



Research Paper

Unethical Packaging Practice and Its Effect on Consumer Perception, a Case Study of Packaged Foods and Beverages

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ABSTRACT

The main purpose of the study has been to investigate the relationship between and effect of unethical packaging practices on consumers' perception towards packaged food and beverage products. A quantitative research design was applied with 700 sample size. The data was analyzed using Pearson correlation and SEM having 558 valid data collected from packaged food and beverage consumers in Ethiopia with special focus on Addis Ababa, Adama and Hawassa cities. The finding reveals that unethical packaging practices and consumers perception are significantly correlated each other with Pearson value $-.435^{**}$ at $P < 0.001$. It means that the unethical packaging practice has a significant negative relationship with perception of consumers. The study also identified that consumer's perception towards packaged foods and beverages significantly influenced by the unethical packaging practices. The value obtained from the finding is $(\beta = -.467)$ at $p < .001$. It means that an increase in unethical packaging practice will cause 47 % of decrease in consumers' perception towards packaged foods and beverages. This is quite large extent of impact which exert from the unethical packaging practice on the consumers' perception. Hence, firms should have to recognize this scenario and need to done carefully and ethically to safeguard and get trust from the consumers side. The results of the study significantly important for producers most especially for packaged food and beverage producers for their production and marketing strategies.

KEYWORDS: unethical packaging practice, consumers' perception, packaged foods and beverages, consumer protection

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I. INTRODUCTION

Packaging is a marketing activity that help product in making conducive for transportation and preserving it for long period of time. Package is just a wrapping of goods that used to prolong the quality and safety of goods. Packaging is the container which has a direct contact with product, it holds, preserves, protects, and identifies the product. In addition to this, packaging helps to facilitate handling and commercialization (Arun Kumar et al., 2012). This makes the importance of packaging more than just wrapping a product. In this consumer-oriented marketing approach, packaging has gained unique importance providing advertisement role expressing the identity of a product beyond just wrapping it. The role of information provision and persuasion of packaging helps manufacturers or distributors as sales tool to attract the attention of consumers, define the product and helps buyers to make the sale. According to Arun Kumar et al. (2012), packaging is recognized as an integral part of modern marketing operation, which involved in all phases of activities from the transfer of goods and services from the manufacturer to the consumer. Hence, the more ethically a product is packed the more it can create good feeling in the mind of consumer, which means it can, effectively contributing in brand building. Its influence of attracting the attention of consumer can be determined by the creativity and attention given to the design of the package. The more a package well designed the greater and effectively will advertise the product being packed and the brand in the shelf. Most importantly, in the supermarket and hypermarket where products

properly displayed and buyers self-administered, the impact of packaging in stimulating buyer to make even unplanned purchase decision is high.

Packaging is basically designed to provide protection and convenience in the course of transportation and storage of a product however, companies' interest changed towards using it as a marketing and promotion tool. Then after advertising agents are engaged much on packaging and make packaging featured as a campaign theme. So now days, package of a goods is used as a means for carrying company's name, the trademark, the brand name, apart from the information it provides about the ingredients and direct advantages of product use. This makes Package a multipurpose object which identifies products, their quantity, shelf life, constituents, mode of use and nutritional value.

From the consumers' point of view, the role and contribution of packaging is crucial. Most especially, in this self-serving selling system, packaging play great role in guiding, informing and creating convenience. Here, Sonsino's (1990, as referred by Olga A. & Natalia V., 2006) quoted that the system of self-service marketing shifted the role of guiding consumers by sales assistance to advertising and then to packaging. Hence, now days it contribute a lot in helping consumers to be free from sales persons assistance and confusion.

As S.A. Sherlekar explained in his book of marketing management, packaging is just a marketing necessity. When consumer pays for a product he/she does not want only a product. Attached with the product they want explanation, assurance, encouragement, confidence and convenience. Hence in fully delivering what the buyers require, the role of packaging is indispensable. As a result of this, there is no reservation of applying packaging most especially in foods and beverages. The most important thing here is how to make it attractive and ecofriendly. According to Green marketing laws, the marketer should give due emphasis to environmentally friendly products, packaging materials, and its effect on solid waste management. Most of the European countries have strong green marketing practice and tough green marketing law.

