

THE ROLE OF PACKAGING IN CONSUMER BUYING BEHAVIOR: A CASE OF SELECTED SMALL-SCALE ENTREPRENEURS IN ARUSHA CITY

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ABSTRACT: *This study sought to examine the role of packaging among the small-scale entrepreneurs in consumer buying behavior in Arusha City. The study used a quantitative approach to collecting and analyzing data from a total of 219 respondents. Closed-ended questionnaires were used to collect data. The findings revealed that the label of the package is important in the decision buying process, the quality of the packaging material is important during the buying process and packaging color impacts consumer behavior during the buying process. Society culture, business culture, customer's family culture, and customer's lifestyle culture were important factors towards customers buying behavior. Finally, the study revealed that the existence of the relationship between the small-scale entrepreneurs packaging practices and the buying behavior of consumers in Arusha City was a factor for small-scale entrepreneurs in the study area to compete with other products from outside the country. The study recommended that small-scale entrepreneurs in Arusha City should be creative and innovative in terms of packaging. It was also recommended that the Government through the Small Industries Development Organization (SIDO) should train the small-scale entrepreneurs in Arusha City on packaging related matters to promote customer buying behavior.*

KEY WORDS: Packaging, Consumer buying behaviour, small-scale entrepreneurs

.INTRODUCTION

In the 21st Century, customers eat with their eyes. Beautiful looking products such as food make people not only want to consume the food but also to believe that the food tastes better. In marketing, this shows that product packaging is ultra-important. Having a memorable presentation affects perception, and will keep customers returning again and again (LaMarco, 2019). A study on the role of packaging on consumer buying behavior in Patan District by Deliya and Parmar (2012) indicated that nowadays competitive environment the role of package has changed due to increasing self-service and changing consumers' lifestyles.

Studies on the role of packaging among the small-scale entrepreneurs on consumer buying behavior have been done and to a higher extent, they all agree that packaging affects customers buying behavior. For example, the study done in southeast Europe on the role and impact of the packaging effect on consumer buying behavior by Zekir and Hassan (2015) La Marco (2019), revealed that the primary purpose of packaging is to protect the product, but packaging can be

used by small-scale entrepreneurs as an instrument for promoting their products, and for boosting their sales.

It is obvious that starting a business is one thing and winning customers is another thing. One can be sure of producing products as much as he or she can, but on the other hand, if the customers are not persuaded to buy the product the business will fade away. Persuading customers is a complex task due to the fact that they are exposed to more than one product choices within a short period of time. Nzumile and Taifa (2019) confirmed that most of the small-scale entrepreneurs in Tanzania normally disregard packaging which at large extent bears the convincing power and draw the attention of customers towards a specific product. This is witnessed by the way small-scale entrepreneur's products are packed in comparison to the imported ones. As a result, customers tend to doubt the products thinking that products of small-scale entrepreneurs are of low quality.

Despite the great efforts done by the Small Industries Development Organization (SIDO) and other stakeholders to help the small-scale entrepreneurs in Tanzania in terms of packaging, yet most of the small-scale entrepreneurs end up with low sells in the market compared to imported products and obstruct them from expanding their business (Nzumile and Taifa, 2019). Similarly, Lymo (2014) affirmed that despite the challenges in accessing credits to boost their businesses, small-scale entrepreneurs in most parts of Tanzania are facing a challenge of packaging. The study also indicated that businesses are not growing.

The poor packaging leads to get loss in their business, failure in competition and meet the international standards as reported by Kazimoto (2014) in his study on the assessment of challenges facing small and medium enterprises towards international marketing standard indicated that small-scale entrepreneurs in Tanzania cannot compete with products outside the country because of various reason. The study revealed that poor packaging does not attract customers at all. This influenced the researcher to conduct this study so as to examine the role of packaging among the small-scale entrepreneurs in consumer buying behavior in Arusha City.

Packaging among Small-scale Entrepreneurs

The package is a critical factor in the decision-making process because it communicates to consumers. The package standing on the shelf, affects the consumer decision process and package design must ensure that consumer response is favorable. Shah, Ahmad and Ahmad (2013) in their study on role of packaging in consumer buying Behavior in Pakistan indicated that, small-scale entrepreneurs consider packaging so as to attract the customers in their products.

