

Consumers' attitude towards look-alike packaging in Bangladesh- A study on Energy Plus Biscuit Vs Mr. Energy

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ABSTRACT: *Look-alike packaging is becoming one of the most serious issues at the present situation in the FMCG sector of the whole world as well as in Bangladeshi regional brands. Consumers are misled because of look-alikes packaging when they purchase impulsive product. A study has undertaken to find out the consumers attitude towards the look-alike packaging between Energy Plus Biscuit Vs Mr. Energy. The study is based on a convenient sampling technique, a sample size of 127 respondents both male and female of different age groups and occupations. The statistical tool has been applied for data analysis.*

KEYWORDS: *Look-alike packaging, Consumers attitude, Purchase behavior, Energy Plus Vs Mr. Energy.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Look-alike, Parasitic, Copycat or Similar packaging whatever we say is the most common phenomenon in the Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) sector. The role of Packaging in consumers purchase decision plays vital factor. In the competitive consumers market, packaging is one of the most important factors for the impulsive consumers buying decision process. Packaging works as a tool of differentiation among the similar product range stimulates consumers buying behavior. In the consumers market the worldwide the manufactures are facing the same scenario. Only packaging can not be a differentiation tool to attract the customers' attention. Parasitic or copycat manufactures easily copying the original producers packaging design, use the mostly similar brand name and use the same color of the original manufacturers brand to mislead the consumers. This issue is vastly impact on the consumers and manufacturers. There are numerous research have undertaken regarding this issue. One of the common findings is that the copycat manufacturers mainly use the same packaging to boost their sales by confusing and misleading the consumers. British Brand Groups undertaken a study on look-alikes or similar packaging (2009), the key findings of consumer research are 64% agree that similar packaging can be confusing, 38% agree they have been confused or misled, 33% admit to having bought the wrong product, a positive correlation between the similar packaging and belief that the product come from the same source.

In Bangladesh, we are facing the same situation when we go our nearby shop to purchase impulsive products. As a study has conducted using the convenient sampling technique with a structured questionnaire survey to find out consumers attitude towards the look-alike packaging between Energy Plus Biscuit Vs Mr. Energy. Every age groups more or less purchase biscuits to fulfill their short time appetite. Energy biscuit is one of the generic biscuit brand in our country. But in the market we have found so many biscuit brand which have more similarity as packaging and same brand name like Energy Plus, Mr. Energy, Pran Energy Biscuit, Fu Wang Energy Plus Biscuit and others (Olympicbd.com website) . A study has undertaken to find out regarding the look-alike packaging between two biscuit brands Energy Plus Biscuit and Mr. Energy how the consumers show their attitude towards purchasing behavior. Energy Plus Biscuit was first launched by Olympic Industries Limited in 1996 and Mr. Energy was introduced by Haque Group. (haquegroup.com). The packaging design, color, similarity of the brand name are too much misleading to purchase desirable brand rather than another among the consumers.

1.1. Objectives of the study

The main objective of the study to understand the consumers attitude towards the buying behavior of look-alike packaging between Energy Plus Biscuit and Mr. Energy.

The specific objectives are included as-

- ✓ To identify the more persuasive factor to mislead them to purchase the copy brand.
- ✓ To assess whether the look-alike packaging is likely affecting the consumers buying behavior.

1.1. Limitations of the study

Like every study the limitations of this study is not out of questions. The following points are figured out as the limitations of this study-

- ✓ The most important limitation of this study is the time constraint to complete the study properly.
- ✓ The behavioral process has made this study more complex.
- ✓ The limited resources have constrained to get proper information.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) sector is too much competitive and lucrative in today's business world. Consumers market is booming rapidly than the previous decades of business era. The competition among the competitors of consumers' products are turning into a war like as Price War, Packaging War, Quality War and others so on. One of the present phenomenon is the "Look-alike packaging" or somewhat we can say as Similar Packaging or Copycat Packaging. Consumers are somehow more or less confused because of look-alike packaging. When consumers notice a brand on the shelf of the super shop or anywhere they first interact with the packaging of the products. The colorful packaging is so much lucrative to grape the customers' attention.