Even though packaging is not related directly to the ingredients of the product in the container, it presented & considered as part of the purchasing & consuming process (Underwood R., 2003). Moreover, he acknowledges that packaging is one of the strategic decisions of marketing mix as well as contributes to positioning decision. The more attractive the packaging is the more shelf space that product get from the retailers store and also getting more visiting consumers. Packaging can act as one tools of creating differentiation. Differentiation is one of the marketing strategies that help winning competition. So in ensuring the product differentiation well designed packaging role is crucial. Packaging is designed in making the product convenient to use and help to differentiate one brand's product from the competitors brands.

According to the book written by Shimp T. (2007) ethical issue in packaging evolve around four aspects. These main aspects are the first one is label information, the second packaging graphics, packaging safety the third, and the fourth one is environmental implications of packaging. Label is information that tagged on the package. The information is about the product ingredients, production date, expire date, the particular producer, weight and size of the product being packed. This information should indicate the exact details about the product. When it deviate from this, label loses its main purpose and ethical issue cloud arise. For example when information about a product exaggerated or unethically suggested that a product holds more of desired nutrition and less of undesired attributes (like trans-fat), the practice is considered as unethical because it mislead or deceive consumers.

Packaging graphics is a picture or graphs designed on the package. The trade mark and pictures that used as differentiating one brand's product from the other and helps to explain about the product. When it fail truly representing product content (misrepresenting the quality and quantity of the product than it actually is) it considered as unethical practice.

Safety is important thing in packed foods. The material in which package is made determine how safely the goods preserved and transported. Package of a particular good should have to made from proper and good packaging material considering the nature of the product going to packed. Most of the time companies with the intention of cost minimization they might choose low-grade packaging material, which is unethical packaging, practice. When goods packed in substandard package it loose its quality within short period of time and it is considered here also unethical packaging practice.

Environmental pollution and issues related with environment is the crucial issue of the time. Now days, cities all over the world suffering with carelessly removed packages of packed products. Moreover, oceans and rivers are suffering with carelessly thrown used package. In order to avoid plastic package which is not easily decomposed from the market, social activists, environmentalists and governments should advocate environment friendly package. As a result, in countries like India, Rwanda, Kenya, Ethiopia the government enact law which ban usage of plastic package and bag. However, its implementation is not satisfactory. Hence, the company that use packaging which is not environmentally friendly consider as unlawful and unethical packaging practices. Moreover, companies that advertises as if it contributes to the environment but not practically applying it also misleading consumers so it is unethical practice.

1.1 Unethical packaging practices

Unethical packaging is a deliberate practice of using poor packaging which can directly affect the health & safety of the final consumer. Moreover, the size & shape of packaging sometimes observed deceiving or confusing consumers about the exact amount & quality of the product within that package. Producers increasing the size of package while decreasing content of a product. It is totally unethical when the amount of a product in the package is not consistent with what is stated on it.

It is important and an expected benefit of packaging having uniqueness & convenience utility to get competitive advantage however when it inclined giving more attention to the package than the quality of a product being packed, it considered unethical practice. According to Margaretha L. et al. (2012), misleading packaging considered as packaging of a product that deliberately designed to deceive purchaser to thinking as the product inside the packet is better in quality and quantity than the real product. Unethical packaging is a packaging which intentionally designed to cheat or confuse buyers to get him/her makes purchase decision.

The unethical practices in packaging remain common problem in Europe where the business and consumers are civilized as well (Margaretha L. et al., 2012). If this situation is happening in developed communities, imagine its impact in developing world like Ethiopia where the consumers' awareness and government regulation over these practices are loose and not as expected.

