The Role of Product Packaging_ "Printed Information" on Customers' Buying Behavior:
Case study of AZAM RWANDA LTD

Hakizimana Phanuel

Adventist University of Central Africa, P. O. Box 2461, Kigali, Rwanda.
Email address: hakizimanaphanuel@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

In nowadays' business globe competition, consumers are bombarded with too many marketing stimuli in order to being attracted by different companies. On that, manufacturing companies use products packaging as one of the most important factors of influencing consumer's purchase decisions. Frequently, the used packaging elements are printed information, packaging color and material, design of wrapper, brand image, innovation and practicality. Printed information (the focus of this study), contains all the information related to the product quality, price and description which help customers to identify the brand. This topic was selected after realizing that some of nowadays packaging information are in foreign languages which are sometimes not understandable by the targeted customers. And this affects the failure of companies due to the fact that nowadays of full of sicknesses, consumers are more concerned with health and nutrition issues; thus they pay more attention to the understandable label information. The main purpose of this study was to assess the role of product packaging _ "printed information" on consumer buying behavior. The research was conducted among the customers of AZAM Rwanda ltd specifically, located in Rwanda_ Kigali city_ Gasabo Distric_ Bumbogo sector. The sample size was composed by 85 customers frequently using the Energy and Tangawizi drink, products of AZAM Rwanda ltd. The study used a descriptive and correlational research design. The data collected from the respondents were analyzed using SPSS version 22 and the results were interpreted through the mean, standard deviation and Pearson correlation. The statistical results showed a significant relationship between product packaging_ printed information and consumer buying behavior. However, some weaknesses were found and recommendations were provided.

Keywords: Packaging, Printed Information and consumer buying behavior.

Introduction

For decades in winning business globe competition, product packaging has been one of the focuses for businesses not only to protect their products, but also to be an instrument for promoting their market offer and boosting their sales. Packaging communicates brand personality through many elements such as printed information, colors, logo, fonts, package materials, pictorials, product descriptions, the shapes, and other elements that provide rich brand associations (Underwood, 2003).

Packaging becomes an ultimate selling preposition stimulating impulsive buying behavior, increasing market share and reducing promotional costs. Packaging has become important tool of differencing the product/ service from the similar kinds of products or services available in the market (Wells, 2007). In the light of that, Rundh (2005) has clearly discovered that packaging attracts consumers' attention to particular brand. Packaging enhances consumers' perception about the product or service. And from that, as confirmed by Mutsikiwa and Marumbwa, (2013) the appearance of the package is believed to have a strong impact on influencing consumers' purchase decision than advertising. Good and well planned designs are eye-catching and can differentiate products on the shelves and can attract consumers more easily. Packaging also pertains as a Container or Wrapper for a consumer product that serves a number of purposes including protection and description of the contents, theft deterrence, and product promotion. Innovative and attractive packaging may actually add value to the product if it meets a consumer need such as portion control, recyclability, tamper-proofing, child-proofing, easy-open, easy-store, easy-carry, and non-breakability (Clement, 2007).

The labels on packages are important components of the overall marketing mix and can support advertising claims, establish brand identity, enhance name recognition, and optimize shelf space allocations (Shimp, 2011). When designing a packaging, the cost to manufacture, ship, and display the package must be looked at. Packaging must be small enough to accommodate available shelf space and large enough to deter theft. It must also contain an adequate amount of product to keep the unit price competitive. Packaging should be designed to highlight product benefits and can be an integral part of the product itself, like facial tissue boxes (Clement, 2007).

While in the context of marketing function, the packaging should be attractive enough and well designed, so that it conveys the message of product attributes clearly. Now whatever the logical considerations of packaging, the marketing function of packaging attributes plays a vital role as a communicator and it is only the package that sells the product by attracting and communicating the consumers, and allows the product to be comprised, divvy up, unitized and protected (Ghani & Kamal, 2010).

Charles and Lamb (2011), in their book "Essentials of Marketing" think that packaging has four distinct marketing functions. It contains and protects the product. It promotes the product. It helps consumers use the product and finally, packaging facilitates recycling and

reduces environmental damage. Therefore, packaging does more than just protecting the company's products. It also helps in developing the image of the product in consumer mind. So, failing to pay attention to the design of the packaging can decrease the chances of being visible and attractive, which can result in using sales.

