

Packaging As A Brand Communication

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Abstract

Packaging occupies an important place in modern economy. Marketers nowadays face the complex task of making their product identifiable and conspicuous among other competitive ones. The only product exposure a consumer contacts prior to purchase of a product is packaging. Packaging today is regarded as a vital communication tool. So marketers utilize this packaging as a face of the product to draw consumer attention and also use it as a tool to establish their brand. Packaging is regarded as a separate marketing mix (tool) and consider both as a communication and sales promotion tool to attract the attention of the consumer and boost the sales. It also helps to identify the branded food products and educate the consumer. The basic objective of the study is to find out packaging as a brand communication and its influence on consumer behaviour. To achieve the above objective, the author has developed a framework. Packaging serves as a communication tool. The main focus is how the elements of package like colour, brand name, brand image, symbol/logo shape /size influence the consumer behaviour as brand communication. Data were collected from 384 respondent of Tiruvarur district by using a structured questionnaire. The findings and conclusions of this study indicate that there is significant difference between age of the respondents and packaging as a brand communication influence on consumer behaviour. This study makes an attempt to study the food product packaging as a brand communication influence the consumer behaviour while purchasing packaged food products.

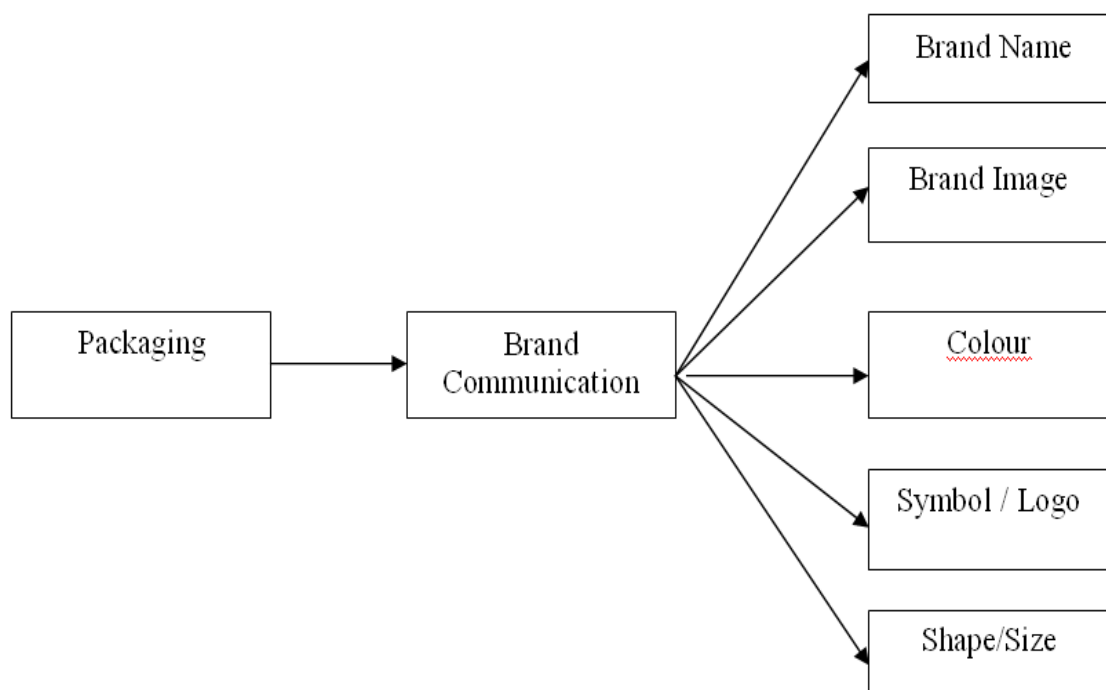
Key words: *Packaging, Brand, Communication, Promotion, Consumer Behaviour*

INTRODUCTION

“Packaging is the least expensive form of advertising” - Gershman

Today's competitive global market, the need for effective product promotion is packaging. Consumer does not have prior knowledge of product qualities. Packaging provides a physical barrier to a product and protects it from the external environment. It reduces the contamination and delivers the hygiene products to the consumer. Packaging is the container which protects a product and also establishes its brand name, so that we know which product is inside the package. Brand of a product can be easily identified by the consumer through packaging.

According to kapferer 1997, brands are analysed through 6 elements: the brand name, logo, design or packaging, advertising, the level of image and brand awareness or, more recently, in terms of financial valuation. In this study the researcher developed a frame work.



