



Trend Analysis of Eco-Friendly Food Packaging among Street Vendors: A Case Study in Gegerkalong Street, Bandung, Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

This research was conducted to understand the trends in food packaging among street vendors. It utilized a qualitative method involving interviews with 20 street vendors regarding the use of food packaging in marketing their products. The study revealed that street vendors around Gegerkalong Street lack an understanding of the eco-friendly packaging trend in food packaging. This is due to their limited knowledge of eco-friendly packaging trends. Additionally, environmental concerns and the cost of packaging materials are factors influencing why these vendors haven't adopted more eco-friendly packaging. The research aims to equip street vendors with knowledge about the trend of eco-friendly food packaging and to have a positive impact on the environment.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Packaging is a familiar element in the industrial realm, especially in the food industry. Packaging management in the food industry must use the most optimal strategy possible so that it can add high-selling value to the products to be marketed. Packaging strategy has a crucial role in the world of marketing, where attractive packaging can significantly captivate some consumers and encourage them to make transactions (Fianda et al., 2022). The majority of consumers expect product packaging that can protect the product maximally and is environmentally friendly.

Eco-friendly packaging is packaging that is designed and produced with minimal environmental impact in mind, involving the utilization of recycled materials, and the use of other materials that support sustainability (Yaputra et al., 2023). Although this eco-friendly packaging material has many advantages for the environment and health, there are still many street vendors who use non-eco-friendly packaging such as plastic and styrofoam packaging. Although these eco-friendly packaging materials have many benefits for the environment and health, there are still many street vendors who use non-eco-friendly packaging such as plastic and styrofoam packaging. This requires product and packaging development (Nurwulandari, 2023). There are several factors or reasons why street vendors prefer to use plastic and styrofoam packaging compared to more environmentally friendly packaging. Some of the reasons are that plastic packaging is lighter, more durable, not easily damaged, more affordable compared to other packaging, and easily available. Likewise, with Styrofoam, street vendors prefer Styrofoam because this packaging is also lightweight and easy to obtain and makes the product neatly wrapped.

Shodiq et al. (2020) have discussed the implementation of environmental awareness in purchasing packaged food. In this study, it was concluded that in purchasing packaged food, respondents have a fairly high level of awareness or concern for the environment. Respondents or in this case, consumers prefer environmentally friendly packaging compared to packaging that has a significant negative impact on the environment such as plastic and styrofoam. However, many people still consume food in packaging that is not environmentally friendly because there are still many food product producers who use non-environmentally friendly packaging in marketing their products.

Meanwhile, Dwijayanti et al. (2022) discussed environmentally friendly packaging in influencing purchasing decisions. In the results of their research, Dwijayanti et al. (2022) concluded that packaging variables have a significant effect on consumer purchasing decisions. This can also be valid evidence that packaging plays an important role in the food product processing industry. However, in this study, it is not yet known how the solution for producers who have not implemented environmentally friendly packaging is to change it to environmentally friendly packaging by considering all aspects.

With the shortcomings in previous studies, the purpose of this research is to analyze the packaging trends used and educate street vendors. The research method used was a qualitative method with data collection through interviews with 20 street vendors. Topics taught include eco-friendly packaging and the impacts of the packaging used on products and the environment. The research aims to equip street vendors with knowledge about the trend of eco-friendly food packaging and to have a positive impact on the environment.

2. METHODS

Trend analysis of eco-friendly food packaging has become a major concern in the food and beverage industry (Nugrahani, 2015). The trend of eco-friendly food packaging is also now

increasingly popular among the public, especially among street vendors, because it involves understanding changes in consumer behavior, government regulations, technological innovations, and increasing awareness of environmental and sustainability issues in the food industry. To prove this statement, research was conducted in the form of a case study on the analysis of eco-friendly food packaging trends in street vendors regarding changes in packaging design and strategy around Gegerkalong Street, Bandung.

This research uses a qualitative method with data collection through observation and interviews with 20 street vendors on the topic of the use of food packaging in marketing their products. Observation activities were carried out by direct observation of the conditions of the street vendors' business premises, observing the sales process, as well as comprehensive observations to obtain the information needed. Interviews were conducted directly with street vendors, with question instruments that had been prepared in advance to obtain the information needed, for example, to find out what products are sold, the packaging used to package food or beverage products, how long the packaging is used, whether or not they have changed the type of packaging during the sales process, and understanding of eco-friendly food packaging. Traders who have a minimal understanding of eco-friendly food packaging, are given education about the importance of using eco-friendly to support a sustainable approach in the food industry (Gunawan & Ferdhian, 2020).