As explain above different studies have identified different unethical packaging practices. Considering it and the socio-cultural values of Ethiopia, the researchers identified the following unethical packaging practices. Hence, the research is revolve around whether the producers deliberately practicing them or not and how consumers perceive when they come across this situation.

i. Using substandard packaging material

The main function of package is to wrap goods not to easily deteriorate or in order to prolong the shelf life of a product. Hence, the material from which the package is made matter in effectively meeting its objective. According to the type and nature of the product the type of the package should have to be determined. There are different types of packaging material like; paper, can, aluminum sheath, soft plastic, hard plastic and so on. Now days the application of packaging is almost unlimited to specific products this means it is difficult to get goods sold unpacked. The problem is not with the packaging in reverses it is the most important marketing innovation. It is good and attractive when the good are delivered rapped by container or package that can grantee keeping the quality of a product.

ii. Downsizing packaging with the intention of making invisible price increment

Downsizing packaging practices might be done in more careful so that consumers cannot easily recognize manner. The ultimate objective of minimizing the size of the package is in order to minimize the content of the goods packed. However, downsizing becomes unethical practice when the firm minimizing the package size and ultimately the content of the product without minimizing the selling price. This is considering unethical because the firm is cheating buyers by selling deducted amount of product with unfair price. Just by modifying the design and volume of the package the firm can cheat buyers pretending as if no amount change is happened. Here, the main trick is to impose price increases which are supposed to remain unnoticed.

iii. Over sizing packaging with the intention of misleading buyer regarding content or weight of the product

We have discussed above that the downsizing is a cheating practice however consumers are not only misleading by downsizing packaging but also by tactic fully oversized packaging. The action is consider unethical if the intention of modification or over sizing is just to increase the price of the product. Over sizing packaging is unethical when the firm is pretending the content of the packed product is increased just only increasing the package of a product without changing really the content of the product.

Margaretha L. et al. (2012) indicated examples of over sizing packaging practices in the book entitled with "Misleading packaging practices". These are: empty space in the packaging which is Non-functional, Lifted up the bottoms, Big caps, Doubled wall thickness and Relatively too big covering box; without any function just with the intention of misleading consumers mind to resembles the product is big in size.

iv. Using package which can harm the environment

Environmental issue is another claim that can raised against packaging. As a result of packaging consumers are entertaining safe and quality products where ever it produced. The demands for packed foods are increasing over time as the living condition and working time of people are changing.

v. Exaggerated packaging graphics

Packaging graphics is a part of informing buyers about the product in the package. It can depict the figurative explanation, product usage, any treatment needed associated with the product, the brand name of the company,

any picture that can attract the attention of the target consumers. Showing about the product pictorially or about how to use the product figuratively has no evil connotation. However, when the firm uses figures and pictures exaggerating more than what really the product is it become the practice of deceiving consumers and considered unethical packaging practice.

vi. Over investing on modifying the design of a package

Most of the time companies used package modification as one promotional program. It is also important making the package simple, convenient, environmental friendly and attractive. However, the more frequently changing the design of a package exposes company for extra cost. This cost directly imposed on the consumers or buyers by increasing the price of the product without any change on the quality of the product. Hence, it is unethical practice exploiting buyers forcing them to pay extra for extra modification on the package. It is an extra payment requested from buyers for the cost company incur for promotional program to attract consumers.

vii. Developing a design of package easily attracting the attention of children

As elaborated above, it is important making packaging as well as product as good as attracting consumers. However, when the packaging designed with the intention to catch the attention of children and vulnerable part of the society it become unfair and unaccepted practice. Because these part of the community are those who can't understood the nature and objectives of promotion and marketing and which can easily cheated.

1.3. Consumer perception

Perception is the way we look things, the way we interpreting, giving meaning to the situation or action we have observe, hear/listen, touch through our sense organ. It is the feeling we develop after experiencing the situation. Our sense organ constantly feed our brain with information collecting from the environment. The information is filtered and sorted based on the merit of particular situations to the individual while ignoring other situation that has not get due emphasis by him; unless and otherwise the information seriously overloading the individual. Yakup D. and Ibrahim D. (2011) suggested that perception is not only just observing and collecting information about a certain events but also recognizing stimuli, processing and storing them. Therefore, whether perceiving good or bad could depend on the information we gather through our sense organ and how we interpret it based on the experience we have associated with that object.