Lundberg and Fredman (2012) argues that packaging is considered to be a strong marketing strategy for companies since it can be used as a powerful competitive advantage tool to attract attention, describe a product and make sales. They pointed out various types of packaging

namely; (i) Primary packaging is the wrapping or containers handled by the consumer like as boxes for consumable toys, food carton and drinks bottles, paper or plastic carrier bags (ii) Secondary packaging or grouped packaging is term used to describe larger cases or boxes that are used to group quantity of primary packaged products for distribution and for display in shops. Example of secondary packaging such as corrugates boxes and shrink wrap or a box containing many soft drink or fast food. This secondary packaging is what the retailer sees and handles before goods are places on selves. (iii) Tertiary packaging or transport packaging is referring to materials that are used to collate products into larger loads for transport which facilitates loading and unloading. For example, like as pallet stretch wrap, metal strapping and pallets. The tertiary packaging activities are used for protecting goods in shipmen.

Quality of Packaging Materials

Packaging material has great influence on consumer's purchasing decision. Chukwu and Enugu (2018) explained that, high quality packaging attracts the consumer's than the low-quality packaging. Any material used specially to protect something- packing, wadding. Consumer can change its decision regarding packaging material. High quality Packaging attract consumer then low-quality Packaging. The first packages used the natural materials available at the time: Baskets of reeds, wineskins, wooden boxes, pottery vases, ceramic amphorae, wooden barrels, woven bags, etc.

Oppong, Owiredu and Churchill (2014) in their work on micro and small-scale enterprises development in Ghana reported that the challenges facing entrepreneurs and small medium enterprises in Africa are varied and many; lack of financial support, poor packaging materials, weak economic infrastructure, and lack of policy coherence, and lack business support. According to Agata (2017), high quality materials are more preferred than low quality ones. The first packages to be used in the old days were made of natural materials that were available during that period. Examples of materials first used in packaging included: reed baskets, wineskins also known as bota bags, wooden boxes, pottery, vases, ceramic amphorae, barrels of wood, bags that were woven, etc. At its most base level, product packaging serves to protect the product inside.

Packaging can also differentiate one brand of product from another brand. Because the product packaging can contain company names, logos and the color scheme of the company, it helps consumers to identify the product as it sits among the competition's products on store shelves (Silayoi and Speece, 2004).

Attractive (Color & Image)

Colors play a vital role in the consumer's decision making and they attract customers towards any product. Different colors have different meaning and can help to draw attention according to the consumer's mood. A study on impact of packaging on consumers' buying behavior by Ghosh

(2016) indicated that, the focus of color as a stimulus is related to its ability to aid companies who are looking for ways to improve their sales and obtain a dominant market share. Also, a study by Mazhar, Sayeda, Bhutto and Mubeen (2015) indicated that, packaging color plays an important role in a potential customer's decision-making process, certain colors set different moods and can help to draw attention

Printed Information

Printed packaging is an effective way to communicate the appearance, quality and other qualities of a product. Sometimes, print design also helps establish the personality of the product and the brand. A study by Sumner (2017) indicated that 90% of consumers want their products in printed packages. This is the same for all collaterals related to sales and promotions. When packaging a product, be it food or brands take a number of factors into consideration and one of the most crucial of it is print display on the packaging.

Brand Image

Branding and packaging on the products of small and medium businesses attract more customers. A product that is well-packed in a beautifully designed package will attract more customers. Attractive Branding on a product also demonstrates professionalism and the quality of your product. Branding the product can be done using a medium like print-ad that would promote design as a primary weapon. Advantages of brand image includes; Makes the business identifiable by customers and the public, attractive packaging sways customers to purchase the product, facilitates buying decisions, branding and packaging as a marketing tool and branding and packaging create customer loyalty (Mousavi and Jahromi, 2014).

Consumer Buying Behaviour

Consumer buying behavior is considered to be an inseparable part of marketing and packaging outlooks (Dudovskiy, 2013). For instance, marketing activities and packaging outlooks factors such as quality of packaging materials, printed information, brand image, attractive colors and images, are believed to have some levels of effect on the purchasing decisions of the consumers. A variety of factors go into the consumer buyer behavior process, but here we offer just a few. Taken separately, they may not result in a purchase.