Montague, M., (1999) claims that packaging communicate the brand name and creates an image in the minds of consumers that can inspire loyalty, build trust and enhance loyalty. In the view of Mehta (1999), Consumers usually have the habit to prefer a particular brand which improves their self image. This proves that packaging is important in conveying the brand image to the consumers and also influences their buying behaviour. Packaging is also a medium to build a brand image as Keller(1998), describes brand image as “perception about a brand as reflected by the brand associations held in consumer memory”. Brand image is an important element that consumers use to convey information regarding the quality of the product and motivates their consumption tendencies. Physiological effects of colours are used by the manufacturer to mesmerizing the people without the usage of drugs. Colours are used by the marketers to position their brand in the market place. Colour used in the advertising is help to create mood and emotional responses. Colours used in the package helps the customers to identify the branded products displayed in the shop. Colours like Red & Yellow attract the attention of the consumer, which is why, both the colours mostly used in the packages of food product to identify the branded items. Grimes & Doole (1998), Red colour is associated with adventurous, luxurious, love, passion, power and aggression. Yellow colour is associated with light and good tasting, reliable and high quality. Due to this only most of the food package is in yellow colour. Meyers, (1998), states that, a uniquely styled brand identity creates a recognizable signature that creates acceptance among consumers and enhances their familiarity with their products. A uniquely shaped signature is referred to as the brand’s logo. Many forms of logo’s are there. Unique typographic format, uniquely styled configuration, symbol, abstract shape designed are the various forms of logo which can be used to recall the brand very easily. Strength, masculinity and effectiveness will be communicates through bold logo. Elegance, lightness, femininity, and fashion are communicates through cursive logo. Entertainment, fun, casualness will be communicates through script logo. Logo is a stylized symbol, helps to identify a product or a line of products. Irrespective of the shape, size and form, logo style has to be printed on all packages. Danger’s (1987) views, there cannot be rigid principles for the physical shape of a package. The size of the package is differing based on the nature of the product, display consideration, and the method the package is used. Simple square shapes are usually preferred to rectangles. Round shapes are preferred by the women. Men usually prefer angular shapes and triangles.

Packaging plays an important role in communicating the brand image and identifies the company. The surest way to attract and maintain good customers is packaging products in a very attractive manner. In this research food product packaging as a brand communication is considered as a communication tool. The overall image for brand is contributed by the package.

BRAND PACKAGING

Packaging has facilitated marketers to write the net weight, brand name, the size of the product, the grade, nutritional information and other information meant for the consumers to identify the brand (Sacharow and Griffin, 1980). The role of packaging has changed over the last decade from just preservation and transportation to project the brand. Brand name is very important for the success of any organization. (Randall 1997). Today, brand is a variable that travel through packaging. Packaging initially draws the attention of consumer and conveys the brand name to the consumer through packaging. Shoppers spend only a few minutes on the shelf of the shop to select the product. Purchase decisions are made at the point of purchase by most consumer. This makes the branded company to project the right product messages on package. In order to spend less on advertising, company focus more on packaged (brand) products. Packaging communicates something about the identity and values of product.

In packaging design, a brand is a name, a design, or symbol of ownership and helps to identify the products, services, people, and places. Consumer product brands are identified by their presence, its physical attributes and emotional connection. The brand helps to differentiate the product in the minds of consumers. Food products brands use colours, shapes, symbols, designs and messages as packaging attributes. (Nancarrow, 1998).

A physical product requires packaging to protect it from damage and to present both the product and its brand in attractive way to the consumers. Packaging provides a base through which it communicates the information about the product and the company brand. Through the packaging, the manufacturer communicates the name, usage, term and symbol of the product to consumers. The materials used for product packaging also helps to identify the brand name. Low quality packaging cannot able to project branded products as high quality. Packaging physical attributes and the messages that the brand seeks to project has a direct relationship. Packaging conveys the brand characteristics in the minds of the consumer and that will ultimately differentiate it from its competitors. So packaging is an extremely powerful tool in positioning the brand.

Marketers mostly focus on Verbal brand communication. Hence they create clever taglines. People are usually attracted more by visual element compared to verbal element. Visual designs try to develop a unique communication hierarchy in packaging. Brands can be communicated by the use of color, a distinctive brand identity, and unique graphics. The visual impact of package design has the power to build brand image.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Fight and Kim (2007) showed that needs of non-unique consumers with perceived quality is negative. Emotional value plays a positive role in the purchase decision of garment brand in U.S.A.

