GHANAIAN EXPORTS: MEETING EU CUSTOMER EXPECTATIONS THROUGH EFFECTIVE PACKAGING DESIGN

BY

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MASTER OF COMMUNICATION DESIGN

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the submission of this thesis is my own work towards the award of Master of Communication Design and that, to the best of my knowledge it contains no materials previously published by another person nor material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree of the University, except where due acknowledgment has been made in the text.

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ABSTRACT

Packaging design has been identified as one major challenge in the Ghanaian Export Sector especially Non-Traditional Exports. This thesis discusses Ghanaian exports and how to meet the European Union customer expectation through the application of effective packaging design.

Based on a sampled population of 25 exporters and 18 consumers who are not Ghanaians, the research revealed that Ghanaian exports do not meet EU customer expectation mainly because the packaging designs and labelling do not exhibit strong visual appearance. For that matter they cannot communicate clearly the products' values and benefits in the minds of the consumer. Environmental accountability or sustainability issues are not considered at all. The researcher used qualitative research method to gather data through questionnaires, interviews and observations.

The researcher made several recommendations. Among them are: Government agencies, institutions, SME'S (Small Scale Enterprises) and other stakeholders in the export industry should be educated as regards the requirements, needs and expectations of the importing country especially in relation to packaging. Also, research and development centres for packaging should be created in schools and colleges. Students in tertiary institutions and colleges should be encouraged to do their thesis or dissertations in packaging.

Finally, this thesis attests to the fact that packaging plays a critical role in nation building. It serves as a means of identification and communication. Packaging helps to develop human culture. It is therefore prudent for Ghanaian exporters to invest more into effective packaging design in order to meet customer expectations.

J.A

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Overview

This chapter explains the background to the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, research questions, assumptions, limitations and the delimitations of the study. Other significant issues discussed are definition of terms, abbreviations, and importance of the study.

1.01 Background to the Study

Packaging is the outer wrapping of a product. Its purpose is intended to make a product readily sellable as well as to protect it against damage and prevent it from deterioration while storing and transporting. Furthermore, packaging is often the most relevant element of a trademark and is conducive for advertising or communication.

The marketing aspect of packaging is important but a marketable container is not enough. It must meet the consumers' taste as well as practical needs. Everything we see these days suggest that the needs of the consumer will continue to change and challenge the traditional paradigm of packaging in the future. The need in packaging, as research indicates, is not for art, but rather "a communication tool" that determines the purchasing power of the product.

With outstanding product choices in the retail market today, it is essential to provide appetite appeal that triggers an immediate "buy it" reaction in the consumers' mind. Images or photographs make the first and the greatest impact on the potential customer.

This means that the image on the package should play an important role in conveying the “atmosphere of the product”. Thus the packaging design must be clear to the audience for which it is intended.

Moreover, to attract the consumer with a powerful visual message, images on a package have to be of the highest standard. Images created have to be very strong such that a consumer will be compelled to choose a particular product over the other in a crowded supermarket shelf.

The packaging of most products, especially foods, in Ghana primarily serve as containers for the products. They are normally not intended as a means of extending shelf-life, promote it sale as well as protecting it against damage and prevent it from deterioration while storing and transporting. Suitable packaging can preserve most products. Good packaging could extend shelf-life and permit more of a product to be processed.

The development of suitable packaging for most traditional staples is hampered by the lack of standards. Variations exist in the composition, shape, weight, and methods of preparation of products from different sources, and it is not easy to design simple, inexpensive, ready-made containers for such a wide range of items. Also, for a package to be readily acceptable, it must be relatively cheap. Unfortunately, the packaging industry in Ghana is not well developed to meet most of these demands.

Even at the industrial level packaging contributes significantly to the cost of production. As a result, many local industries use cheap, poorly designed packages. Local manufacturers can hardly afford to add any extra cost to their overhead.

Virtually all food products packaged by local food vendors are unlabelled. No indication is given of the name of the product, its source, or its composition, nor any information on appropriate storage conditions or instructions for use. Street foods are displayed open and unwrapped. Sellers and consumers alike take this for granted. The local food sector will dominate the food industry in Ghana for a long time and remains a major source of meals for many people. But this significant role is adversely affected by poor hygiene and the lack of suitable packaging materials.

The use of unsuitable packaging materials, inadequate and ineffective packaging during transportation, cost of packaging, absence of appropriate packaging machinery, poor labelling, lack of standards and specifications and environmental issues are some of the challenges facing the packaging of both fresh and processed foods in the informal and formal sectors of the food industry in Ghana. These challenges impact greatly on the country's drive towards food security as well as promoting the export of Ghanaian food products.

1.02 Statement of the Problem

In European markets Ghanaian products, though not deficient in quality, have packaging designs that are ineffective in communicating product value and clear consumer benefits. Ghanaian exporters appear to be ignorant about the sophistication and unpredictability of the EU consumer and fail to meet their expectations. It is every exporter's desire to see his/her product arrive at its final destination in an acceptable condition, suitable for sale and consumption.

Trade liberalization, the free-zone market system and globalization has intensified competition between products on the international market. Exporters therefore have to comply with increasingly complex international standards and provisions, as well as target market specifications and requirements on safety, health, environmental protection and packaging requirements. International trade rules and regulations, in addition to packaging expectations of importers and buyers are changing drastically and rapidly.

Europe has existing standards and regulations for its imports. Every exporter has to comply with or face sanctions and blacklisting. EU consumer expectation and attitudes towards products place high demands on exporters. EU consumers have divergent needs that must be met. Since purchases are often made in cluttered, relatively noisy retail environments, it is important to ensure that products on shelves get noticed when situated alongside competing brands. Obviously, the solution rests on great packaging design.