Relationship between packaging and consumer buying behavior

In the past, packaging was solely regarded to performing technical functions such as protection and logistics. People mainly packaged goods for containing, protection and transportation purposes. Packaging is known to attract consumers to a brand. In the view of this, Azeem (2015) in his study reveals that packaging elements influence the attraction of consumers to a brand, boost its image and affect consumers' perceptions of a product. The study further indicated that the relationship between packaging and buying behavior exist to a higher extent.

Similarly a study of Mousavi and Jahromi (2014) on the relationship between packaging and consumer behavior found. There is no doubt that packing related directly with buying behavior. Having a correct understanding of customers and their buying behavior is of numerous advantages. By understanding customers, small-scale entrepreneurs could make the best decisions to meet customer needs and achieve their business goals.

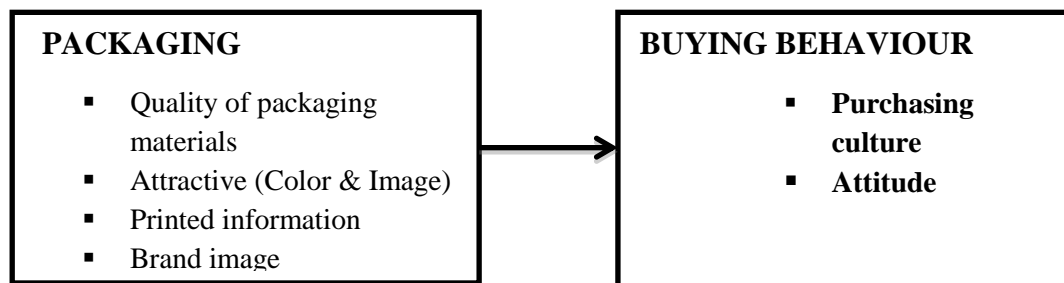
Research hypothesis: *There is a significant relationship between the small- scale entrepreneurs packaging practices and the buying behavior of consumers in Arusha City.*

Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework is a structure, which the researcher believes can best, explains the natural progression of the phenomenon to be studied (Camp, 2001). In the figure below, packaging is an independent variable; customer's buying behavior is a dependent variable. The relationship between the two variables is that, packaging of the products determines the customer behaviors either positively or negatively.

INDEPENDENT VARIABLE

DEPENDENT VARIABLE



Source: Researcher (2020)

METHODOLOGY

This study used descriptive research design. Mugenda and Mugenda (1999) defined descriptive research design as a design that helps a researcher to obtain information that describes the existing phenomena by asking individuals about their perceptions, attitudes, and values. This study used a quantitative approach. The quantitative approach is based on the measurement of quantity and amount. In other words, it is the mathematical method of measuring and describing the observation of materials or characteristics (Kothari, 2004). In this regard, a quantitative approach was used so as to collect numerical data from the respondents

The targeted population for this study included the small-scale entrepreneurs in Arusha City. Small-scale entrepreneurs were used in this study because the study entailed finding out how small-scale entrepreneurs' packaging practices have an impact on consumer buying behavior. This study used questionnaires in the collection of data. According to Akhtar (2016) the advantage of the questionnaire technique is that it covers a large area and a large population in a short period of time. The information generated can be verified and cross-checked against the information collected using other methods.

The Missing Data and Outliers Analysis

Missing data is a possible problem in almost every field of research (Honaker & King, 2010). Working on the missing data is one of the steps in preparing the data for analysis. There are several techniques that may be employed in dealing with the issue of the missing data. In this study, the mean substitution method was employed to substitute the mean response for that particular missing data (see Schumacker & Lomax, 2010) A rationale for using this method is that it is suitable for datasets that have a small number of missing values (Schumacker & Lomax, 2010). Whereas out of 223 questionnaires attempted, 219 remained usable for further analysis after the incomplete ones were removed. This represents an effective response rate of 99%.