It is a very complex process to know about human psyche, which can influenced by so many factors like economic, emotional, social and cultural factors (Clark R. & Goldsmith R., 2006). This complexity process makes the research conducted to understand the concept of consumer perception difficult. Even though studying consumer perception or consumer behavior is so difficult, it is one of the main duties of marketing activity of the organization. Unless and otherwise it unable to understand the interest of its consumers, and also to satisfy their needs. Consumers should have to be well recognized and should have to be given proper attention to be successful in the business; because consumers are the main reason behind the establishment of any business organization. The success and failure of a business can determine by the capacity of understanding and holding the consumer perception. What a business organization produced is destined in the hand of consumers; if the receiver refuse to accept that particular product it become the great loss for that business. Kaufman-Scarborough (1998), supported this ideas; the success and failure of a product acceptance by the consumers directly related to the human psyche and their preference. Before consumers attain to the level of making purchase decision and even before giving attention to a particular brand's product, they should have to perceive it good and comfortable. Hence, knowing consumer perception play a vital role for attracting, satisfying or reducing dissatisfied consumer.

Understanding about their target customers (human psychology) in general and consumer perception in particular helps marketer/ firms not only to hold and attract new consumers but also engage in the innovative product. Whatever the quality level product we produce or whatever innovative/ new product it is, unless it considers the psychological readiness/ perceptions of consumers' it could be nothing and the result disappointed the marketer. Scholars like Sheth and Parvatiyar (1995) believe that the knowledge and understanding regarding consumer behavior and perception developed by the marketer helps in strengthen the relationship between business and consumers. Hence, it is a must to study and understood for marketers about the consumers' perceiving the brand, product and competitors' product. The perceptions of consumers play a great role in determining their purchasing behaviors thus marketers need to understand well the costumers' perception (Yakup D. and Ibrahim D., 2011).

Consumer perception and the buying process can be influenced by so many factors like culture, values, society, family, thinking, feelings, personality, attitude,...etc. Even though, the degree of influential pressure of the factors varies from individual to individual, it can shape greatly the behavior of the individuals.

1.4. Factors affecting perceptions of consumer

A motivated person is a person who is ready to take action. However, the individual perception towards a situation influence how that motivated individual actually acts. Perception is a process which involves selecting, organizing, and interpreting information inputs by individual to create a meaningful picture of what he/she observing.

So many research findings portraying that various factors can affect the perception of consumers. These are broadly categorized in to internal and external factors (Mourali et al., 2005). The internal factors are based on the psychological awareness and status of consumers' lifestyle, personality, attitude, affordability, knowledge, experience, etc... Moreover, the social factors like culture, social status, norms, values, family, friends, reference group, etc...

Whereas the external factors of consumer perception involves social and physical factors. Mourali et al. (2005) identified the physical factors as economic, demographic, political elements, changes in technology and globalization. The economic factor is one of the determinant factor that can affect how consumers perceive things (product or brand). When consumers are indifferent economic level their buying pattern and perception are quite different. Consumer in high income/economic level can undermine low branded product, low quality product, may give due emphasis for the treatment he get from the service provider and pay tips in response. While consumer in low economic level may not consider about the quality, ethicality, brand image and the interaction with service provider. The only thing such individual demand is getting low price for a product they going to purchase. Hence, the economic factor has significantly high impact on the customers' preference and also shape the liking and disliking, preference and test of consumers.

Social and cultural factors also another influential factor that can determine and shape how consumers perceive products and brand. Kesic, T. & Piri- Rajh, S.(2003) discussed the social interaction which is the interaction individual has with his family, groups, and social class can greatly affect his/her individual consuming pattern and his perception. It is obvious that parent shape the behavior, attitude and perception of their children in the family hood interaction. As the kid grow up and join school, he/she lifted up to the next behavior-molding group, the peer group. Moreover, the social class also has a significant impact in determining how the member of the social group think, perceive, behave, work, and dress. Economically Poor individual perceive just like how other poor social class member perceives and the rich also thinks like how the upper class thinks.

The pattern of living, standard of behavior, personality, lifestyle, eating habit, values and perception, taste and preferences of an individuals can be build by the culture they grownup or adapted. If the culture determine these personal trait of an individual, so the consumer perception too. Under the cultural factor, language and values of the consumer are also mentioned which can affect the interaction and acceptance of the brand and the product.

1.5. Unethical packaging in food and beverage industry

Food and beverage products are a product, which need to be carefully and ethically produced and carefully delivered to the ultimate consumer. All across the supply chain of the product all the stakeholders should have to be take part ethically as this type of product is a serious product which can directly affect the health status of the ultimate consumer.