Packaging will help increase earnings from products exported to the EU. This research therefore seeks to prove that effective packaging design can increase the attractiveness and recognition of Ghanaian products in the international market.

1.03 Objectives of the Study

1. To investigate the causes of poor packaging in the Ghanaian export sector.
2. To identify Ghanaian non-traditional product exporters, and determine EU customer expectations towards imports of Ghanaian export products.
3. To compare best practices of packaging development around the world with local processes and materials.

1.04 Research Questions

1. Why Ghanaian exporters should invest more substantially in effective packaging design than in primary product development in order to meet customer expectations in the EU?
2. What standards are expected to be met in the EU market by exporters of made in Ghana products.

1.05 Delimitation

This thesis will be limited to non-traditional product exporters within Accra and Kumasi, who export to the European market. Also, local and foreign consumers who are within Accra and Kumasi.

1.06 Abbreviations

I.O.P.G	Institute of Packaging Ghana
E.U	European Union
N.T.E	Non-Traditional Exports
I.S.O	International Organisation for Standardisation
U.K	United Kingdom
U.S.A	United States of America
K.N.U.S.T	Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology
E.C.O.W.A.S	Economic Community of West African States

1.07 Assumptions

It is assumed that improving the standard and quality of Ghanaian Export products, particularly Non-traditional export will ultimately depend on effective packaging design. Consequently, Customer expectations can be met if packaging design is enhanced.

1.08 Importance of the Study

The research aim at how Ghanaian exports can meet customer expectations in the EU market through the application of effective packaging design. It is hoped that the research will serve as a reference material for Ghanaian exporters and a body of knowledge for researchers, students and Small Scale Enterprises (SME). It will also create awareness about how effective packaging can promote Ghanaian exports.

1.09 Facilities Available for the Study

- Library, Ghana Export Promotion Council, Accra.
- Main Library, KNUST.
- College Library, College of Art & Social Sciences.
- Institute of Packaging Ghana Library.

1.10 Sources of Information

- Selected Ghanaian non-traditional exporters to the EU market, situated in Accra and Kumasi.

1.11 Arrangement of Text

The content of this thesis has been divided into five chapters. The beginning chapter will highlight on the background to the study, statement of the problem, objectives, research question, delimitation, Abbreviations, importance of study, Facilities available for the study, Sources of information and the arrangement of text.

Chapter two reviews related literature on packaging and the research topic. It also acknowledges certain significant facts about packaging. These include; Packaging, Package Appearance, Ghanaian Export Trade, Major Challenges Affecting Ghanaian Export, Ghana's Export Trade with the EU, Consumer Trends and Expectations.

Chapter three entails a detailed explanation of the methodology with regard to research design, library research, population for the study, sampling, data collecting instrument (interview, questionnaire and observation), primary and secondary data.

Chapter four offers results from the study. It also presents analysis and interpretation of data gathered from the research.

The final chapter is the conclusions. It also gives suggestions and recommendations based on critical observations from the research.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.00 Overview

The research- “Ghanaian Exports: Meeting EU Customer Expectations through effective Packaging Design”, requires the review of literature written by scholars, writers, technocrats and other researchers in relation to packaging. References to the books, journals, websites, articles, trade publications consulted sets the pace for further understanding of the scope of the study.

2.01 Packaging

”Packaging” is the science, art and technology of enclosing or protecting products for distribution, storage, sale, and use. Packaging also refers to the process of design, evaluation, and production of packages. It is fully integrated into government, business, institutions, industries, and personal use (Wikipedia, 2008).

Packaging has always had a fundamental role to play in business and marketing communication. The package is a vital element on the marketing communications mix. The increasingly important communications role of packaging has given rise to expressions such as “Packaging is the least expensive form of advertising”: “Every package is a five-second commercial”, “Packaging is the silent salesman”, and The package is the product” (Shimp, 1997).

However, packaging design in the modern age has become one of the most sophisticated, holistic and powerful examples of the designer’s craft. The full life-cycle of packaging now touches on all of the key issues facing business today and it is important to understand its impact from cradle to grave (Sands, 2007).

In Hines's (2008) perspective, the package has become the "first moment of truth" at retail since that is going to decide whether the customer will buy the product or not. It is important therefore that attention is given to not only what goes inside but, more importantly what is on the outside of the box. Just because the product is great does not mean it is going to sell even if it is placed in the right retail environment (Hines, 2008).

The box today is the "retail" salesperson. The box or package is expected to provide the necessary information to make an informed shoppers' decision. There may not be a salesperson available to answer a question either. So the package must be the silent salesperson to tell all that is needed to know, more importantly, convey the information about what is inside and how it is going to help the consumer (Hines, 2008).

According to Sands (2007), designers today must consider the full impact of a pack's design right from where the original product is sourced through material cost, transportation cost to the legal issues surrounding its reuse or disposal.

Prendergast & Pitt (1996), sees packaging as "…that which has both ***"marketing and logistics"*** functions. For marketing, the package sells the product by attracting attention and communicating. For logistics, the package allows the product to be contained, apportioned, unitized and communicated". Against this background, the authors concluded that it is difficult to separate the marketing functions of packaging from the logistical functions since both are related.

In his capacity as a management consultant, Walton Thomas (2002) observed, "...from single serve to family-size, packaging is a bridge between how we live and what we buy". He cited an example where a new carton for Coca-Cola becomes a refrigerator dispenser and school lunches for children becomes their favourite items in ready-to-go cartons, bags and cups. He concluded that, packaging is about function. It is about engaging the minds and hearts of consumers.