Product Information

Specifically, the printed information on packaging is an important component since it supports marketing communication strategies of companies, establish brand image and identity. Printed information contain all the information related to the product quality, price, description which help to identify the brand. Ricardo (2008) has much worked on the features of the perception and value of the products. According to him, packaging information helps in choosing the product when there is a lot of uncertainty and thus they trust on good attribute of the product packaging.

Quality judgments are largely influenced by product characteristics reflected by packaging information, because package's overall features can underline the uniqueness and originality of the product (Rundh, 2005). If the packaging attributes communicates high quality, consumers assume that the product is of high quality. If the package symbolizes low quality, consumers transfer this low quality perception to the product itself. The package information communicates favorable or unfavorable implied meaning about the product. Ghani and Kamal (2010) suggests that consumers are more likely to spontaneously imagine aspects of how a product looks, tastes, feels, smells, or sounds while they are understanding the package information.

Nowadays, as consumers' health concerns and healthy diet are increasing, a product should include clear information, in order to make it easy for consumers to make purchase decisions (Deliya & Munyarazdi , 2012). Labeling definitions differ and labeling may include a simple brand name, graphic or detailed product information (Keller, 2009). Packaging layout is very important consideration in providing product information because consumers get confused with the information overload and inaccurate information (Rundh, 2013).

Even though product information is relatively less important to the consumers with their low involvement with the products, on the other hand, consumers with their high involvement with the products tend to look at product information and make appropriate decisions accordingly. From that, the product information changes the customers' attitude of buying the products (Ghani & Kamal, 2010). It is aforementioned that, research has shown that a significant relationship between consumer purchase decision and the information on packaging (Otterbing, 2013). A qualitative research has shown that participants (in that study) tended to judge the performance of food product while reading the label information when the products were considered by them carefully (Ahmed, 2005). The same study further suggested that the printed information which is appropriately delivered can have strong impact on consumer buying behavior and enhance the credibility of a product. Information on the product could help

consumers in making their decisions about product choice. Nonetheless, it could also create confusion for them if the information is not accurate or if it is misleading (Ghani & Kamal, 2010). Consumers read information on the packaging when they want to buy an alternative product of milk, if the one they usually buy were out of stock (Karimi, 2013).

Printed information helps customers to make the right decisions and to purchase the products. Printed information is one of the most visible parts of product and important element of marketing mix (Deliya & Munyarazdi , 2012). One of packaging's functions is to communicate product information, which can assist consumers in making their decisions carefully. An example of such significant information is food labeling. The trend towards healthier eating has highlighted the importance of labeling, which allows consumers the opportunity to cautiously consider alternatives and make informed food choices (Hingley, 2007). Package layout is important for information presentation.

One recent survey on food labeling found that 90 percent of respondents agreed that nutritional information panels should be laid out in the same way for all food products so that they are easy to understand quickly (Karimi, 2013). However, packaging information can create confusion by conveying either too much information or misleading and inaccurate information. Most of the cases, this happens when the printed information is written in a language not known by targeted customers.

To maximize the information carried on products, manufacturers often use very small fonts and very dense writing styles. This reduces readability and sometimes causes confusion. Lynsey and Hollywood (2013) suggest that one major way consumers reduce confusion from information overload is to narrow down the choice set. Considering fewer alternative brands and evaluating fewer attributes decrease the probability that the consumer will be confused by excessive choice and information overload.

This strategy could apply to more experienced consumers, because heavy users potentially look at fewer brand alternatives. In other words, experience makes consumers selectively perceptive and restricts the scope of their search (Clement, 2007). Confusion can also affect consumer decision quality, and can undermine consumer rights to safety and information. Thus, there are trade-offs between cognitive effort and decision-making accuracy. Balance between information and choices are needed in order to decrease the difficulty of purchase decisions. Ahmed (2005) indicates that involvement level reflects the extent of personal relevance of the decision to the individual in terms of basic values, goals and self-concept. If the product does not stimulate much interest, consumers do not give much attention to it. High involvement indicates more personal relevance or importance.