Because of unethical practices increasing overtime, consumers are suffering more and more of the product they are consuming. The increase in non-communicable diseases such as the cardio-vascular diseases, certain kinds of cancer, osteoporosis, and hypertension all over the world become burning issue for researchers to discuss on cause of the problem and suggesting solution. These all kinds of diseases are directly or indirectly associated with the food (Legesse et al., 2016). Low and substandard quality product overwhelmed the market. Irresponsible unethical marketers are confusing consumers their unethical advertisement. Particularly packaged foods and beverages are what cannot see and test or try before making purchase. So it needs trust of consumers on that particular brand to purchase covered or packed product. When consumers observe any abnormal things on the product or heard about the product, they develop a negative perception and restrict themselves from buying or using that product (Bone & Corey, 2000).

Hypothesis of the study

H0₁: There is no significant relationship between unethical packaging practice and consumer perception.

H0₂: Unethical packaging practices have no significant effect on consumer perception.

II. METHODOLOGY

The study conducted to identify the effect of unethical packaging practice on consumers' perception of packed food and beverage products in selected cities. Relevant data were collected using questionnaires distributed to packaged food and beverage consumers in selected cities namely Addis Ababa, Adama and Hawassa cities. 700 questionnaires were distributed to respondents whereas 558 respondents data were analyzed that completely filled questionnaires. The instrument used for collecting data was just subjective assessment of consumers' view using a five point likert type scale which ranging from strongly disagree (1 point) to strongly agree (5 points).

The study applied a quantitative research approach. A descriptive statistics applied to describe the frequency, and percentage of respondents' demographic profile. An exploratory factor analysis, confirmatory factor analysis and structured equation modeling applied to insure the model and test the hypothesis using SPSS V. 23 and AMOS V. 23.

Table 1. Demographic character of the respondents

Character		Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	259	46.4
	Female	299	53.6
Age	15-25 Years old	266	47.7
	26-35 Years old	217	38.9
	36-45 Years old	70	12.5
	46-55 Years old	5	.9
Educational background	Elementary school graduate	51	9.1
	High school graduate	153	27.4
	College and above graduate	354	63.4
Monthly income	below 2000 birr	179	32.1
	2001-3000 birr	71	12.7
	3001-4000 birr	75	13.4
	above 4000 birr	233	41.8

Source: own survey (2020)

According to table 1, 54 percent of the respondents (299) were female while the rest 46 percent accounted by male respondents. Regarding age intervals of the respondents, 48 percent of the respondents lied under 25 years old, 39 percepts with the age interval of 26-35 years old and 13 percent within the age interval of 36-45. The educational background of the respondents concerned, 9 percent, 27 percent and 63 percent of the respondents were elementary school graduate, high school graduate and college & above graduate respectively. Regarding monthly income of respondents, 32 percent of them earn below 2000 birr, 13 percent of them earn in between 2001- 3000 birr, 13 percent of them earn in between 3001- 4000 birr and 42 percent of them earn above 4000 birr monthly.

2.1. Analysis and discussion

Before directly analyzing the data it was checked through different ways of insuring the validity and reliability of the data as well as the instrument whether it fit for the model or not. Reliability of the data was checked using SPSS V. 23 and the result of the Cronbach's Alpha value for UEPK is 0.893 and for CP is 0.924. Hence, it meet the ideal value or minimum requirement of value of Cronbach's Alpha greater than 0.7. The ideal value for determinant of correlation matrix is 0.0001, which indicate that there is no collinearity problem in between items (Ajay Kumar, 2017). Likewise, the determinant of correlation matrix was 0.001 which mean according to the rule the collinearity issue is insured. The ideal result of KMO is greater than 0.7 to indicate the analysis have sufficient items for each factor. The result of the KMO was 0.934 and the Bartlet's test of Sphersity was 0.000. Hence, according to the rule, enough items were predicted by each factor and the variables are correlated highly enough to provide a reasonable basis for factor analysis. The variables were grouped into two factors and both factors together accounted for 65 percent of the total variance.

