

CONSUMER PERCEPTION TOWARDS THE PLASTIC PACKAGING IN FAST MOVING CONSUMER GOODS MARKET IN KURUNEGALA MUNICIPAL COUNCIL AREA

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ABSTRACT

The fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) industry relies extensively on plastic packaging to enhance convenience and product protection, particularly in urban areas such as Kurunegala Municipal Council Area. Although plastic packaging provides functional benefits, its non-biodegradable nature raises critical environmental concerns. Increasing environmental awareness among consumers makes it essential to understand their perception of plastic packaging and its impact. This study addresses the gap between widespread plastic packaging usage and the rising environmental consciousness in the FMCG market. This study aimed to examine consumer perceptions of plastic packaging in terms of functionality, environmental impact, and sustainability, focusing on how packaging form, color, and material alignment influence these perceptions. Using a mixed-method approach, a pilot study with 20 participants refined the research tools, followed by data collection from 156 respondents within the Kurunegala Municipal Council Area. A convenience sampling technique was used to select participants across 13 wards, and structured questionnaires were used to gather quantitative data on consumer attitudes. Reliability and validity tests ensured the robustness of the data. Key findings reveal that, while plastic packaging is universally used, only 45% of respondents express environmental concerns, 65% regularly purchase fast food in plastic packaging, and 40% are satisfied with current packaging practices. These findings indicate the need for sustainable packaging innovations and targeted consumer education regarding environmental impact. The study suggests that harmonizing packaging form, color, and material with consumer expectations could promote sustainable consumption within the FMCG sector. These findings underscore the significant role of packaging attributes in shaping consumer perceptions of functionality, environmental responsibility, and sustainability. Insights from this study can inform FMCG companies and policymakers in developing packaging strategies aligned with consumer demands for eco-friendly practices.

Keywords: Consumer perception, environmental impact, plastic packaging, packaging design, sustainability