So what happens when a typical package has nothing to do with how we live? Any package that cannot connect with consumers' lifestyle cannot effectively sell a product. This shows that today's society cannot survive without effective packaging. The recent development of a global market coupled with the growth of supermarkets and other self-service retail outlets has necessitated that the package assumes functions beyond the traditional role of merely containing and protecting the product.

The package serves to:

1. Draw attention to a brand,
2. Break through competitive clutter at the point of purchase,
3. Justify price/value to the consumer,
4. Signify brand features and benefits, and
5. Ultimately motivate consumers brand choices.

2.02 Types of Packaging

Wikipedia (2008) grouped packaging into three broad categories: Primary, Secondary and Tertiary packages.

1. Primary packaging - the material that first envelops the product and holds it. This usually is the smallest unit of distribution or use and is the package which is in direct contact with the contents.
2. Secondary packaging- is outside the primary packaging – perhaps used to group primary packages together.
3. Tertiary packaging- is used for bulk handling, warehouse storage and transport shipping. The most common form is a palletized unit load that packs tightly into containers.

Figure 1: *Example of different types of packages*

To Sand (2008), the package design must serve in four different ways:

1. Protect the contents of a package.
2. Contribute to the cost of the end product.

3. Promote the product's attributes and benefits.
4. Form a part of the product experience.

On shelf, the role of package design changed with the move to self-service (Danger, 1987; Behaeghel, 1991), and the package became an essential part of the selling process (Rouffignac, 1990). The move to larger supermarkets and increased segmentation of markets has led to the proliferation of products, so that packaging has to work in a more crowded competitive context both in the retail environment and in the kitchen (Thompson, 1996). Impulse-buying is also increasing, with an estimated half of all grocery purchases being unplanned (Cobb and Heyer cited in Philips and Bradshaw, 1993). A quantitative survey by the Henley Centre concluded that 73 percent of purchase decisions were made at point of sale (*Frontiers,* 1996). The tendency to shop weekly, and the large number of items purchased at one stop, leads to less time to make the purchase decision, and the consequent need for the package design to work harder.

It is suggested that packaging may be the biggest medium of communication (Behaeghel, 1991; Peters, 1994). Three reasons are given for this:

1. Its extensive reach to nearly all purchasers of the categories.
2. Its presence at the crucial moment when the purchase decision is made, and
3. The high level of involvement for users who will actively scan packaging for information.

All these reports attest to the fact that, the point of purchase is the ideal time to communicate with consumers. Accordingly, anything that a consumer is exposed to at the point of purchase can perform an important communication function. Every element on the package must aid in communicating value and trust about the product to the potential customer. The package must also function in several ways. But in the end the package must sell the product.

In addition, we live in a world of ever demanding consumers, whose requirements are constantly changing. Consumer trends that impact on the packaged goods "supply chain" include an ageing population, more single person households, focus on health and fitness, more working women and a higher consumption of convenience foods and takeaways. All these trends make demands on the packaging requirement. There is a need for the packaging supply chain, both packaging manufacturers and producers of consumer packed goods to respond to these challenges of increasing retailer demands and changing consumer needs (Ann, 2005).

Ann Stirling Roberts (2005) has this to add, "…As we move into the 21st Century the pressure on the packaging supply chain are increasing all the time. Retailers are fighting to increase their share of a UK market that is essentially static, due to lack of population growth and an actual decline in the number of calories consumed per person..." He advised that while the pressure on the consumer packaged goods supply chain continues to increase, there is the need to collaborate with supply chain partners.

"…In the future it will not be organizations which compete; it will be supply chains..." says Professor Martin Christopher (2006), Cranfield School of Management.

2.03 Purposes and Importance of Packaging

According to Michael, Bruce and William (2004), packaging is intended to serve several vital purposes. These are:

1. **Protect the product on its way to the consumer.** A package protects a product during shipment. Furthermore, it can prevent tampering with products, notably medications and food products, in the warehouse or the retail store. The design and size of a package can also help deter shoplifting. That is why small items such as compact discs, come in larger-than-needed packages
2. **Protect the product after it is purchased.** Compared with bulk (that is unpackaged) items, packaged goods generally are more convenient, cleaner, and less susceptible to losses from evaporation, spilling, and spoilage. Also, “childproof” closures thwart children (and sometimes adults) from opening containers of medications and other potentially harmful products.
3. **Help gain acceptance of the product from middlemen.** A product must be packaged to meet the needs of wholesaling and retailing middlemen. For instance, a package’s size and shape must be suitable for displaying and stacking the product in the store. An odd-shaped package might attract shoppers’ attention, but if it doesn’t stack well, the retailer may not display them.
4. **Help persuade consumers to buy the product.** Packaging can assist in getting a product noticed by consumers. The average shopper spends 20 minutes in the store, viewing 20 products a second. At the point of purchase such as a supermarket aisle- the package can serve as a “silent sales person.” In the case of middlemen’s brands,

which typically are not advertised heavily, packaging must serve as the means of communicating with shoppers.

The authors concluded by saying that historically, packaging was intended primarily to provide protection, but today, with its marketing significance fully recognised, packaging is a major factor in gaining distribution and customers. Ultimately, a package may become a product's differential advantage, or at least a significant part of it. That was certainly true with Coca-Cola and its distinctive contour glass bottle, so much so that the firm replicated the contour shape in bottles made of other materials, such as plastic. To the authors, packaging a product the right way entails much more than just creating a box to put your product in.