2.2. Confirmatory factor analysis

Once the construct was identified and their respective explaining variables, Confirmatory factor analysis was carried out in order to test the degree of variables explaining the related construct. It was conducted using AMOS V. 23 and maximum likelihood method was chosen. A range of indices were used to assess the model fit. According to Ajay Kumar (2017), all of the analysis result indicates good level of fit. Hence, CFI result was 0.987 whereas RMSEA result was 0.041. Moreover, all the model fit indices had the best over fit to the data with chi-square over degree of freedom (CMIN/DF) was 1.923 ($p < 0.001$), goodness of fit index (GFI) was 0.964 and an adjusted goodness of fit index (AGFI) was 0.950.

1.6. Composite reliability and construct validity

Composite reliability of all factors were found a value of 0.926 for the construct unethical packaging practice and 0.924 for construct consumers' perception which exceed the recommended value i.e greater or equal to the level of 0.6 as per Fornell and Larcker (1981), so the internal consistencies for both construct were insured. According to Ajay Kumar (2017) construct validity shows the degree of accuracy by which the construct is correctly measured by its variable. It can be checked by uni-dimensionality, convergent and discriminate validity. Uni-dimensionality shows whether a variable does measure multiple construct or not. It can be checked from comparative fit index (CFI) from the CFA goodness of fit indices. Value CFI was 0.987 which is far greater than 0.8 the indicative result for having strong evidence of uni-dimensionality (Ajay Kumar, 2017).

Hence, the uni-dimensionality is insured. Convergent validity also needs to be check which shows the degree to which items or variables in the construct are related to each other. It measured calculating the composite reliability (CR) and average variance extracted (AVE). According to Ajay Kumar (2017), the condition for convergent validity are $CR > 0.7$, $CR > AVE$ and $AVE > 0.5$. The values of CR obtained for the construct unethical packaging practice was 0.926 and AVE value 0.640 while for the construct consumer perception the CR value was 0.924 and AVE value was 0.636. Hence, the convergent validity issue was insured. Discriminant validity is a type of validity that indicates the degree to which variables in different constructs are different from each other. When AVE greater than 0.5 it insures any variable in one construct does not correlated very high with any other variables in another construct. The values of AVE for both unethical packaging practice and consumer perception were 0.640 and 0.636 respectively and greater than 0.5. In addition to this, the CR values of both constructs were greater than 0.7 as well as the CR value each construct was greater than the respective construct's AVE value. Therefore, the value obtained ensures the presence of discriminant validity among the constructs (unethical packaging practice and consumer perception).

Table 2. Measure of model fitness

Model fit indices		Value
Goodness of fit indices	CFI	0.987
	NFI	0.972
	TLI	0.984
	GFI	0.964
	AGFI	0.950
	X ² /DF	1.923
Badness of fit indices	RMSEA	0.041
	LO 90	0.031
	HI 90	0.051

Source: own analysis, 2020

As shown in table 2, Comparative Fit Index (CFI) obtained 0.99, Normed Fit Index (NFI) was 0.97, Tucker Lewis Index (TLI) was 0.98, Goodness of Fit Index (GFI) obtained 0.96 and Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index (AGFI) was 0.95 and Chi-square divided by Degree of freedom (X²/DF) value was 1.923. Moreover, Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) obtained 0.041, LO 90 was 0.031 and HI 90 value was 0.051. Whereas, the ideal values of indices of the model fitness are: CFI>0.9, NFI>0.9, TLI>0.9 GFI>0.9, AGFI>0.8, X²/DF<5, RMSEA <0.1, LO 90<0.08 and HI 90<1.5 [14]. Hence, it implied that the entire proposed research model fit the data more significantly.

1.7. Hypothesis Testing

In order to test the hypothesis, the measurement model was converted to structural model of AMOS V 23. Once the constructs checked for fitness of goodness of test the value of the construct computed through correlation model to identify the relationship between the variables as well as regression model to identify the effect of the independent variable upon the dependent variable. The result obtained described hereunder.

Table 3. Correlation model result

		CP	UEPK
CP	Pearson Correlation	1	-.435**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	558	558
UEPK	Pearson Correlation	-.435**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	558	558

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

Source: own analysis, 2020

According to the correlation result showed in the above table, the relationship between the dependent variable consumer perception and independent variable unethical packaging practice is -0.435 at 0.001 significant levels. It implies that there is a significant negative relationship between variables (dependent and independent).