Outliers represent respondents whose data are inconsistent with the main part of the data (Blunch, 2008). In this study, the procedure of dealing with normality in SPSS was done for the outliers. In SPSS, outliers were identified using the Boxplot and all respondents that appeared to be on extreme scores points were removed. Hence, a total of 2 outliers were identified and removed from the data, reducing the data to 217 respondents.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of Respondent

SN	Category	Frequency	Percent
1.	Gender of Respondents		
	Males	108	49.3
	Females	111	51.0
	TOTAL	219	100
2.	Experience in business		
	Below 2 years	80	36.5
	3 to 5 years	91	41.5
	6 years and above	48	21.9
	TOTAL	219	100

As observed in Table 4.1 above, respondents were categorized according to gender and their experience in the business. This was so because it was important to determine the background of those who participated in filling the questionnaire. As far as the gender of respondents is concerned, males were 108 (49.3%) while females were 111 (51.0%). Therefore, the majority of respondents who filled the questionnaire were females. This gives an expression that the study included respondents from both females and males with not varying numbers. In terms of respondents' experience in business, those with below 2 years were 80 (36.5%), those with experience between 3 to 5 years were 91 (41.5%) while those with experience of 6 years and above were 48 (21.9). This implies that the questionnaires were filled by experienced respondents who were able to provide adequate information about the topic under investigation.

Research Question 1: *What is the impact of packaging practice on the buying behavior of consumers in Arusha City?*

Table 2: Packaging Practice and Consumers Behaviours Implications

SN	Item in the Questionnaire	Min.	Max.	Mean	Interpretation
1.	I always pack my products	1.0	4.0	2.477	Low
2.	I sometimes pack my products	1.0	4.0	2.505	Agree
3.	I don't pack my products	1.0	4.0	2.505	Agree
4.	I'm aware on the importance of packaging	1.0	4.0	2.827	Agree
5.	My fellow entrepreneurs also park their products	1.0	4.0	2.907	Agree
6.	I do use attractive packaging materials	1.0	4.0	2.762	Agree
7.	I do use creative packaging materials	1.0	4.0	2.607	Agree
8.	The brand image on the package has an impact on consumer behavior on buying process	1.0	4.0	2.799	Agree
9.	Label of the package is important in decision buying process	1.0	4.0	3.126	Highly Agree
10.	Quality of the packaging material is important during buying process	1.0	4.0	3.196	Highly Agree
11.	Packaging color impacts consumer behavior during buying process	1.0	4.0	3.098	Highly Agree
12.	My society culture influence my buying behavior	1.0	4.0	2.953	Agree
13.	My society culture discourages my buying behaviour	1.0	4.0	2.986	Agree
14.	My society culture accepts my buying behaviour	1.0	4.0	3.065	Highly Agree
15.	My business culture helps me to shape my attitudes towards packaging	1.0	4.0	3.112	Highly Agree

16.	My buying behaviour depends on the attractive packaging materials	1.0	4.0	3.098	<i>Highly Agree</i>
17.	My life style culture helps me to shape my attitudes towards packaging	1.0	4.0	3.271	<i>Highly Agree</i>
18.	My family culture helps me to shape my attitudes towards packaging	1.0	4.0	3.285	<i>Highly Agree</i>
19.	Consumers positive attitude about the product is a result of quality packaging materials	1.0	4.0	3.355	<i>Highly Agree</i>
20.	Consumers positive attitude about the product is a result of attractive color and image	1.0	4.0	3.374	<i>Highly Agree</i>
21.	Consumers positive attitude about the product is a result of printed information	1.0	4.0	3.379	<i>Highly Agree</i>
22.	Consumers positive attitude about the product is a result of brand image	1.0	4.0	3.383	<i>Highly Agree</i>
23.	I often change to another product if I had bad experience with packaging handling materials	1.0	4.0	3.383	<i>Highly Agree</i>
24.	My personality affect my buying behaviour	1.0	4.0	3.435	<i>Highly Agree</i>

The mean score for all the twenty-four items ranged between 2.47 and 3.435 denoting agreement. This means that the role of packaging in consumer buying behavior for small-scale entrepreneurs in Arusha city is extremely important. For instance, the selected Arusha city respondents have shown that a high agreement that personality affects the buying behavior process with a mean of 3.44. This means that the Packaging process should align with the personality of a consumer that includes behavior, emotional, and environmental factors

Research Question 2. What are the small-scale entrepreneurs packaging practices that are more important for improving buying behavior of consumers in Arusha City?