2.04 Package Appearance

Packaging appears differently to different people. Factors such as demography, culture and technology influence consumers' perception to package appearance. The author identified four basic components of package appearance.

1. Colour,
2. Shape and size,
3. Copy or text and
4. Photograph or illustration

1. **Colour-**Colour provides the most versatile and powerful instrument in the presentation of a product and its packages to a prospective customer. Colours have the ability to communicate many things to consumers including quality, taste and the

product's ability to satisfy various psychological needs (Danger, 1987). In combination with the brand logo and the shape of the package, it can help identify and reinforce branding. For example, Coca-Cola, Heinz, Kodak and Shell are just a few well-known companies that use colours for this purpose.

The capacity of colours to convey a great variety of feelings and moods make it very useful for rapidly communicating the basic sales message from the store shelf to the consumer. Colour can have strong psychological influences on potential purchasers and this property can be used in packaging design to reflect, for example, fashion and elegance (pastel shade), fun and playfulness (bright yellow, red and orange), luxury (black, silver and gold), high technology and sophistication (grey and black). Colours can also be used to differentiate product varieties and flavours within a family of related products (Danger, 1987). A producer of canned foods, for instance, could use labels with red background for soups, yellow for curries, blue for fruits, green for vegetables, and so on.

But, it is important to note that the meaning of colour varies from culture to culture. When designing packages for a particular export market, the package designer should consider the importing country and know their colour preferences before designing the package.

2. **Package Shape and Size-**Variations in the design and shape of a package communicates differences in the product to consumers. A distinctive package shape, when practicable, can provide a good opportunity to reinforce the product's brand

image. Some examples of package designs that have used shape as an important part of the products image are;

1. The Coca-Cola bottle, designed in 1915, - one of the best known of all packaging shapes.
2. The Pepsi Cola bottle, designed in 1950
3. Many distinctive shapes of bottle for Scotch whisky such as Dimple, Johnny Walker and Chivas Regal.
4. The Heinz glass and plastic bottles for Ketchup and other condiments.

The authors added that, the “shape feature” of all these containers is so well known and easy to recognize that no text or illustration is really necessary to identify the products concerned. Package shapes evoke feelings. One way of doing that is through the choice of slope, length, and thickness of lines on a package. Horizontal lines suggest restfulness and quiet, evoking feelings of tranquillity. Vertical lines on the other hand evoke feelings of strength, confidence, stature, and even pride (Prendergast and Pitt, 1996).

A package shape also affects the apparent volume of the container; example, if two packages have the same volume but a different shape, the taller of the two will appear to hold a greater volume because height is usually associated with volume (Hall, 1993).

3. **Package Copy or Text-** The printed texts on packages known as the “copy” play a vital role in conveying messages about the product, and its package to the consumer. To achieve the best possible impact on the retail shelf, the copy must first of all be short, clear and easy to understand. The consumer must be able to grasp in seconds the gist of the package’s message, including the nature of the product, origin and how it should be

used and stored (Hall, 1993). The graphic designer ensures that the copy from the standpoint of type sizes, typefaces, colours, and type location harmonize into the overall package design concept.

Some texts on a package are mandatory in almost every market; the form, size and location of such messages on the package or label are often dictated by laws that differ little from country to country. These laws dictate not only the mandatory information but also, the size and nature of the typeface to be used and the locations of such information on the package. Depending on the product, typefaces can frequently be used as promotional features in the design, with calligraphic styles for up-market fashions and cosmetics, or heavy gothic typefaces for traditional European products. Generally, packaging typefaces, sizes and colours are chosen for their clarity, simplicity and legibility at a distance (Danton de Rouffignac, 1990).

Not only is the package a critical communication device in the store, but it also provides a focus for much advertising effort in television commercials which features packages about 40 percent of the time (Shrimp, 1997).

4. **Photograph or illustration-** Photography or illustration on packages has to be of the highest standard. The sole objective of the photograph on the product is to attract the consumer with its powerful visual message. Photography is often the chosen technique when economic or practical considerations rule out a transparent package such as one on glass or Perspex. Photographic illustration on packages usually lies between the “see-through” technique and the “mood shot”.

The" see-through" technique requires a photograph of the product – usually life size- to cover, for example, the surface of the paper label on tinned foods. The "mood shot" shows the prepared product in a seductive situation, possibly as part of a table setting; this could also act as a serving suggestion for the consumer (Rettie and Brewer, 2000).

The psychology behind the use of the appetite appeal shot has proved itself unarguably successful in the market place, particularly where staple such as rice is depicted in an atmosphere of luxury (Hall, 1993).

While making the product look as attractive as possible, the authors noted that it is also important the illustration is understandable, and in accordance with consumer preferences and beliefs in the target market. For example, in some countries, dogs and pigs are considered to be unclean animals and so should not normally be depicted unless entirely relevant to the product. Images of people and other figurative subjects should be avoided unless essential in package design intended for exports to Muslim countries (Rettie and Brewer, 2000).

In his perspective, Kenji (2005) proposes that the most important human contribution to packaging is to create objects that are culturally expressive. Westerners generally regard packaging as ephemeral containers that can be physically and mentally exploited and discarded. The Asian view is to create something more meaningful and enduring (Walton, 2002).

Zarney (2005) complements Kenji's philosophical commentary with pragmatic advice on the package design process. For any project, he stresses the necessity of having a "core creative concept"-a statement articulating goals, audience, and content that can be used as a baseline for evaluating design options. In making judgments, he advices that executives and the design team need to assess the effectiveness of the interaction between the package and potential consumers.

