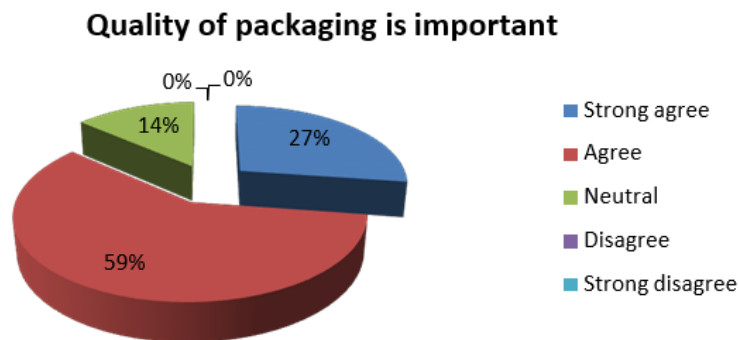
Q7. Do you agree with the following statement

(a) Packaging helps in identifying the product/ brand



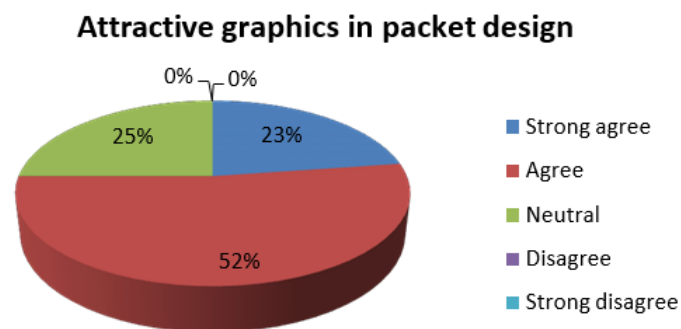
In this figure, 60% of the respondents agree that packaging helps in identifying products/brands and 28% strongly agree. Packaging is the face of a product and it carries the identity and uniqueness among other products.

(b) The quality of packaging material is important



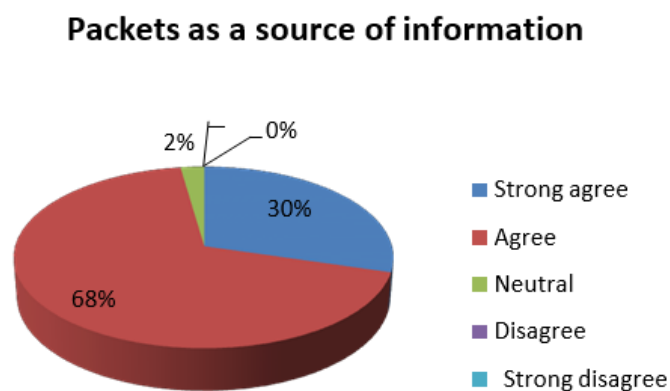
As seen in the above figure, 59% of the respondents agree that quality of packaging material is important as it determines the toughness and durability. 27% also strongly agree that quality is important and consumers are ready to purchase a product of their choice with high-quality packaging.

(c) I like attractive graphics in packet design



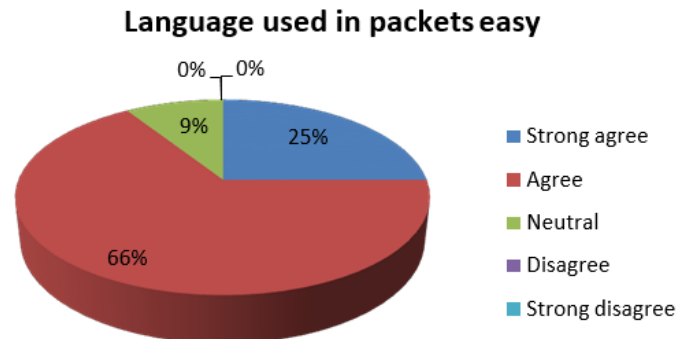
As seen above, we see that 52% of the respondents agree and 23% agree and 25% are neutral in liking attractive packet design.