In general, consumer acquisition of low involvement products is often done without carefully examining brand and product information. This lack of commitment suggests that information on the package would carry relatively less value in such cases. On the other hand,

more highly involved consumers evaluate message information more carefully, relying on the message to form their attitudes and purchase intentions (Ghani & Kamal, 2010).

Conceptual & Theoretical framework

As shown in figure one, the study focuses on product packaging as independent variable, and consumer buying behavior as dependent variable.
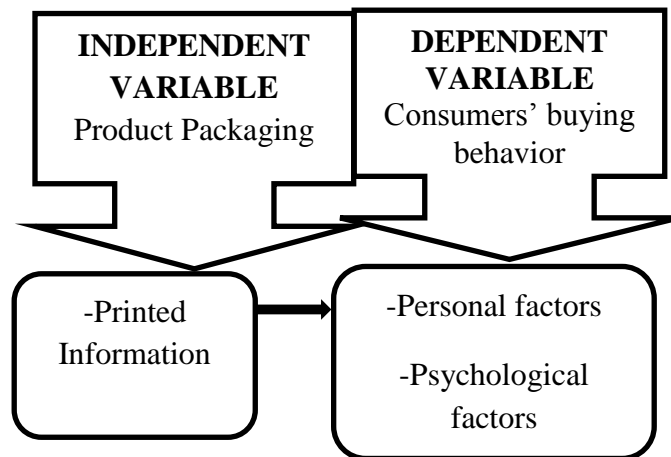

Figure1. Conceptual framework

The theoretical framework of this study is based on different theories and approaches that were used to support this study include the image and brand theory, psychodynamic approach, behaviourist approach and cognitive approach.

Image and Brand theory

A person's attitudes and actions towards an object are determined by what a person knows or assumes to know about the object (Karimi, 2013), in other words, the person's attitudes are determined by their beliefs. The Fishbein model explains that there is a link between beliefs and attitudes. There are three kinds of beliefs: descriptive, inferential and informational. A study by Fishbein and Ajzen (2005) describes the descriptive beliefs as those that derive from a direct experience with the product. The informational beliefs are those influenced by outside sources of information such as advertising, friends, and relatives and so on. The inferential beliefs are formed by making inferences based on past experiences as this experience relates to the current stimulus (Ghani & Kamal, 2010).

In marketing it is common to talk about an image. An image is the set of beliefs, ideas and impressions that a person holds of an object. According to Clement (2007), the image of an object results from people's perceptions. Each perception occurs at an individual level and therefore each object has a different image for each individual obsever. A customer bases his actions on what he thinks he knows (beliefs), therefore, the image is very important to a

company. The image is an asset of the company in which the company has invested time and money (Backhaus & Wilken, 2007).

Psychodynamic Approach

The psychodynamic tradition within psychology is widely attributed to the work of Sigmund Freud (1856-1939). This view posits that behavior is subject to biological influence through 'instinctive forces' or 'drives' which act outside of conscious thought (Shimp, 2011). While Freud identified three facets of the psyche, namely the Id, the Ego and the Superego (Freud 1923), other theorists working within this tradition, most notably Jung, identified different drives (Ghani & Kamal, 2010). The key tenet of the psychodynamic approach is that behavior is determined by biological drives, rather than individual cognition, or environmental stimuli.

Behaviorist Approach

In 1920, John B. Watson published a landmark study into behavior which became known as *'Little Albert'* (Karimi, 2013). This study involved teaching a small child (Albert) to fear otherwise benign objects through repeated pairing with loud noises. The study proved that behavior can be learned by external events and thus largely discredited the Psychodynamic approach that was predominant at the time.

Essentially, Behaviorism is a family of philosophies stating that behavior is explained by external events, and that all things that organisms do, including actions, thoughts and feelings can be regarded as behaviors. The causation of behavior is attributed to factors external to the individual. The most influential proponents of the behavioral approach were Ivan Pavlov (1849-1936) who investigated classical conditioning, John Watson (1878-1958) who rejected introspective methods and Burrhus Skinner (1904-1990) who developed operant conditioning. Each of these developments relied heavily on logical positivism purporting that objective and empirical methods used in the physical sciences can be applied to the study of consumer behavior (Kotler, 2012).