In the Afrik embal magazine (2005) it was stated that packaging has facilitated the movement of goods and services to distant places but the economy of most developing countries in Africa is dominated by trade in low value commodities such as timber, cotton, cocoa, coffee, and groundnuts and other agricultural and natural resources. These items are handled in bulk and do not require sophisticated packaging. The author noted that Increasing globalization has the potential of marginalizing many African countries. West Africa needs to integrate into the world economy by being able to produce goods which are acceptable on the world market. The packaging industry must therefore be developed to support national programmes for improving our performance in foreign trade.

Ohene-Akoto's (2001) unpublished BFA student thesis stated that a product should exhibit the power to attract a consumer, establish an identity, inform and educate a consumer, have a long lifespan by protecting and preserving itself as well as leaving a very good psychological mark or impression on the mind of a consumer. For a product to achieve these marketing qualities he emphasized the need for every product to be given a good covering or package that could meaningfully interact with a consumer.

Wallace (2005) also disclosed that a welcomed new trend in package design is simplicity. Achieving a simple design, however, might not be so simple. The mass retail environment has become visual junk food, leaving us overfed and under-nourished. Successful brands cut through the visual noise with colour, symbols, icons, and a singularity of focus, to communicate a simple message.

Scott's (2005) research: shelf impact says it all –The challenges of "breaking through shelf clutter" are growing, but there is a lack of clarity and consistency in measuring shelf impact. With some careful research and the benefit of lessons from past research, there are proven design strategies that increase package "pop" as well as shelf position strategies that can have an impact.

2.05 The Packaging Industry in Ghana

In the PACKit Exporting Country Module: Ghana (2006) it was stated that the liberalized economy introduced by the government of Ghana over the past decade has resulted in increased competition in the local market especially goods from India and the Far East (China, Indonesia, Thailand etc). Consumers have thus been exposed to high quality packaging and presently demand well-packaged consumer products.

Essuman (2000) describes the packaging industry in Ghana as rudimentary. Small scale enterprises still reuse post consumer packages. Ghana being identified as the gate way to West Africa obviously opens up excellent growth opportunities for the packaging sector. The steady growth in the export sector is instrumental in the development of various types of packaging. Plastic and paper constitute the dominant raw materials. Plastic packaging is the fastest growing sector of the packaging industry in Ghana. The Ghanaian packaging industry is still dependent on polymers.

The packaging sector consists of packaging converters, suppliers of machinery, raw and ancillary materials, designers and packaging users. The packaging industry started in the late 1950s. After the country became independent, the government embarked on a massive industrialization programme to manufacture import substituted consumer goods such as canned foods, alcoholic and non alcoholic drinks and household equipment (Essuman, 2000). This called for a corresponding growth in the packaging industry but the only major packaging company established was on large-scale corrugated box factory and a number of small-scale plastic and paper bag manufacturers. The bulk of packaging materials was therefore imported which became a major bottleneck in the industrial development programme, the author lamented.

The author continued by saying that the introduction of the economic reform programme and trade liberalisation by government in the 1990s led to the establishment of several small and medium scale plastic and paper converting companies. Despite several years of operation, the packaging manufacturing industry in Ghana is still rudimentary. Local converters are unable to meet the demands for high quality packaging. Many of the converters are small-scale using imported raw materials, old machinery and technology for their operations.

Small-scale enterprises in Ghana depend mainly on local converters for their packaging needs. When these are not locally available some of them rely on post consumer packages such as corrugated boxes, sacks, glass and plastic bottles, and jars for packaging products. Newsprint, stationary wicker baskets, jute bags, wooden crates and leaves are still widely used as packaging materials. Collection of post consumer packaging is thus a major informal activity in Ghana (Essuman, 2000).

The large manufacturing companies and exporters often require high quality packaging and usually depend on imported packaging materials to ensure that their products are attractive and comparable to international standards. These are major challenges that affect companies in Ghana and make them uncompetitive due to the low quality of their packaging (International Trade Centre, 2005).

The author noted some constraints that have hampered the growth of the local packaging industry. These include:

1. Inadequate or old-fashion technology and machinery.
2. Import of all raw materials for packaging.
3. Inadequate skills in packaging technology due to absence of institutions for training.
4. Low level of expertise in packaging design, especially in structural designs.
5. Absence of facilities for testing and certification of packages.
6. Lack of facilities and software for packaging development.
7. Absence of reliable data on the packaging industry.

2.06 Ghanaian Export Trade

All export commodities in Ghana have been categorized into two main groups: Traditional Exports and Non-Traditional Exports (NTE). Commodities that are grouped under Traditional Export are: cocoa beans, logs, mineral Ore (e.g. unprocessed gold), electricity, fresh fish, and fresh yam. Non-Traditional export products are products outside the traditional export. There are over 383 different non-traditional export products categorized into agricultural, processed/semi-processed and handicrafts. Cocoa paste, canned tuna, veneer, cocoa butter, shea nuts and pineapples are among the 10 leading NTE products exported (Ghana Export Trade report, 2006)

Ghana's major export destination is Western Europe, especially the EU. This is due to the duty-free access granted under preferential arrangements and the expanding EU membership. Outside Western Europe, the US and Japan are the most important destinations, accounting for a little over 11 percent in 2002. The share of exports to ECOWAS is also significant, especially with respect to Togo which accounted for an average share of 13 percent between 1998 and 2000. On average, 20 percent of Ghana's Non-Traditional Exports now go to the ECOWAS countries (Ghana Export trade report, 2006)

Due to persistent deterioration of trade for the country's major/traditional exports – cocoa, timber, and minerals, the Non-Traditional Export Sector (NTES) has been accorded unparalleled attention in economic development (Addo & Marshall, 2000). Non-Traditional Exports fetched the country 1.2 billion dollars in 2007. The figure brings NTE contribution to 27.7 percent of the country's total exports of 4.2 billion dollars (Addo & Marshall, 2000).