Nilsson and Ostrom (2005) critically examined that how the product packaging is used as a brand communication vehicle. The main objective of the study was how the elements of the package design affects consumer perception of brand and the benefits it associate with the brand's packaging. Further this study indicates that the elements of the package design affect consumer's perception differently depending on how they are combined. The results showed that consumers associate different benefits to different packaging depending on both internal and external variables. There is no proper evidence for the elements of packaging design affect the consumer perception.

Underwood and Klein, (2002) carried out an empirical research and shown that placing a picture of the product on food packages significantly improve brand beliefs and has positive effects on attitudes towards the package (Underwood, Robert L: & Klein 2002). Burke's results shows that, the pictures in the packages increase the attention of the consumers towards brand. According to his view, mostly pictures in the packages are useful for the private-label brands only. For national brands their main aim is to improve the perception of the consumer.

Ulrich R.Orth (2009) found that there are no meaningful guidelines for developing holistic packaging design, Shapes, Finishes, Sizes, images, Typography, Colors, Impression, Purchase Intention, and Brand. This research was conducted by collecting information and data in four stages. The main aim of this research is to create a brand impression among the consumer.

Riswan Raheem Ahmed, Vishnu Parmar and Muhammed Ahmed Amin (2014) in their research titled, “Impact of Product Packaging on Consumer’s Buying Behaviour”: examined the essential factors, essential factors in product packaging plays an important role in the success of a brand. This research also identified the relationship between dependent and independent variables. Data has been collected through questionnaire. 150 respondents has been collected and tested the reliability of the model. According to the finding of the research study, it has been observed that the packaging is the most important factor. It is concluded that the buying decision are affected by the packaging elements like its Packaging material, Colour, Design of wrapper and Innovation. Finally it has also been concluded that the packaging is one of the most important and powerful factor, which influences consumer’s purchase decision.

From the widespread exploration of the literature review, few studies have been dedicated for packaging as a brand communication tool and its influence on consumer behavior. Hence, the present study provides a greater scope of explorative research in understanding as well as determining the package as a brand communication tool.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The primary objective of the study is to find out the food product packaging as a brand communication influence the consumer behaviour while purchase the packaged food products. Since the food product packaging covers a variety of dimension, the study covers only the food product packaging as a brand communication.

METHODOLOGY

The study is descriptive in nature. An attempt has been made to identify the food product packaging as a brand communication influence the consumer while purchasing the packaged food product. 384 respondents were selected from Tiruvarur district by using convenience sampling. Primary data were collected by distributing a questionnaire to 384 respondents. Further, secondary data from journals, books were used.

STATISTICAL TOOLS

The statistical methods are:

Percentage Analysis:

The number of respondents for each factor is converted into percentage basis.

Chi-square Analysis:

Formula

$$\chi^2 = (O-E)^2 / E$$

O=Observed frequency

E=Expected frequency

Mean Rank

RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

There is no significant association between food product packaging as brand communication and their overall effects on consumer behaviour

There is no significant difference between age of the respondents and packaging as a brand communication.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Table-1: Demographic profile of the respondents

Characteristics	No. of respondents	Percentage (%)
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Gender	Male	193	50.3
	Female	191	49.7
	Total	384	100
Age	Below 20 yrs	60	15.6
	21-40 yrs	215	56
	41-60 yrs	89	23.2
	Above 60 yrs	20	5.2
	Total	384	100
Monthly Household Income	Below Rs. 10000	64	16.7
	Rs. 10001-20000	141	36.7
	Rs. 20001-30000	113	29.4
	Above Rs. 30000	66	17.2
	Total	384	100
Occupation	Housewife	30	7.8
	Student	102	26.6
	Businessman	66	17.2
	Professional	44	11.5
	Non-Professional	10	2.6
	Government employee	94	6.67
	Agriculturist	8	24.5
	Others	30	7.8
	Total	384	100

Source: primary Data

Majority of the respondent were male as purchasing was made by male in the study area. It is interesting to note that majority of the respondents are in the age group of 21-40 years. 26.6 % of the sample consisted of student, 24.5% comprised of government employee and 17.2% of respondents were business people and the rest 6.67% were government employee. Majority (36.7%) of the respondents belong to the monthly household income of Rs.10000-20000 respectively.