Cognitive Approach

In stark contrast to the foundations of Classical Behavioralism, the cognitive approach ascribes observed action (behavior) to intrapersonal cognition. The individual is viewed as an 'information processor' (Deliya & Munyarazdi , 2012). This intrapersonal causation clearly challenges the explicative power of environmental variables suggested in Behavioral approaches, however an influential role of the environment and social experience is acknowledged, with consumers actively seeking and receiving environmental and social stimuli as informational inputs aiding internal decision making (Hingley, 2007).

While there are distinct branches of cognitive psychology, they all share an abiding interest in exploring and understanding the mental structures and processes which mediate between stimulus and response. Contemporary Cognitive Psychology has identified and developed a wide range of factors which are thought fundamental to these intrapersonal processes including: perception, learning, memory, thinking, emotion and motivation. While this is far from a complete list of the possible constructs at play, it does serve to outline the complexity and multiplicity of issues inherent with this approach (Pristouri, 2010). Thus, Printed material, is one of the easiest and most effectual ways to provide information. The consumer can change his decision on the basis of information printed on the packaging. Printed information can be easily handed out and accepted away. It is significant at all levels of participation. Printed information contain all the information related to the product quality, price, description which help to identify the brand. According to Shah et al. (2013), labeling is one of the most visible parts of product and an important element of the marketing mix. The information on packaging is an important component since it can support marketing communication strategies of companies, establish brand image and identity. From the empirical evidence, the information on packaging represents an important component and it can support marketing communication strategies of companies, establishes brand image and identity. Printed information contains all the information related to the product quality, price, and description which help customers identify the product and facilitates the decision process during purchasing. The obtained results also show the language used on the package influences consumer behavior during the buying process.

Methodology

This study was carried out at AZAM Ltd, specifically among their customers consuming their Tandawize and energy drink products. The intention of this research was to find out the effect of AZAM Ltd Product packaging_Printed information on their customers' buying behavior. The population of this study comprised 85 customers consuming the above two mentioned products and who were conveniently selected from AZAM Ltd customers located in Kigali City _Rwanda.

The five-point scale (1. Strongly Disagree, 2. Disagree, 3. Neutral, 4. Agree, and 5. Strongly Agree) questionnaire, which was chosen as research instrument, was designed in a way it can meet dimensions of the study: packaging_ printed information measured by four questions and customer purchasing behavior by four questions too. All 85 customers received and answered questionnaires given to them. Mean, standard deviation and Pearson correlation coefficient were used for statistical analysis of data. The mean from 1 to 1.99 was evaluated as weak, from 2 to 2.99 as tend to weak, from 3 to 3.99 as tend to strong and from 4 to 5 as strong (Kothari, 2009). While for the standard deviation, less than 0.5 was interpreted as "homogeneity" and the standard deviation equals to 0.5 and above was interpreted as "heterogeneity". The correlation coefficient having the absolute value greater than 0.5 was interpreted as positive/ negative strong correlation while the correlation coefficient having the absolute value less than

0.5 was interpreted as positive / negative weak correlation and that one equals to 0.5 was interpreted as positive/ negative moderate correlation.

Results and Discussion

With regards to the respondents' profile, the gender and level of educational aspects were taken into account. These demographic variables were chosen assuming that female customers and male ones may not necessarily have the same understanding relating to both packaging_ printed information and their buying behaviour. This was to balance respondents' views, as summarized in the tables below:

Table 1

Gender of Respondents

Categories		Frequency	%
Gender	Male	33	38.8
	Female	52	61.2
Education level	Below Certificate	7	8.2
	Certificate	24	28.2
	A1 Diploma	3	3.5
	Bachelor & above	51	60

Source: Primary data, 2018

In table 1, respondents were asked to indicate their gender and the following results are obtained; out of 85 respondents, 38.8% of the respondents are males and 61.2% of the respondents are females. The majority of the respondents who have participated in this study are females. In addition to that, out of 85 respondents who have participated in this study, 8.2% have a below certificate, 28.2% have a certificate, 3.5% have A1 diploma and 60% have bachelor degree and above. The majority of the respondents who have participated in this study have bachelor degree and above.