The European Union and ECOWAS remained the major destination of Non-Traditional Export, accounting for 46.55 percent and 31.36 percent respectively of the exports. Other African countries, developed countries and emerging economies hold the remaining share. The leading markets include the United Kingdom, France, Nigeria, Burkina Faso, Togo and United States. At the regional level, Nigeria has become a prominent NTEs market in the ECOWAS sub-region (Ghana Export Trade report, 2006)

Ghana Export Promotion Council reported that during the periods of 2005 to 2006, all the markets recorded positive growth with the exception of the ECOWAS market that recorded a negative growth of -0.52 percent. The decline was as a result of the relative difficulty in accessing the Nigerian market. The EU market performance grew by 13.88 percent, while the markets in the other African countries, other developed countries, including emerging markets grew by 34, 33.55 and 47.22 percent respectively (Ghana Export Trade report, 2006)

In 2006, Ghana's single largest market for NTEs was the United Kingdom. It accounted for 12.12 percent of total NTEs, worth US$108.2 million, representing a decline of 4.6 percent of the previous year's figure of US$113.5 million (Ghana Export Trade report, 2006).

Cocoa paste, veneer sheets, prepared tuna, cocoa butter, plywood, frozen tuna, shea nuts, fresh-cut pineapples, other prepared fish and frozen fish, accounted for 51.7 percent of total exports worth US$461.7 million dollars. Cocoa paste which is the highest earner contributed 10.71 percent with a value of US$95.6 million, representing 226 percent increase over the 2005 figure of US$29.3 million. This was due to significant increase in the future prices of the product the previous year on the London futures market. Additionally, the increase was also partly due to expansion of Barry Callebaut Ghana Limited, a major exporter of cocoa paste. (Ghana Export Trade report, 2006).

2.07 Major Challenges Affecting Ghanaian Export

The major constraints to the growth of the export sector despite several government interventions as outlined in the International Trade Centre (Pack it cross-cutting module, 2005);

1. **Limited range of exports:** Ghana relies heavily on primary products for its export earnings. The volatility in the prices of these products has a direct effect on total export earnings.

2. **Lack of market diversification:** Ghana's principal export market is the EU. Many view trade within the West African region as under-developed. Many see regional trade as a necessary step for Ghanaian exporters in advance of penetrating the global market. The slow pace of implementing the ECOWAS Trade Liberalization Scheme, however, has affected diversification (International Trade Centre, 2005).

3. **Enterprise-level problems:** Many Ghanaian enterprises are small and have difficulty in engaging in international trade. Many businesses suffer from limited financial and technical capacities. Access to credit is limited and expensive.

4. **Lack of package attractiveness:** Ghanaian product packages are not attractive when rated against products from developed economies. Most of the packaging have poor labelling, design and durability.

5. **Lack of equipment and resources**: Inadequate, obsolete technologies and equipment, often imported second-hand from India and China. Servicing support for packaging equipment is weak and plants may be shut down for weeks due to lack of spare parts or expertise in fixing a breakdown. Technological skills in packaging are

inadequate, due to the absence of specialized training institutions and courses. (International Trade Centre, 2005).

6. **Irregularity of raw material supply**: With the exception of wood, and to some extent cotton fabrics, all raw materials for packaging and consumables are imported. This results in irregularity of raw materials supply and therefore unreliability in deliveries.
7. **Lack of competitiveness on quality**: This is often related to difficulties in respect to the mastering of high visual appeal for the pack, (i.e. graphics), which comprise criteria such as transparency, gloss, precision in printing. Generally printing/ decoration performance is not achieved to the same degree, when compared with what is available in developed countries (International Trade Centre, 2005).

Additionally, the current position of the use of imaging or graphic design for consumer-packed products, exported from Ghana to Europe leaves much to be desired. In summary, the most important problems seem to be:

1. Incorrect positioning of package designs intended for foreign markets;
2. The lack of a systematic family appeal between the different products of the same producer/exporter;
3. The quality of the execution of designs (printing) on export packages/labels is too low;
4. Old-fashioned and inconsistent use of typography;
5. Frequent violations of packaging-related regulations enforced in foreign markets;
6. Unnecessarily high packaging costs, mainly as a result of the exporter's lack of technical/commercial know-how;

7. Difficulties in introducing joint export marketing strategies between producers/packers of related products.

2.08 Ghana's Export Trade With the EU

The EU is the world's largest and most open trading partner. It is also the world's biggest single market. Following the enlargement of the EU in May 2004, the EU is now composed of 25 Member States and is home to 450 million consumers. Ghana and other Third World countries benefit from an enlarged Union. A single set of trade rules, tariffs, and administrative procedures apply across the continent. This simplifies dealings for Ghana exporters to the EU and improves conditions for trade & investment. The EU remains Ghana's major trading partner (53% for exports and 33% for imports), with the United Kingdom, Netherlands, Germany, France, Italy and Belgium being the main bilateral European partners. Outside Europe, USA and Japan represent important export destination, whilst Nigeria, China and US are relevant importing countries. Exports to the European Union are predominantly based on a few (primary) products, with almost 60 percent of exports consisting of cocoa (mainly beans, but also some butter and paste), followed at a distance by wood (including sheets and plywood), gold (and other precious stones), prepared fish, fruits and nuts.