(d) Packets are a source of information



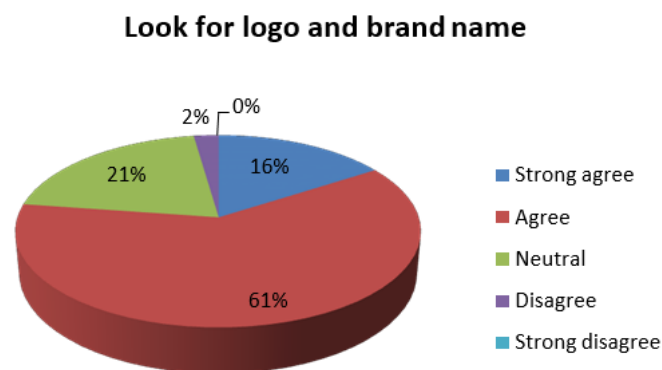
As seen in the above figure, the majority of the respondents up to 68% agree that packets are a source of information. Packets provide a lot of information about the product; say manufacturing date, expiry date, and ingredients and so on.

(e) The language used in packets must be easy



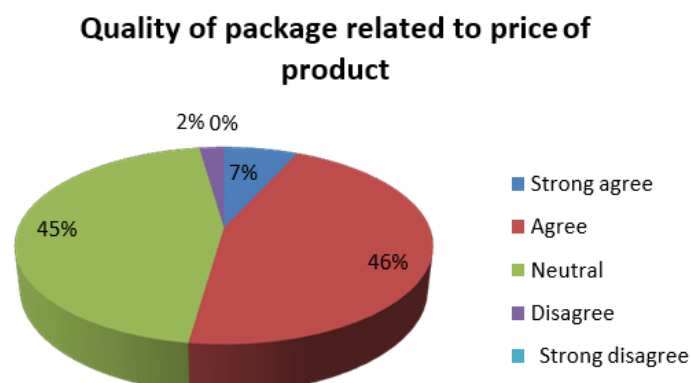
The above chart shows that 66% of the respondents agree that languages used in packets must be easy to understand. The language used should be communicable and understood easily by customers for their convenience.

(f) I look for the logo and brand name printed on packets



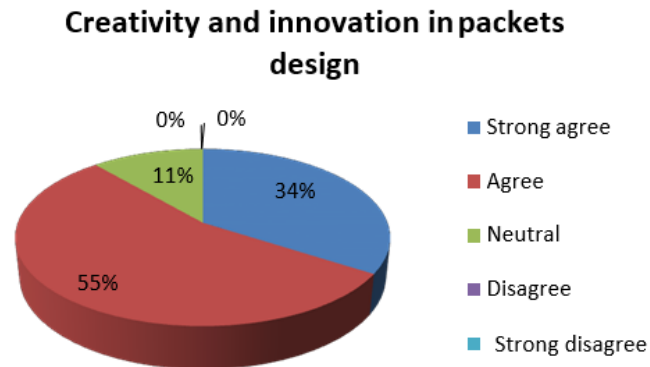
The above chart shows that 61% of the respondents agree that they look for the brand name and logo of the company within the product. It means that branded products have a better chance in creating goodwill among competitors and a reputation of the manufacturing company.

(g) The quality of the packaging is related to the price of the product



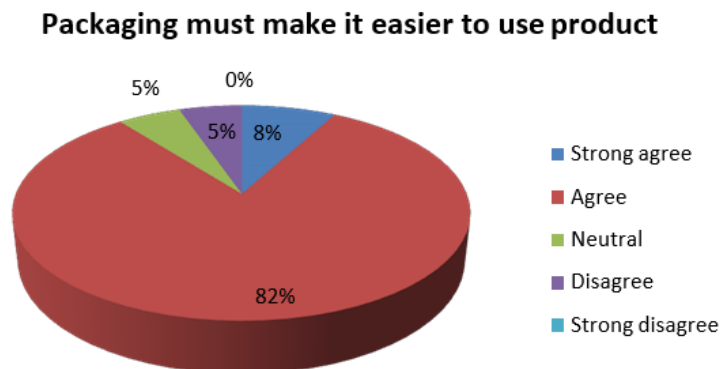
In the above figure, 46% of the respondents agree that the quality of the package is related to the price and 45% are neutral towards this. The quality of the package will only be high if the price of the product is high and vice versa.

