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RESEARCH ARTICLE

A STUDY ON CONSUMER BEHAVIOR TOWARDS "GREEN PACKAGING" IN A WASTE MINIMIZATION PERSPECTIVE

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ABSTRACT

Green marketing is not only about green consumption but also about waste minimization. Based on literature review and data collection from 74 respondents the paper studied the consumption behavior towards soaps and shampoos. We infer from the analysis that consumers prefer FMCG products for their brand credibility and quality and not for their green marketing practices.

INTRODUCTION

The word "green" may sound flowery and like a fairy tale but while taking the real bite it doesn't. Green can largely be achieved by much greater emphasis on waste minimization in consumption. Of more than 7million tones of packaging used annually, half goes into the household stream and is the direct result of consumer oriented activity (Davies *et al.*, 2002). As of 2003, the packaging sector accounted for about 2% of the gross national product in developed countries (Schneider *et al*, 2010). FMCG sector is a considerably large sector in the economy which has to open their eyes on eco friendliness in a packaging perspective. Consumers generally put less thought into the purchase FMCG than other products. FMCG are generally sold in high numbers because they have a quick turnover and relatively low cost. Hence the waste disposed for FMCG's are more relative to other goods. The main segment of FMCG can be classified as personal care (oral care, hair care, soaps, cosmetics and toiletries), house hold care (fabric wash and household cleaners), branded and packaged food and tobacco (IBEF report). This paper attempts to study the consumption behavior of body soaps and shampoos (sachets and containers).

Review of literature

The mintel organization reported results from a study which indicated that the number of consumers who do buy green has tripled in recent years (Makower 2007). Consumers claim to care about the environment but seem to only make green

purchasing decisions when there are immediate and tangible benefits. The Boston Consulting Group reported that a consumer will not pay for a product based solely on its green attribute, there must be some added value to the product such as better taste, better safety or save money (Manget, 2009). Kinnear and Taylor (1973) investigated attitudinal and behavioral dimensions of ecological and found them to have marked effects on brand perception.

Objectives

- To study the factors those are more influential for the purchase of soaps.
- To study the factors that motivates the purchase of shampoo containers.
- To study the factors that influences the purchase of shampoo sachets.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Instrument: A research questionnaire consisting of a set of questions was presented to the respondents to know their preferences and ideas about a particular issue.

Questionnaire design: The questionnaire was prepared with a 5point likert scale, rank list and check list method.

Sampling units: Consumers of soaps and shampoos (not any herbal body care products)

Sample size: By the application of formula $n=(Zs/e)^2$ (Rajendra nargundkar, Marketing Research). $Z=1.96$, $s=.6666$, $e=0.15$ (at 95% confidence level and tolerable error.15) $n=74$

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Sample procedure: convenience sampling

Analysis: The primary data collected was analyzed through the statistical method (percentage analysis, weighted average)

Sample profile: female, married, family size: 2 adult and 2 children

Table 1.

Name of soaps	No. of respondents	% Analysis (rounded off)
Hamam	27	36%
Dove	22	30%
Mysore Sandal	11	15%
Pears	9	12%
Old cinthol	5	7%

Inference: 36% of the respondents prefer hamam, dove and old cinthol are wrapped in paper packaging and hence we come to know that 73% of the consumers have green consumption practices of soaps.

Table 2.

Name of shampoos	No. of respondents	% Analysis (rounded off)
Dove	31	42%
Clinic plus	18	24%
Sunsilk	14	19%
Pantene	11	15%

Inference: Of the four brands only clinic plus has containers of all volume.

Table 3.

Particulars	No. of respondents	% Analysis (rounded off)
Only who buy shampoo containers	31	42%
Only who buy shampoo sachets	23	31%
Both sachets & containers	20	27%

Inference: 42% of the respondents prefers containers and hence they are supportive to green.

Table 4.

Reasons for preference of soaps (5 point scale)	Weighted average
I trust the brand	4.08
I feel fresh when I bath with this product	3.6
Small amount gives a very good lather	2.45
Price is affordable/acceptable	3.09
Follows green marketing practices	3

Inference: Consumers prefer soap only if he believes that the brand has credibility. Then he prefers for quality and price. Consumer doesn't buy soap because of its green practices. So from the inference of Table 1, 73% of consumers who we claim to be green prefer brand credibility, quality and price and they are not aware of the green marketing practices

Table 5.

Reasons for preference of sachets (5 point scale)	Weighted average
Price is less	4.209
Available in small quantities	4.39
Easy to store	4.25
Change another brand for trial	2.97

Inference: Consumers prefer sachets because they are available in small quantities. They prefer price only as the third factor.

Table 6.

Reasons for preference of containers (5 point scale)	Weighted average
Save money	4.333
Less frequency of shopping	4.196
Containers are recyclable	3.862
I want to reduce waste	3.666

Inference: Consumers prefer containers to save money and reduce their frequency of shopping rather than to reduce waste

Findings

Consumers prefer soaps and shampoos mainly because of tangible benefits and they do not buy a product solely it is eco friendly. It is the main responsibility of marketers to make them aware of the green practices they follow.

Conclusion

Consumers consumption behavior is based on some cognitive structure build in their mind because of the information they internalize. They internalize that reliable information only which have immediate cause and benefit. Mere pamphlets and lectures are not enough to make them aware of environmental activities. At the same time consumers take everyday consumption action for granted. This is a major ignorance. Even a slight shift in their behavior can have a positive impact on the earth.

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