Packaging and packaging design have become significant factors in the marketing of diverse "consumer goods" and have a main role in communicating product benefits to the customer. Czinkota & Ronkainen (2007) deem that product packaging is connected to other variables in the marketing mix (Rundh 2009, p. 988). The more the packaging is lucrative the buyers are more attracted to purchase the product and that is the main reason the competitors are trying to mislead the buyers to purchase their products. As a result the copy brands are getting benefited through using same packaging color, packaging design, font, size and others so on. These are the main points for the availability of look-alike packaging in the consumers market.

In Bangladesh, the national brands of too many consumers' goods have the most similarity of packaging. For this reason, the customers some- times misinterpret their desirable purchasing brands and unconsciously purchase the copy brands of the similar products. The history of look-alike is just one of the potential areas to conflict in the FMCG sector among the manufactures of original brand and copy-brand. Not only in our national manufactures are facing the look-alike packaging issue but also the issue of look-alike is one that has been the policy and business agenda for at least the two decades.

More recently, the issue of look-alike is the most prominent business agenda of the European Union (EU) both in context of so called "Free Riding" in relation to trade mark law, and with respect to possible unfair commercial business practices. The UK's Intellectual Property Office (IPO) commissioned the Intellectual Property Institute to study the problem, with its report published in 2013. This summarized existing research and undertook its own research, confirming that consumers buy products in similar packaging by mistake and in large numbers and that the similar packaging provokes assumptions about the origin and quality of products that may be incorrect, prompting transactional decisions that would not otherwise be made. It is therefore the most important and timely issue to undertake a study on look-alikes effect on consumers and business.

Stewart (2004) has found that Consumer preferences and consumer buying behavior are the major issues that should be taken into account when designing a new package. In spite of factors such as new technology or material development, consumer's choices and desires are the important elements that drive the marketing process. Consumers are the key actors in planning and implementing packages. Hereby, the key issue for packaging design is to understand the consumer. Howard, Kerin, & Gengler, (2000) and Warlop & Alba (2004) found that The basic belief is that the more similar the lookalikes are to national brands, then the stronger the likelihood of brand confusion and the stronger the positive evaluation that consumers would rate the lookalikes, in turn causing greater damage toward original brands.

Van Horen & Pieters (2012) also suggests that compared to blatant and highly similar lookalikes, subtler and moderately similar lookalikes can be more easily accepted by consumers.

There have been numerous consumer surveys on the issue of similar packaging for fast-moving consumer goods. These studies demonstrate a high level of consumers making mistaken purchases. The reasons for these mistakes include similar packaging such as cues of color, shape and size. Additionally shelf position is reported as a factor.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Basically to conduct any kind of study two types of research should be conducted. To figure out the basic insights into and comprehension of situation here exploratory research has conducted to acquire a deeper and hence more useful understanding regarding “Consumers’ attitude towards look-alike packaging in Bangladesh- A study on Energy Plus Biscuit Vs Mr. Energy”. After conducting the exploratory research, descriptive research has been applied to find out “what exists” with respect in the present situation regarding this issue has described to use the collected information. To analyze this issue, both primary and secondary information have been collected. Primary data has been collected through individuals as a structured questionnaire survey. Dichotomous and closed ended questions have been used to figure out the respondents attitude and Likert 5 measurement scale has also been used from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Secondary data has been collected from different publication materials including international papers, websites, books and others so on. Non-probability sampling technique as convenient sample has been used. 200 respondents are selected as total population of this study. The study is based on sample size of 127 collected randomly people of both gender of several age groups and occupation. Male and female respondents were 87 (69%) and 40 (31%) correspondingly. The composition of the 127 respondents have shown in the following table:

Age	15-20	(%)	20-25	(%)	25-30	(%)	30-35	(%)	Above 35	(%)	Total
Respondent	9	7	98	77	6	5	4	3	10	8	100%
Occupation	Student		Service-holder		Housewife		Businessman		Other		Total
Respondent	104	(%)	14	(%)	8	(%)	1	(%)	0	(%)	100%
		82		11		6		1		-	

Table 1:Age and Occupation composition of respondent

IV. DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

Our study is mainly based on “Consumers’ attitude towards the look-alike packaging in Bangladesh- A study on Energy Plus Biscuit Vs Mr. Energy”. To conduct this study both male and female respondents have considered among several age groups and they are from different occupations. The statistical tool has been applied for data analysis. The first question of this survey was to find out the awareness level of look-alike packaging. Here 80% (101 respondents) agreed that they are aware of look-alike packaging and 20% (26 respondents) answered that they have no idea regarding the look-alike packaging issue.