(h) I like to see creativity and innovation in packet designs



The above figure shows that 55% agree with the statement that they like to see creativity and innovation in packet designs. The only way companies can stay ahead of the competition is if they are creative and innovative. Innovative packaging may actually add value to the product if it meets a consumer’s need such as portion control, recyclability, tamper-proofing, childproofing, easy-open, easy store, easy carry, and non-breakability.

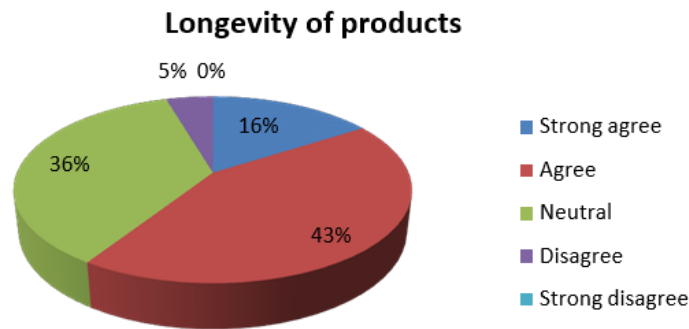
(i) Packaging must make it easier to use the product



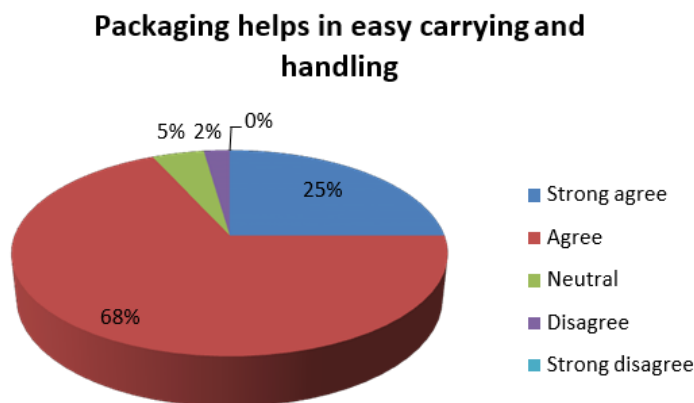
The above chart shows that 82% of the respondents agree that packaging should make it easier to use the product and this is also another way where companies can become innovative.

(j) Longevity of products in important aspect of packaging

The chart below shows that 43% agree that longevity of product in an important aspect of packaging and 36% neither agree nor disagree which means people look for the longevity of products through the packets while purchasing them.

