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Competitive Advantage Of Green Packaging For Sustainable Development

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Abstract

It's enough we have used a lot, it's enough we have exploited the natural resources to a great extent, it's enough that we have consumed the good and thrown away the worst, it's enough that we have polluted the eco system to the extreme. Yes, it's a high time for the manufacture of packaging product to gain a competitive advantage by using green packaging which promote product and maximizes their profit for the long run. So it's the apt time to be more sustainable due to global warming and other environmental issues. This paper concentrates on various level of awareness on environmental issues currently faced by the society at large particularly incoastal villages of Kanyakumari district, Tamilnadu. This paper gives proposals to the manufacturers to improve competitive advantage by adapting green packaging. The data were collected from kalkulam taluk in Kanyakumari district (chinnavillai and colachel) with the help of interview schedule by adopting simple random sampling method of 150 sample respondents. The major finding of this paper highlights that male respondents have more awareness on environmental issues than female respondents. The respondents are more eco-conscious and eco-friendly. Hence they are willing to practice three R (Reduce, Re-use and Recycle) concept of green packaging. Hence it will be a good opportunity for the manufactures and producer of packaging of product to start adapting green packing.

Key words: *green packaging, eco-friendly packaging, green consumers, sustainable development, eco-friendly, reduce, reuse and biodegradable.*

Introduction

The earth's resources are being plundered because of short-sighted approaches of the economy, commerce and production. Each year hundreds of millions of tons of waste are generated, much of it is non-biodegradable, highly toxic and radioactive from homes and businesses, from construction and demolition sites, from clinical, electronic and industrial sources. As a result, the earth is beginning to look more and more like an immense pile of filth. Marine sea is no way exempted to this. Like the earth, the marine sea is polluted to greater extent due to throw away culture. Hence the only remedy for such pollution is green packaging. It is also known as eco packaging and sustainable packaging. Green marketing refers to the process of selling products or services based on their environmental benefits. Such a product or service may be environmentally friendly in itself or produced or packaged in an environmentally friendly way. The consumers who are aware of ecological concepts are ready to buy a product or service for a reasonable price. The development of ecologically

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safer products, recyclable and biodegradable packaging, energy-efficient operations, and better pollution controls are all the outcome of green marketing. Packaging is one of the green marketing tools which play an important role in reducing the destructive effects towards the environment.

Statement Of The Problem

India is polluted tremendously in the name of development, like neutrino, methane and nuclear power plant and so on, Particularly in Tamilnadu. On the another hand the speed culture, fast food habits, throw away culture and accumulation of things more than needshave polluted the environment greater extent. It is vivid that the World Resource Institute estimated in 2005 that 1.8 tonnes of carbon dioxide are released by 1.21 billion people in India. The extent of release of carbon dioxide is much higher in the developed nations.

As the outcome of environmental threat, human existence becomes uncertain and they are exposed to various kinds of illness. Moreover, it is also one of the social duties and ethics of every citizen in the world. The coastal villages of Kanyakumari district are highly affected due to waste packages. These packages are accumulated due to throw away culture of the tourists and the natives near the coastal belt. This brings lot of health issues and other environmental issues. Green packages could be a better choice to avoid this crisis for the environment. Hence the researcher coined the title as competitive advantage of green packaging for sustainable development.

Objectives

The main objective of the study is to find out the competitive advantage of green packaging for sustainable development in coastal belt. The following are the specific objectives.

- To study the demographic profile of the sample respondent.
- To identify the awareness of environmental issues pertaining in the study area.
- To analyses knowledge about the features of green packaging in the sample respondents.

Methodology

The present study is empirical in nature based on both primary and secondary data. Primary data were collected from the coastal taluks in Kanyakumari district. Among the four taluks Agastheeswaram, Kalkulam and Vilavancode are in the coastal belt. The researcher has selected the Kalkulam taluk where in the village which has the highest and lowest population on the basis of simple random sampling. The size of the sample study is 150. Out of it 100 samples from the village which has highest population and 50 from lowest population. personal interview schedule has been used to administer questionnaire. Statistical package of social science (SPSS) was used for analyzing the data.

Data And Discussion

Demographic Composition

Demographic profile is a statistical data to characterize the age, gender, marital status, income of the population in the study area of the researcher. Consumers in coastal line are mainly of fishermen community; their occupation and educational status tend to change according to their economic status. The following table shows the demographic profile of the respondents which is very much important to know their purchasing behaviour and their level of awareness regarding the factors which affect the environment.

Table 1: Demographic profile of the respondents

Variables	Particulars	No.of respondents	Percentage
Age	Below 21 years	26	17
	21-30 years	60	40
	31-40 years	31	21
	Above 40 years	33	22
	Total	150	100
Gender	male	56	37.3
	female	94	62.7
	Total	150	100.0
Educational qualification	Illiterate	10	6.7
	Up to secondary	26	17.3
	Higher Secondary	31	20.7
	Under Graduate	41	27.3
	Post Graduate	22	14.7
	Professional	15	10.0
	Technical	5	3.3
	Total	150	100.0
Occupation of the Respondents	Govt Employee	14	9.3
	Self-Employed	37	24.7
	Professionalist	15	10.0
	Fishermen	31	20.7
	Home maker	53	35.3
	Total	150	100.0
Monthly income	less than 20000	92	61.3
	20001-40000	44	29.3
	40001-60000	9	6.0
	More than 60000	5	3.3
	Total	150	100.0

Source: primary data

Table 1 shows that, 17 per cent (26) of the respondents are in the age group of less than 21 years and 40 per cent (60) of the respondents belong to the age group of 21-30 years. 37.3 per cent of the respondents are male and 62.7 per cent of the respondents are female. This agrees with the study by EwaJerzyk (2015) which shows that 66.7 per cent of the respondents were women shopping themselves and their households. 93.3 per cent of the respondents are literate while 6.7 per cent are illiterate. 35.5 per cent of the respondents are home maker. The findings of this study does not supports with Madalyn Marie Smith(2015) that 62.7 per cent of the respondents were employed who could involve in buying green packaging product. 61.3 per cent (92) of the respondents belong to the income group of "less than 20000 while 3.3 per cent (5) are belonging to the income group of "more than 60000". The validity between gender of the respondents and their awareness about environmental issues is tested with the help of T test with the following hypothesis.