Table 2

Perception on Product printed Information

Variables	Mean	SD	Comments
The product of AZAM Rwanda ltd contain clear information about their quality.	1.96	0.62	Weak/HT
I buy the products of AZAM Rwanda ltd without any hesitation because their attractive information written on the products.	2.89	0.42	Tend to weak/HM
The products of AZAM Rwanda ltd are well labeled.	3.87	0.48	Tend to strong/HM
The information designed on their products is understandable	1.98	0.65	Weak/HT
Overall Mean	2.68	0.54	Tend to weak/HT

Source: Primary data, 2018
(HT: heterogeneous/ HM: Homogeneous)

In table 2, respondents disagree on the statement which says that the product of AZAM Rwanda ltd contain clear information about their quality with a weak mean of 1.96 and standard deviation of 0.62 (Heterogeneous) which indicates that respondents share different perceptions on this statement. Respondents tend to disagree on the statement which says that I buy the product of AZAM Rwanda ltd without any hesitation because their attractive information written on the products with tend to weak mean of 2.89 and standard deviation of 0.42 (Homogeneous) which indicates that respondents have common understanding on this statement.

Respondents tend to agree on the statement which says that the product of AZAM Rwanda ltd are well labeled with tend to strong mean of 3.87 and standard deviation of 0.48 (Homogeneous) which indicates that respondents have common understanding on this statement. Respondents disagree on the statement which says that the information designed on their products are understandable with tend weak mean of 2.68 and standard deviation of 0.65 (Heterogeneous) meaning that respondents have different understanding on this statement. The

general overall mean indicates that respondents tend to disagree on the statement of product information with tend to weak mean of 2.68 and have different perceptions on it with a standard deviation of 0.54 (Heterogeneous).

Table 3

Perceptions on customers' buying behaviour

Variables	Mean	SD	Comments
I like to buy the product of AZAM Rwanda ltd because of their brand image is according to my age.	3.95	0.48	Tend to strong/HM
I like to buy the product of AZAM Rwanda ltd because of their product information.	1.67	0.78	Weak/HT
I like their products because they have designed different packing styles for all categories of customers.	2.98	0.48	Tend to weak/HM
I like to shop their products because it is easy for me to carry them.	3.95	0.49	Tend to strong/HM
Overall Mean	3.14	0.56	Tend to strong/HT

Source: Primary data, 2018
(HT: heterogeneous/ HM: Homogeneous)

In table 3, respondents tend to agree on the statement which says that I like to buy the product of AZAM Rwanda ltd because of their brand image is according to my age with tend to strong mean of 3.95 and standard deviation of 0.48 (Homogeneous) which indicates that respondents have shared same perceptions on this statement. Respondents disagree on the statement which says that I like to buy the product of AZAM Rwanda ltd because of their product information with weak mean of 1.67 and standard deviation of 0.78 (Heterogeneous) which indicates that respondents have shared different perceptions.

Respondents tend to disagree on the statement which says that I like their products because they have designed different packaging styles for all categories of customers with tend

to weak mean of 2.98 and standard deviation of 0.48 (Homogeneous) which indicates that respondents shared same perceptions on this statement. Respondents tend to agree on the statement which says that I like to shop their products because it is easy for me to carry them with tend to strong mean of 3.95 and standard deviation of 0.49 (Homogeneous) which indicates that respondents have common understanding on this statement. The general overall mean of 3.14 (tend to strong) indicates that respondents tend to agree on the statement of age status even if they have different perceptions on it.

Hypothesis Verification

For the hypothesis verification, the following table was given to find out the relationship between product packaging_ printed Information and customers' buying behavior.

Table 4

Relationship between variables

Factors		Product Packaging _ Printed Information	Consumer Buying Behaviour
Product packaging _Printed Information	Pearson Correlation	1	0.897^{**}
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.000
	N	85	85
Consumer Buying Behaviour	Pearson Correlation	0.897^{**}	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	
	N	85	85

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Statistically, the correlation coefficient usually ranges between +1 and -1. The correlation when it is 0 shows that there is no relationship between quality service delivery and customer satisfaction. Therefore, when it is +1 indicates a perfect positive relationship whilst when it is -1 indicates perfect negative relationship. The correlation coefficient requires underlying the relationship between two variables. The results in table 4 show that there is a positive high correlation of .897 between product packaging_ printed information and consumer buying

behavior. The null hypothesis which was saying that" There is no significant relationship between general AZAM Ltd product packaging_ printed information and their customers' buying behavior", is rejected and alternative hypothesis is considered, since the p-value equals to 0.000 of significance, therefore it is concluded that there is a strong direct role of product packaging on consumer buying behavior in AZAM Rwanda ltd.