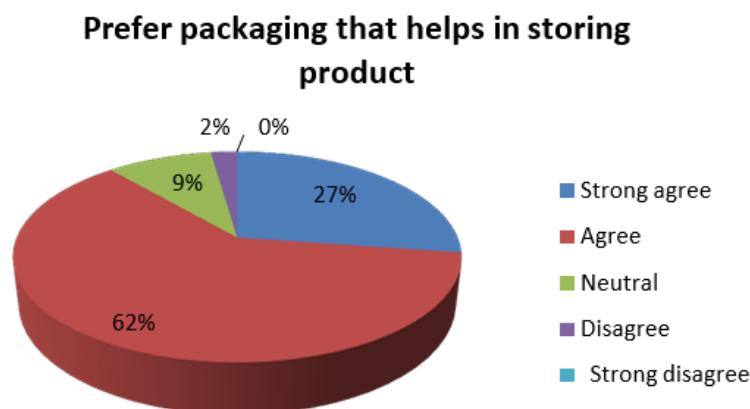


(k) Packaging help in easy carrying and handling of the product



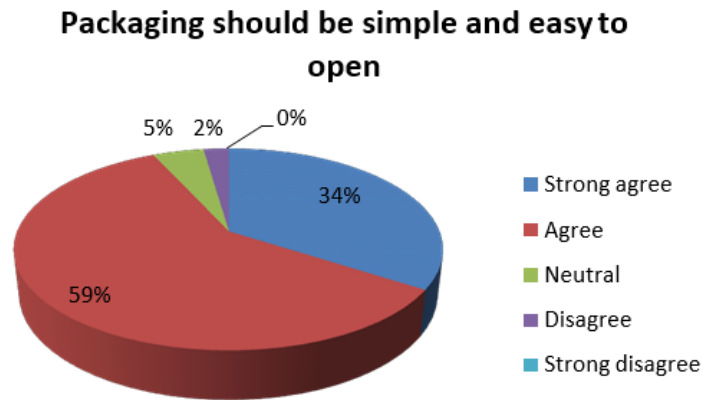
The above chart shows that 68% of the respondents agree that packaging helps in easy carrying and handling of the product, 28% strongly agree with this statement and which means that packaging is not only meant to attract customers but to also make the handling easy.

(l) I prefer packaging that helps in storing the products



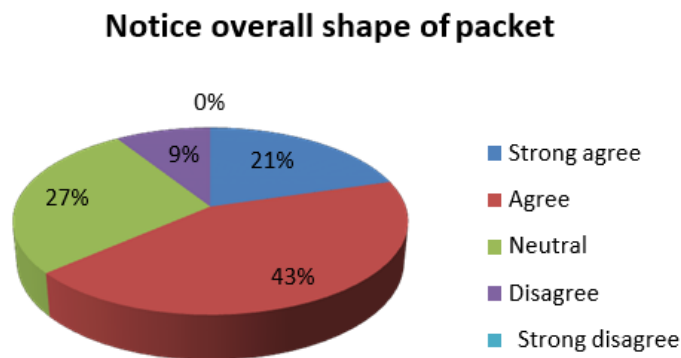
In this figure, the majority of the respondents agrees that packaging should help in storing the product. 62% agree, whereas 27% strongly agree. A package that also acts as a storage is preferably very needed as it saves shelf space of the customers.

(m) Packaging should be simple and easy to open



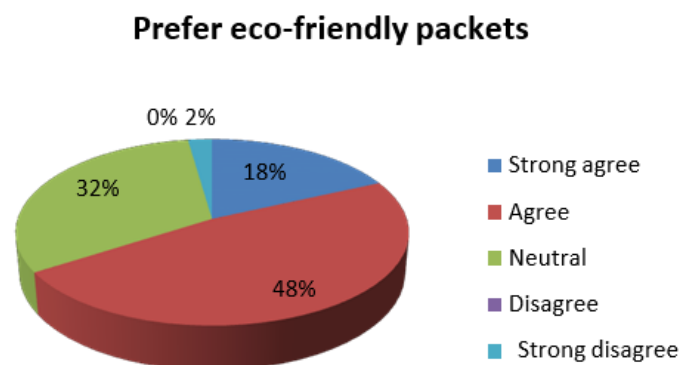
The above figure shows that the majority of the respondents up to 59% agree that packaging should be simple and easy to open since it saves time and effort of the customers. 34% also strongly agree as the same reason applies and the customers do not have to deal with sophisticated and complex packaging.

(n) I notice the overall shape of the packet



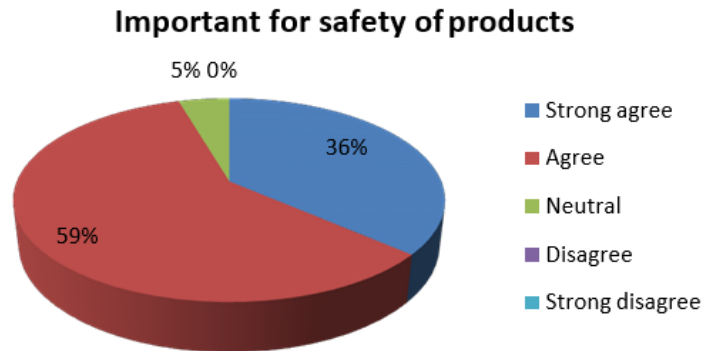
As seen above, 43% of the respondents agree that they notice the overall shape of the packet whereas 21% strongly agree and 27% are neutral towards this statement. They may or may not look at the overall packet, and may notice just the labels and colors.