Null Hypothesis

H₀: There is no significant difference between gender and awareness about environmental issues.

TABLE 2: T- TEST FOR SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCE BETWEEN GENDER AND AWARENESS ABOUT ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

Awareness about Environmental issues	Gender				T-Value	P-Value
	Male		Female			
	Mean	Std.Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation		
Environmental awareness	4.43	.657	4.13	.895	2.363	.019
Environmental degradation	3.95	1.069	3.84	.833	.636	.526
Environmental protection	4.09	.978	4.03	.848	.365	.716
Depletion of natural resources	3.84	1.108	3.88	.960	-.245	.807

Source: Statistically analyzed data

Since P value is less than 0.05 the null hypothesis is rejected at 5 per cent level with regard to Environmental awareness. Hence there is significant difference between male and female with respect to environmental awareness in awareness of environmental issues. Based on mean score the male respondents have more awareness on environmental issues than female respondents therefore the study indicates male respondents have more exposure in knowing the current updates on environmental issues. Paco et al., 2009 study also proves the increased public awareness on environmental aspects and growing environmental responsibility of consumer which developed environment friendly packaging.

Amount Spent On Green Packaged Product

Amount spent on any expenditure may differ according to person, place and time. It depends upon their economic status and purchasing behaviour towards the product. Table shows the amount spent on green packaging.

Table 3: Amount Spent on Green Packaged product

S.no	Amount spent on green package	No. of Frequency	Percentage
1	<3000	48	32.0
2	3000-5000	56	37.3
3	5000-7000	34	22.7
4	>7000	12	8.0
Total		150	100.0

Source: primary data

Table 3 shows that, 37.3 per cent of the respondents spend amount between "Rs 3000-Rs.7000", 8 per cent of the respondents spend above Rs.7000. It depicts that their expenditure is based on their income. Hence fishermen income is not stable it may vary according to the season while fishing, therefore maximum of the respondents expenditure lies in average

level. And they are willing to pay extra premium for green packing. This supports a study by Madalyn Marie Smith (2015) that consumers are more likely to spend more and buy a large quantity of green packaging product as they have interest in social responsibility. The following table depicts the mean rank towards features of green packaging.

H₀: There is no significant difference between mean ranks towards features of green packaging.

Table 4

S.No.	Features of Green Packaging	Mean Rank	Chi-square value	P value
1	Recyclable	8.26	76.230	0.000**
2	Reusable	7.99		
3	Renewable	7.55		
4	Remove	6.77		
5	Reduce	7.36		
6	Biodegradable	8.07		
7	Not polluting environment	8.13		
8	Not affect the health of the humanity	8.07		
9	Not affecting living organisms.	8.09		
10	Long life	7.58		
11	Manufactured from natural materials	7.57		
12	Innovative	6.52		
13	Versatile and flexible	6.59		
14	Improves brand image	6.44		

Source: Statistically analyzed data

**Denotes significance at 1% level

Since P value is less than 0.01, the null hypothesis is rejected at 1 per cent level of significance. Hence it is concluded that there is significant difference between mean ranks towards features of green packaging. Based on the mean rank the highest score of 'Recyclable' (8.26) strongly agreed by the respondents, followed by 'Not polluting environment' (8.13), 'Not affecting living organisms' (8.09) and the least score of 'Innovative' (6.52) and 'Improves brand image' (6.44). It is inferred that respondents are more eco-conscious and eco-friendly. Hence they are willing to practice three R concept of green packaging.

Suggestions

- Government can tax the use of disposable plastics and the non recyclable, non biodegradable one, which may increase the use of green packaging.
- Government should impose less or no tax for green packaging. In order to encourage the manufacturers to start adapting green packaging in all the products.
- Manufacture of packaging industry should have eco-ethics to produce only green packaging which are recyclable, reuseable and bio-degradable.
- Manufacturer should have the concern for the society to set recycle centers in the area where they distribute their product. It may create pollution free environment.

- Consumers can contribute more to promote green packaging which will solve the problem of pollution.

Conclusion

It's a boom to the industries which start adopting green packaging. The results of the paper indicates that respondents are well aware of the ecological issues and they are started demanding for an eco-friendly products particularly eco-friendly packaging. They have the knowledge about the features and a concept of green packaging i.e. green packaging is recyclable, reusable and biodegradable. Therefore it's the high time for the manufacturer and it's a great opportunity to the packaging industry to be more eco-friendly. The company which start adopting eco-ethics will have a bright future and bloom in near future. Every manufacturer should keep in mind the principles of sustainable development "that we should live within environmental limits and that we should enjoy and aspire to a healthy, just and fair society." *Willy Day, SDC (Sustainable Development Commission) Chair, UK*

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