The EU account for more than half of all exports. Ghana's other major trading partners including the USA and China, account for nearly 8 percent and 5 percent of total exports, respectively. The share of Ghana's exports to African countries stands at 8 percent. Both India and Japan each account for 4 percent of Ghana's exports. These developed and developing country markets absorb the bulk of Ghanaian exports. (Mayur Patel, 2007). The figure below shows graphically Ghana's Export Markets in 2005.

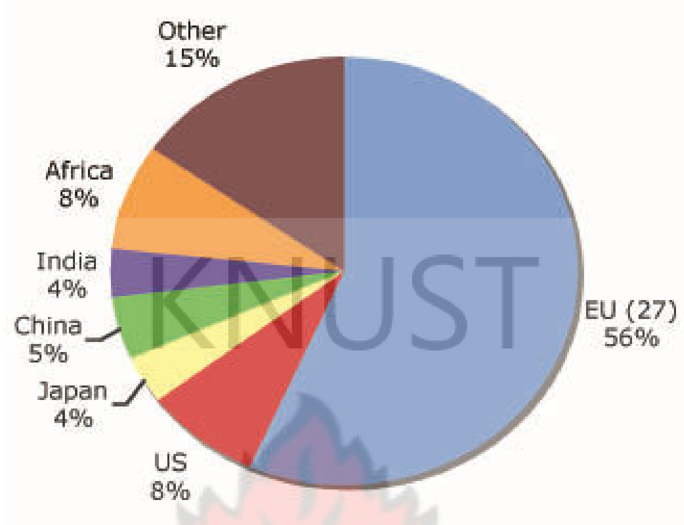

Figure 2: *Ghana's Export Markets (2005*)

Ghana's trade is largely dependent on a few primary products (gold, cocoa and timber) making its economy vulnerable to international price fluctuation. According to the Ghana Export Trade report, (2006) over 83 percent of Ghana's merchandise exports to Europe are primary agricultural products with little value-added, including cocoa, fruits, vegetables, and fresh fish exports. It is only 9 percent of exports to the EU that are in manufactured goods. In contrast, Ghana's main imports from the EU are value-added products, such as machinery, electronic equipment, vehicles, textiles and pharmaceutical products. The figure below shows Ghana's top Exports and Imports in 2005;

EXPORT Products	Share of Total Exports
Cocoa and cocoa preparations	42%
Wood and articles of wood, wood charcoal	14%
Mineral fuels, oils, distillation products	11%
Ores, slag and ash	9%
Edible fruit, nuts, peel of citrus fruit, melons	5%
Meat, fish and seafood food preparations	5%
Pearls, precious stones, metals, coins	2%
Edible vegetables, certain roots and tubers	2%

IMPORT Products	Share of Total Imports
Machinery (processing machines, construction machinery)	14%
Electrical equipment	9%
Vehicles (other than railway	9%
Articles of iron or steel	6%
Cereals	5%
Plastics and articles thereof	4%
Sugars and sugar confectionery	4%
Cotton	3%

Source: Data from TradeMap (2006)

Figure 3: *Ghana's Top Exports and Imports, World Bank (2005)*

The total value of EU exports to Ghana in 2004 was €1,186 million, while imports from Ghana valued €1,032 million. The trade balance therefore showed a deficit for Ghana (€154 million).

The global market today has changed; to earn more one must create value through the sale of branded merchandise. In response to this, there has been diversification in export recently. In Ghana, the scope of export has expanded to include goods such as yam, fish, shea butter, spices, handicrafts, fruits and vegetables, referred to as non-traditional exports. Poor packaging has been a major constraint to the growth of the sector (Afrik Embal Magazine, 2005).

From the above findings the researcher deduced that over the past years that Ghana had been exporting to the EU, there have not been any significant improvements on the export products.

The International Trade Centre (2008), reports an increased interest towards consumer-packing of traditional commodities by developing countries lately. The trend towards both the local processing of traditional commodities for export, and the introduction of new, non-traditional, consumer-packed products on the world market, will mean that the exporters in developing countries will have to pay close and increased attention to customer requirements in sophisticated industrialized countries.

In most cases, the report further explains that, this will mean entering into direct contact with the consumers in the target markets, using own brand names, introducing new types of products, and maintaining competitive packaging designs and high quality levels. This will also bring about new and, often, difficult problems for the packaging industry in developing countries, as well as for the exporters who are often unfamiliar with, for instance, the requirements of the supermarket distribution systems, or who have difficulties in understanding the basic concepts of package design on their target markets (International Trade Centre, 2005).

2.09 Consumer Trends and Expectations in the EU

Today, consumers expect and demand more than just the product itself, and their wants have a bigger appetite than their needs. This is particularly relevant in a world where products have become homogenised and the difference between one product and a competitor's can be negligible.

Today’s consumer is a moving target. Market trends, demographics and market niches are continually evolving. If you are not staying on top of these trends then your product isn’t “connecting” to them with the right message. A consumer is influenced by many factors at the point of sale, but there are several things which Hines (2008) call “universal truths” that can influence virtually any consumer.

1. Time- Consumers are in a hurry. They would not take a lot of time making up their minds which item to buy. The product must be easy to access when they are shopping and help in making the buying decision

2. Convenience is mandatory- today’s consumer is looking for one stop shopping where they can get the majority of what they need in one place.