(o) I prefer eco-friendly packets / packet material



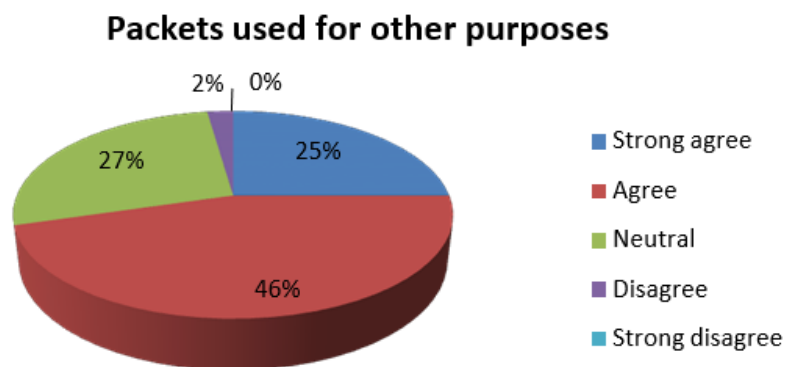
As seen above, 48% agree that they prefer eco-friendly packets and 18% strongly agree. These people may be eco-friendly too and choose to stay green. Others which have opted for neutral (up to 32%) and strongly disagree (up to 2%) may not like the style of eco-friendly packets.

(p) Packaging is important for the safety of the product



In this figure, 59% of the respondents agree that the safety of the product is important in packaging and 36 % strongly agreed. So, it shows that the safety of the product is very important and safety is all that matters, since, if the package breaks and the good is damaged then there is no point in having a package.

(q) Packets, that can be used for other purposes also are beneficial like glass jars



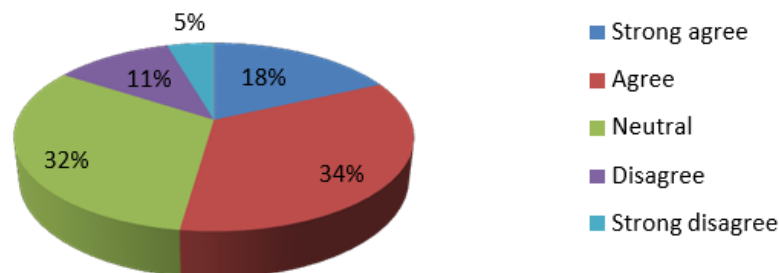
The above figure shows that 46% of the respondents agree that packages such as glass jars are useful since they can be used for other purposes. Another product would be engine gear oils where the buckets are later used for household purposes. 25% strongly agree with this statement and 27% are neutral towards this.

(r) I am ready to pay extra for the product if I find the packaging as per my liking

The chart below corresponding to this question shows that 34% and 18% are ready to pay extra if they find the package to be good as per their liking and 32% are neutral towards this depending upon their product choice. Whereas, 11% disagree and 5% strongly disagree to pay extra for the package. Companies can have the chance to

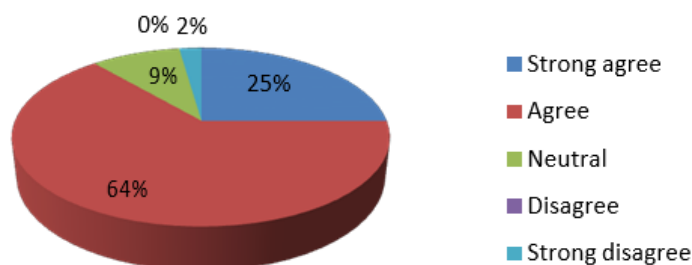
innovate and to acquire more customers and earn profits through the packaging of the product itself, where people are ready to pay extra.