Table 3. Mechanism to Improve Packaging

<i>SN</i>	Item in the Questionnaire	Min.	Max.	Mean	Interpretation
1.	I always pack my products	1.0	4.0	3.341	<i>Highly Agree</i>
2.	I sometimes pack my products	1.0	4.0	3.477	<i>Highly Agree</i>
3.	I don't pack my products	1.0	4.0	3.425	<i>Highly Agree</i>
4.	I'm aware on the importance of packaging	1.0	4.0	3.495	<i>Highly Agree</i>
5.	My fellow entrepreneurs also park their products	1.0	4.0	3.472	<i>Highly Agree</i>
6.	I do use attractive packaging materials	1.0	4.0	3.336	<i>Highly Agree</i>
7.	I do use creative packaging materials	1.0	4.0	3.159	<i>Highly Agree</i>

Source: Field data (2020)

The mean score for all the eleven items in table two ranged between 3.16 and 3.19 denoting highly agreement. This means that, the role of improving packaging practices in consumer buying behavior for small-scale entrepreneurs in Arusha city is extremely important. For instance, the selected Arusha city respondents have indicated that awareness on the importance of packaging is highly important with a mean of 3.50. Hence it is important to know that citizens of Arusha city are aware of the importance of packaging. These findings correspond to those of Shah, Ahmad and Ahmad (2013) in their study on role of packaging in consumer buying behavior in Pakistan indicated that, small-scale entrepreneurs consider packaging so as to attract the customers in their products. The study further indicated that, packaging catches buyer's mind to specific product and they influence the consumer purchase behavior about product. Packaging also plays an important role in effecting consumer buying decision.

Research Question 3. *Is there any relationship between the small-scale entrepreneurs packaging practices and the buying behavior of consumers in Arusha City?*

H_0^1 : There is no significant relationship between the small-scale entrepreneurs packaging practices variables and the buying behavior of consumer's variables.

Table 4: The relationship Between Packaging Practices and Consumers Buying Behavior

		CBB Consumer Buying Behaviour	PP Packaging	MP Mechanisms for Packaging	AA Attitude
	CBB	1			
Pearson	PP	.013**	1		
Correlation	MP	.087**	.250**	1	
	AA	.303**	.115**	.097**	1

Note: ** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2 tailed)

Number of the respondents =254

The hypothesis was analyzed through the Pearson Correlation Coefficient. The result indicates that there is a positive statistically significant relationship with all the variables. Hence, research Hypothesis 1 was rejected. It should be noted that the nature of the existing correlations between the variables would be either positive or negative and was interpreted based on the following criteria: $\geq .70$ = strong relationship, $\geq .50$ = moderate relationship, and $\leq .50$ = weak relationship. In this study, the results indicate that consumer buying behavior to have a greater relationship particularly on the indicator of attitude (.303) and Packaging (.115). However, all the relationships happened to be weak but significant at 0.01.

In other words, Quality packaging, materials, Attractive color and image, printed information and brand image have a significant relationship with consumer buying behavior, particularly on the indicators that include purchasing culture and consumers attitudes, therefore, it can be

concluded that there is a relationship between packaging and consumer buying behavior particularly for the small-scale entrepreneurs of Arusha city.

CONCLUSION

It was concluded that the label of the package is important in the decision buying process, the quality of the packaging material is important during the buying process and packaging color impacts consumer behavior during the buying process. These factors are essential in promoting the buying behavior of consumers. The study further concluded that there are some other factors that promoted the customers' buying behavior. Society culture, business culture, customer's family culture, and customer's lifestyle culture were important factors towards customers' buying behavior.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The study recommended that in order to improve business, compete with other products from outside the country, and promote customer buying behavior, small-scale entrepreneurs in Arusha City should be creative and innovative in terms of packaging. It was also recommended that the Government through the Small Industries Development Organization (SIDO) should train the small-scale entrepreneurs in Arusha City on packaging related matters so as to promote customer buying behavior. This should go hand in hand with helping them get market for their packed products

The Government should reduce or remove tax for the packaging materials used by small-scale entrepreneurs in packing their products. This is because some small-scale entrepreneurs in Arusha City were not able to pack their goods due to the fact that the packaging materials were expensive. It was also recommended that the Tanzania community should change their attitude regarding the products packed by small-scale entrepreneurs. Customers should support small-scale entrepreneurs by buying their products.

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