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Merchant Use of Packaging

Street vendors utilize packaging as one of the tools to attract consumers. The function of packaging is not only to protect the product from external contamination but also to provide a visual effect that attracts buyers. In addition to contributing to product protection, packaging also has a role in determining consumer purchasing decisions and serves as the identity of a business entity. The packaging usually contains product information to facilitate buyers in buying something. Food safety assurance, including safe packaging, and ease of ordering process at street vendors are part of physical processes and information processes within the framework of The Flower of Service.

From the results of interviews that have been conducted, as many as 15 out of 20 traders on Gegerkalong Street Bandung use plastic or styrofoam packaging to package their food products because the price is more affordable. In addition to the affordable price, according to the traders, plastic packaging seems more practical and simpler compared to paper packaging. Plastic packaging is an easily available and flexible material. Merchants tend not to pay attention to the sustainable environmental and health impacts of using plastic packaging because they are more concerned with costs. Health problems such as the endocrine system and reproductive system can occur because the content of harmful substances in styrofoam enters the food (Gunadi *et al.*, 2020).

As many as 5 other traders choose paper-based packaging to package their products for various reasons, one of which is product branding such as fried banana products and pure milk, both products provide attractive and distinctive designs on the packaging which are the main attraction in attracting consumer buying interest. Packaging design affects brand image, the more attractive the packaging design, the more the brand image increases. In addition to product branding, paper packaging is also more environmentally friendly because paper packaging can decompose easily.

3.2. Understanding Eco-friendly Packaging

An understanding of eco-friendly packaging is essential for merchants (Suryani et al., 2023). Eco-friendly products provide many benefits, especially in the context of the environment. It is a better alternative to using styrofoam packaging which is commonly used by merchants. Styrofoam packaging tends to be toxic when exposed to hot temperatures, difficult to decompose, and has the potential to cause negative impacts on the environment. On the other hand, eco-friendly packaging is not only resistant to heat but also maintains the authenticity of food flavors, and provides safety for consumers (Yunita, 2020).

The results of interviews with 20 traders regarding the trend of eco-friendly packaging are still lacking, the traders still do not care about packaging trends, and some traders feel that the price of eco-friendly packaging such as cardboard boxes or paper cups is quite expensive, so traders choose to use plastic packaging at a more affordable price. Of the 20 merchants, there are only 5 merchants who have used eco-friendly packaging such as cardboard boxes, and paper cups for drinks.

The use of eco-friendly packaging in beverage traders is very lacking, most traders still use plastic cups because of the affordable price. Price is very influential on the choice of packaging used by traders (Santoso et al., 2018). After being given an understanding of the advantages of eco-friendly packaging the trader still chooses plastic cup packaging. "If the packaging is changed, the price will go up and the buyers will protest if the price goes up," said one of the merchants who wanted to replace the packaging with more environmentally friendly packaging.

Buyers are one of the reasons traders choose packaging, changing the packaging sold greatly affects the profits of the traders. The role of packaging is very significant in influencing purchasing decisions because often packaging that functions as a protector can also attract the attention of buyers. Packaging is a factor that steals attention from consumers when they are in the buying process. Dwijayanti et al. (2022), one of the traders revealed "Actually I don't want to change the packaging, it's just that the unit price of the packaging I used before doubled so I replaced it with plastic packaging, after that many buyers protested that the packaging was changed so there was a decline in sales" said one of the traders who had used cardboard box packaging and then replaced it with mica plastic packaging.

Providing a brief education about eco-friendly packaging to traders, opened the traders' views on safer and environmentally friendly packaging, and some traders plan to change the packaging. Providing education can change the way a person view something (Iryani & Suriatie, 2021). Providing an understanding of eco-friendly packaging is important because it can change the views of business actors to use packaging that is more environmentally friendly. Environmental communication is a form of communication that actively supports policies and plans, and implements strategies using media that involve community participation (Simbolon & Khairifa, 2018). In addition, this communication also seeks to harmonize the messages conveyed with the principles of environmental sustainability, especially in the context of implementing certain projects.

The merchant's point of view needs to be considered regarding the use of current food packaging, and education of merchants needs to be carried out for sustainable development, this is following research (Christiana et al., 2023). The concept of green marketing emerged as a response to concerns about the problem of environmental damage and was later adopted by businesses as one of the strategies in their marketing efforts (Bahari, 2022).

4. CONCLUSION

This study aims to understand the trend of using packaging in street vendors, especially around Jalan Gegerkalong. The results showed that street vendors around Jalan Gegerkalong have not implemented the trend of eco-friendly packaging due to their lack of understanding of the concept. Other obstacles include a lack of environmental awareness and consideration of the price of packaging materials, which are the main factors why traders still use less environmentally friendly packaging. After being given education about eco-friendly packaging, some street vendors are willing to change their packaging materials and some will continue to use the previous packaging materials because they are still considering the inhibiting aspects.

5. AUTHORS' NOTE

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article. Authors confirmed that the paper was free of plagiarism.

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