Ready to pay extra for good package



- (s) **The information provided in packaging must be detailed and descriptive and cover all aspects of the product**

Information in package must be detail



As per the chart above, findings show that 64% of the respondents agree that the information must be detailed and descriptive to cover all aspects of the product. 25% strongly agree with this statement and it is through this detailed information that customers are given knowledge about the product. Customers need to educate themselves by reading the labels and information given by the company.

Conclusions

Results of research studies regarding the role of packaging on consumer buying behavior stipulated following conclusions:

- Packaging could be treated as one of the most valuable tools in today's marketing communications, necessitating more detailed analysis of its elements and an impact of those elements on consumer buying behavior.
- Appropriate and vivid picture or package color, which delivers them a happy feeling, or an easy handle/open/dose/dispose of, package shape. All these elements contribute each important effort to catch consumer's attention and interest. Besides, each element's single function, we think that a good combination of these elements may lead the product more eye-catching and attractive.
- Analyzing an importance of its separate elements for consumer's choice reveals the impact of packaging and its elements on consumer's purchase decision. For this purpose, main package's elements have been identified: graphic, color, size, form and material of the packaging are considered, wrapper design, innovation while product information,

producer, and brand are considered as important ones. Moreover, the impact of package elements on consumer purchases has been evaluated, and it is concluded that it depends on the consumer's involvement level, time pressure or individual characteristics of consumers.

- It has also revealed that elements of packaging are the most important for the consumer's purchase decision. For a major part of consumers' attraction was a size of the package and material are the main visual elements
- Packaging has a better reach than advertising does, and can set a brand apart from its competitors. It promotes and reinforces the purchase decision not only at the point of purchase but also every time the product is used. Packaging in different serving sizes can extend a product into new target markets or help to overcome cost barriers. Packaging can even drive the brand choice (especially in the context of children's products).
- As a matter of fact, people are becoming more and more demanding; packaging has been gradually shown its important role in a way to serve consumers by providing information and delivering functions. With its different functionality to ease and to communicate with consumers, there is no doubt about the increasingly important role of packaging as a strategic tool to attract consumers' attention and their perception of the product quality.
- New product manufacturers mostly use the labels in their products. Basically, they describe when they manufacture it. Furthermore, they believe that the labels of the products properly guide the consumers. The information is given on the label and its value has to be highlighted while promoting the product in the market.
- It can be concluded that consumers, in general, are well aware of the importance of packaging. They want it to be attractive, easy to handle, differentiable from competitive products. They also prefer the packets that can be used for further use. Labelling is claimed to be an important legal document as it expresses the reliability of the product. Research into packaging has found that different packaging cues affect how a product is perceived. Often the packaging is perceived to be part of the product, it can be difficult for the consumer to separate the two aspects such as package color, package design, and pictures can influence how a product is perceived.
- As a matter of fact, people are becoming more and more demanding. Packaging has gradually shown its important role in serving consumer by providing information and delivering function. With its different functionality to ease and to communicate with consumers, there is no doubt about the increasingly important role of packaging as a strategic tool to attract consumer's attention and their perception of the product quality.

Recommendations

- It is highly recommended to the marketing and business units that they should pay proper attention for the best possible packaging of their products. If they accept or introduce poor packaging, then it could be one of the causes of product failure in the market. It is necessary to set the packaging standard and to implement strategy accordingly for better protection and promotion of a product.
- The researchers believe that culture difference does have an impact on companies' initiatives to design the product package, for instance, during our research; the choices of packaging colors are quite different between various customers. Thus, it is recommended that it is important for international companies to take a consideration of culture differences when they design the product package in different parts of the world.
- It is finally recommended that the marketers in the industry should not consider that packaging is the sole factor for the success of any product; therefore, they should also take

up other important factors of marketing while they are launching new products or revitalize old products.

- Basically, labels of a package describe what made it, place of manufacture, date of manufacture, what it contains, how to use it and so on. Furthermore, the consumers are properly guided by a label to use the product. The information is given on the label and its value has to be highlighted while promoting the product in the market. It must also be more useful technically.

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