To test the second hypothesis, the measurement model was converted to structural equation model using AMOS.

Table 4. the structural model path analysis result

Path	Coefficient (β)	t-value	p-value
UEPK----> CP	-.467	-9.624	.000

Source: own analysis, 2020

Table 4 shows the values of estimated path coefficients (β), associated t-value of the paths and the p-value. The result shows that unethical packaging practices have strong negative effect on the consumers' perception of packaged food and beverages ($\beta = -.467$; $p < .001$). The table ensures that the model is significantly reflected the effect of unethical packaging practice on consumers' perception (dependent variable).

1.8. Discussion of the finding

The study aimed at identifying unethical packaging practices as a factor that can affect the perception of packed food and beverage consumers. The study involves 558 valid questionnaires. To investigate the case 14 factors were identified under two components or constructs. The total variance explained by unethical packaging practice and consumer perception is 65 percent, which implies more than half of the variance is accounted by these two variables. By applying confirmatory factor analysis, the ten factor model had tested and overall results of the indices fit the ideal model fit that indicated by Ajay Kumar (2017). Hence, the outcome obtained from the model is quite insured by all level of tests.

The finding from the correlation analysis witnessed that the unethical packaging practices have strong negative relationship with consumers' perception towards packaged food and beverage; that explained by correlation value of -0.435. This means that there is a negative, strong and significant relationship between unethical packaging practice and consumer perception towards packaged food and beverage. It implies that as the unethical packaging practices by manufacturer increase the perception of consumers towards packaged food and beverage keeps decrease and vice-versa. Therefore, based on this result we reject the null hypothesis (H01) and accept alternate hypothesis which states that there is a significant negative relationship between unethical packaging practice and consumers' perception towards packaged food and beverage.

In order to test the second hypothesis, the structural equation model path analysis was applied.

The data was analyzed using both structural equations modeling in AMOS model. According to the value of regression weight ($\beta = -.467$, $t = -9.624$, $p < .001$) presented in Table 4, the independent variable "unethical packaging practices" significantly and negatively affect the dependent variable "consumer perception towards packaged food and beverage". The figure implies that an increase in unethical packaging practice by manufacturer results a 47% decrease in consumers' perception towards packaged foods and beverage. It is quite high impact which can resulted as a result of deliberately or carelessly practiced packaging process in packaged food and beverage production. It is significant percentage predictability so manufacturer should have to take care of packaging and packaging related practices. Therefore, based on result of the finding we reject the null hypothesis (H02) and accept alternate hypothesis which states that unethical packaging practice have a significant negative effect on consumers' perception towards packaged food and beverage. The output of the finding consistent with findings like Leonidou et al. (2013) in that the increase in unethical marketing practice decrease the perception of consumers.

III. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The value obtained from regression weight of structural equation modeling and linear regression model shows that the consumers' perception is significantly and negatively affected by the unethical packaging practices which intentionally implemented by either producers or retailers of packaged foods and beverages. This indicated that when consumers observe the misleading or mischiefs of producers by oversizing the package, downsizing the package, using substandard package, using the package that affect the environment and other unfair practices, they develop a negative perception towards that particular brand's product.

Most packaged foods and beverage products are applying low quality packaging materials which are non-bio degradable and very unfriendly for the environment. Hence, it is recommended that recycling process should be encouraged by establishing plant which will reduce wastage and prevent degradation of environment.

Concerning the labeling and information attached on it particularly for packaged foods and beverage products where product related information is sensitive, it must be ensured to follow labeling policy and regulations by displaying important information, such as expiry date, weight, ingredients, usage, disposal, etc. More particularly the price should clearly tag on the label for the transparency and not to cheat consumers. For the effectiveness of this, government should have to enforce the law that enacted for the protection of consumers' right (The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, 2013; 2019). The role of government is indispensable in minimizing the problem associated with unethical packaging practice in enforcing the law enacted concerning packaging of goods. According to reports of Margaretha L. et al. (2012), Germany is the only country out of 13 member states where there is a governmental initiative counteracting misleading (packaging) practices. Just like Germany the government of Ethiopia should have to take initiative against unethical packaging practice to save its people and the environment.

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