Conclusion

The main purpose of this study was to find out the role of product packaging_ printed information on consumer buying behavior in AZAM Rwanda ltd. After analyzing the data, the research findings revealed that product packaging apart from packaging color, product material, and brand image, depends on product printed information; while on the other side, consumer buying behavior depends on age status, life style and beliefs and attitudes. The obtained results showed that the information on packaging represents an important component and it can support marketing communication strategies of companies, and the same time establishes brand image and identity. Printed information contains all the information related to the product quality, price, and description which help customers identifying the product and facilitating the decision process during purchasing. The obtained results also show the language used on the package influences consumer behavior during the buying process. Bringing innovation in the packaging design also increases the value of the product in the consumer mind. From the empirical findings, both practicality and innovative packaging are important during the buying process since they give value to the product. The obtained results found out again that even though all the packaging elements are very important during the buying process, but specifically, the printed information facilitate a lot the decision process and seems to be the most important on product selection during buying process.

Recommendations

Considering the mentioned findings and their interpretation, AZAM Rwanda should consider much printed information while packaging. All the marketers of AZAM RWANDA must pay attention for good packaging, since poor packaging causes the failure of their product. They should contextualize their printed information to not only the language of their targeted customers, but also to their culture. As found, AZAM Rwanda customers declared that they don't get well the meaning of their printed information and this was supported by a weak mean of 1.96. Their printed information should be written into languages spoken by targeted customers. Similar recommendations are given to even other companies doing the same businesses, since the same weaknesses may be general to most of the companies.

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Appendices

1. Impact of not understanding the product packaging_ Printed Information (people were proud to wear those T-shirts without knowing the meaning of what was written on them).
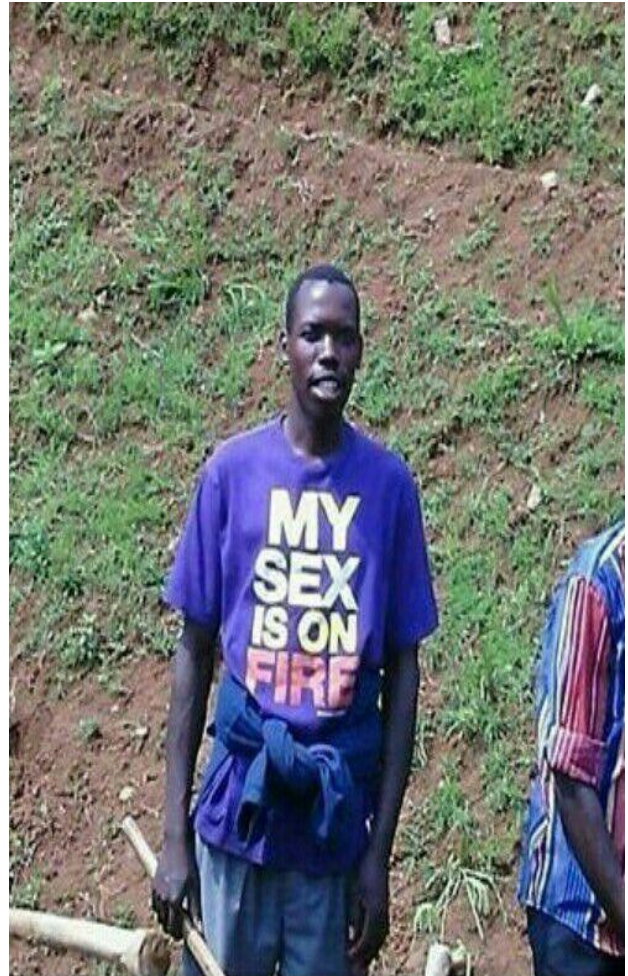
2. AZAM Products sold in Rwanda where more than the half of their target customers speak only Kinyarwanda.