“Did you accidentally purchase Mr. Energy rather than Energy Plus Biscuit?” was the second question to the respondents.

Question	Never purchased	accidentally	Once time purchased	2-4 times purchased	More than 5 times
Accidentally purchase Mr. Energy rather than Energy Plus Biscuit	58%		23%	9%	9%

Table 2: Consumers purchasing behavior towards Mr. Energy rather than Energy Plus Biscuit

From the Table 2, we have noticed 58 % (74 respondents) agreed they didn’t accidentally purchase, 23% respond that they purchased once accidentally, 9% agreed they purchased 2-4 times and 9% respond that they accidentally purchased more than 5 times Mr. Energy rather than Energy Plus Biscuit.

Packaging color between these two biscuit brands is one of the common issue to mislead and buying another brand. 46 % respondents (58 respondents) strongly agree & 31% respondents somewhat agree that color of these two brands’ packaging is misleading and they have the confusion about this.

“Do you agree the two brands are the same manufacturer’s brands?” was another question towards the respondents. 62% respondents (79 respondents) strongly disagree regarding this issue. The summary of the whole discussion has given below on Table 3.

Questions	Strongly disagree		Somewhat disagree		Neither agree nor disagree		Somewhat agree		Strongly agree	
	R.d	(%)	R.d	(%)	R.d	(%)	R.d	(%)	R.d	(%)
The same color of these two brands’ packaging is misleading to purchase another brand?	12	9	8	6	9	7	40	31	58	46
The two brands are the same manufacturer?	79	62	12	9	13	10	17	13	6	5

Table 3: Consumers perceptions towards the same color and the manufacturer's brands

One of the most important questions to our respondents was "Which factor is more persuasive to mislead you to purchase the copy brand?" The summary of this issue has given below on Table 4.

Persuasive Factors	Color	Brand name	Packaging design	Font	Labeling	Total
Respondents	25	30	64	3	5	127
Percentage (%)	20	24	50	2	4	100

Table 4: The more persuasive factor of misleading to purchase the copy brand.

From this summary of this table we can easily say that among these five persuasive factors 50% of the respondents (64 respondents) respond that packaging design is the most persuasive factor to mislead them on buying behavior between these two biscuit brands.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

From the data analysis part, we can say that look-alikes packaging is becoming a concern issue to us. Consumers are more or less aware about look-alikes packaging but accidentally they purchase the wrong products rather than their desirable products. This incident is more common for impulse purchasing. Some areas must be thinking to avoid the look-alikes packaging conflict as,

- Manufacturers should differentiate their color of packaging, packaging design and avoid the similarities of the brand name that the consumers can differentiate the product.
- To get rid of look-alikes packaging consumers awareness regarding this issue should be increased. Promotional activities can play vital role to increase awareness level of consumers. When marketers promote their products they should point out that they introduce their new packaging or different color is used to differentiate from other manufacturers. Though biscuit is impulsive product consumers most of the time do not show their concern about the mother's company of the product. The most of the consumers are not aware of it. If they want to purchase their desirable product they should clarify the exact name of the brand. It may be one way to reduce the conflict of look-alike packaging.

Packaging is the most important part of consumers' goods. But look-alike packaging is more confusing in some extent to the consumers when they plan to purchase their desirable brands. Sometimes they purchase their desirable products based on their previous purchasing behavior or the color, brand name, packaging design are the basic clues to purchase the impulsive buying behavior. In Bangladesh, we have noticed the national brands or local brands are facing the look-alike packaging conflict. Regarding the two brands of biscuit Energy Plus and Mr., Energy the similarity of color, packaging design and sometimes the brand name are so much persuasive to mislead them. They are agreed this issue is becoming more confusing than ever. The packaging should be different than another as every impulse product for the betterment of companies, attain the consumers' attention and make a strong customers base.

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