Table-2: Packaging as a brand communication tool

Sl. No	Packaging as a Brand communication tool	SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean	Mean rank
1	Packaging influence consumer to buy a particular brand	24	22	95	135	108	3.73	10 th
2	Packaging offered by leading brand are always better	4	36	74	171	99	3.85	8 th
3	Colour in the packaging helps to identify the brand name easily	9	12	43	182	138	4.11	2 nd
4	Packaging helps to identify the brand image	13	23	113	152	83	3.70	11 th
5	Packaging adds value to branding	8	17	57	227	75	3.90	7 th
6	Package designs are attractive	15	27	84	164	94	3.77	9 th
7	Packaging design itself acts as a registered brand	8	20	59	176	121	3.99	4 th
8	Printed matters help to identify the brand	13	12	95	130	134	3.94	6 th

9	Captions in the package help to identify the brand name	6	25	52	171	130	4.03	3 rd
10	Symbol or design in a package helps to recognize the brand name	6	12	94	146	126	3.97	5 th
11	Packaging influence to switch over to another brand	18	43	107	120	96	3.61	12 th
12	Packaging helps to identify the brand name easily	6	8	36	185	149	4.21	1 st

Source: Primary data

Table 2 shows the factor that helps to communicate the brand and the mean score of role of packaging as branding from question 1 to 12. The result shows that the “brand name” in the package helps to communicate the brand has received the highest mean score (mean=4.21). It is followed by the “colour” (mean=4.11) and “Caption” (mean=4.03). “Packaging design acts as a registered brand” and “symbol of the packaging” ranked number four and five among the twelve functions. “Printed matters” and “added value” occupies the sixth and seventh place. “Packaging offered by leading brand are always better” occupies the eighth place. “Package designs are attractive”, “packaging influence consumer to buy a particular brand”, “packaging helps to identify the brand image” and “Packaging influence to switch over to another brand” ranked the least importance. This shows that all the respondents had give much importance to color, brand name, caption and design that helps to identify the brand and least importance to package designs are attractive, packaging influence consumer to buy a particular brand, packaging helps to identify the brand image.

HYPOTHESES TABLES

Hypothesis (H₀): There is no significant association between branding as a communication tool and their overall effects on consumer behaviour.

Table-3: Association between branding as a communication tool and their overall effects on consumer behaviour

Overall effect on consumer behaviour	Branding			Chi –Square Test
	Low	High	Total	$\chi^2 = 148.338$ Df=1 .000<0.05 Significant
Low	138	47	185	
High	26	173	199	
Total	164	220	384	

Degrees of Freedom=1

Chi Square Value = 148.338

Table value = 3.841

The distribution is significant at 5% level

Result: Since the calculated value is higher than the table value the null hypothesis is rejected. It is proved that there is significant association between branding as a communication tool and their overall effects on consumer behavior.

Table-4: Association between age of the respondents and packaging as a brand communication

Age	Package as a Brand Communication					Total
	Shape/Size	Brand Name	Brand Image	Colour	Symbol/Logo	
Up to 20yrs	18 (10.86)	8 (12.12)	7 (0.07)	12 (0.07)	15 (0.71)	60

21-40yrs	20 (3.46)	112 (4.43)	10 (1.73)	48 (0.05)	25 (1.29)	215
41-60yrs	10 (0.51)	39 (0.02)	8 (0.48)	20 (0.03)	12 (0.07)	89
Above 60yrs	6 (3.62)	5 (1.47)	2 (0.25)	3 (0.40)	4 (0.40)	20
Total	54	164	27	83	56	384

Level of Significance 5% = 0.05
 Degrees of Freedom = (r-1) (c-1)
 = (4-1) (5-1) = 12
 Table value (TV) = 21.026
 Calculated value (CV) = $43.8 \times 2 = \sum (O_i - E_i)^2 / E_i$
 C.V > T.V 43.8 > 21.026

Null Hypothesis: There is no significant difference between age of the respondents and packaging as a brand communication

Inference: As the calculated value is greater than the tabulated value, the null hypothesis is rejected. Hence it concludes that there is significant difference between age of the respondents and packaging as a brand communication

RESEARCH GAP

Food product packaging requires extensive evaluation of the products. In this study food product packaging plays an important role in the choice to identify the branded Product.

LIMITATIONS

Since the FMCG sectors covers a variety of product categories, the study covers only the food product packaging. This study covers only the food product packaging as a brand communication. Due to time and money constraints the study is restricted to Tiruvarur district only. Convenient sampling method is used in this study. This study is restricted to 384 respondents only

FINDINGS

- Majority of the respondents are in the age group of 21-40 years.
- Majority of the respondents says that brand name can be easily identified through product packaging
- There is significant difference between age of the respondents and packaging as a brand communication.
- There is significant association between branding as a communication tool and their overall effects on consumer

CONCLUSION

Researcher suggests that the companies have to develop their brand that exhibits packaging elements, such as brand name, brand image, colour, logo, shape. This suggestion makes the consumer to spend less time in this fast world.

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