3. KISS-Keep it simple stupid- The more complicated the decision making process the more likely the consumer’s interest will be lost. It needs to be quick, simple and uncomplicated. Last but not least, give them a reason to buy. What is this product going to do for them? In many cases they will even pay more if it solves a problem.

Other "social” issues that can influence your package include:

Environmentally accountability or sustainability: Green issues revolving around disposability, recyclability, and the latest hot button issue bio-plastics. The environmental aspects of packaging are heating up. Every week there are dozens of articles pertaining to packaging and the waste stream.

Packaging Innovation: One major shift in consumer acceptance can cause a landslide of new product innovations. Companies are building entire brands around environmentally friendly packaging and consumers are waking up to the "garbage" problem.

From the discussions so far it is clear that packaging design has a crucial role to play in international trade today. Every exporter needs to ensure that the packaging of the export product functions beyond just protecting and preserving the content of the product. Rather the package must connect with the consumer's needs and expectations of the importing country.

Ghana being identified as the gate way to West Africa obviously opens up excellent growth opportunities for the packaging sector. The rapid growth in the exports sector is instrumental in the development of various types of packaging. Ghana has easy access to the European market as a result of bilateral trade agreements between the two countries. It is evident that Ghana needs to improve its domestic and export packaging, so as to stand competitive against other global players from Asia, China, Japan etc.

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CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.00 Overview

In this chapter, the researcher will examine the general procedures employed to gather necessary information for this thesis. The focus will therefore be on the sources of information gathered, research methods, data collection et cetera. The research was conducted through the following steps.

1. Research design.
2. Library research.
3. Population for the study.
4. Sampling.
5. Instruments of data collection.
6. Procedures for data collection.
7. Collection of primary and secondary data.
8. Reliability and Validity of Data and Information.

3.01 Research Design

The study was conducted largely in Accra and partly in Kumasi. Stakeholders and institutions in the packaging sector like; Ghana Export Promotion Authority, Institute of Packaging Ghana, Ghana Standard Authority, Food and Drugs Authority, National Board for Small Scale Industries (SMEs) among others were visited by the researcher to gather primary and secondary data.

For the purpose of this research work the researcher employed a mixed approach method in analyzing and interpreting the data gathered from the field. Qualitative research method (specifically descriptive) was adopted in analyzing and interpreting about one third of the data gathered in the form of words. All the experiences and discoveries made during the research were described. It helped the researcher to describe the current state of affairs in the packaging industry and what needs to be done to improve the industry in all aspects. The quantitative method on the other hand was used in quantifying related responses to the questionnaire and some interviews conducted. These were statistically analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Software and Microsoft Excel. These methods were used because of their ability to strengthen and also to enhance the validity of the findings.

3.02 Library Research

In order to get sufficient documents relevant to the research, the researcher visited a number of libraries in Accra and Kumasi respectively. These included public and private libraries. The information gathered ranges from archival material as well as written documents. The college of Art and the KNUST Libraries, for example, provided authentic sources of information. This is because valuable books, journals, past students' thesis which assisted the researcher have all been documented.

During the search at these libraries, the researcher made sure that relevant literature related directly or indirectly to the research topic at hand were chosen. Weekly and annual articles, journals and brochures on packaging design were also studied. Some of the areas read in these books and journals are packaging design, Ghanaian export trade, Ghanaian export trade with the EU, Consumer trends and expectations, major challenges affecting Ghanaian export among others.

Apart from the libraries, Ghana Export Promotion Council and the Institute of Packaging Ghana offered similar sources for information. The researcher also accessed the internet in order to find out what was being done in other parts of the world. This is to assist in making a conclusive statement on the topic in contention. In addition, the literature review aspect of this thesis relied upon the use of the internet facility as well.

3.03 Population for the Study

A population deals with all the people in a particular area or setting. This means identifying characteristics which members of the universe have in common and which will identify each unit as being a member of a particular group. Nkpa (1997) is of the view that, "a population consist of all elements in a well defined collection of a set of values". For instance all the exporters and consumers make up the population of exporters and consumers in Ghana. He further argues that "any research is expected to yield findings. The findings may be applicable to the entire universe" or certain elements within the universe.

To be able to come out with a good research piece, there is the need to restrict one's self to a particular target group, population or area. For example, one industry, a community or an organization. The group to which the researcher intends to generalize his findings is referred to as the target population.

The population for this research work was focused largely in Accra and partly in Kumasi. This is because most of the companies that export products to the EU are all situated here. Consumers within the population area are also found to have more exposure to locally packaged and imported products as well. This included companies that export Ghanaian products to EU countries such as United Kingdom, Italy etc. The target population under study consisted of 90 exporters and 200 consumers. Out of this number the researcher was able to access a total number of about 115. The population was divided into two distinctive categories forming the strata at the population level. These categories are

A- Food exporters representing stratum 1

B- Consumers representing stratum 2

The number of people selected from each stratum is

Category A – 25 export companies

Category B – 90 consumers

3.04 Sampling

Sampling had to do with gathering information from only a fraction of the population or phenomenon under study. Osuala (2005) defines sampling as taking any portion of a population or universe as representative of that population or universe. Its main function is to obtain external validity of data being studied. In addition, sampling serves the practical purpose of making possible the study of problems which otherwise could not be undertaken due to prohibitions of cost, time, personnel or scope.

There are many types of sampling techniques. These includes the following; stratified random sampling, simple random sampling, systematic sampling, cluster sampling, stage sampling, purposive sampling and others.

In this research work the simple random and purposive sampling techniques were used. The critical attribute of a simple random sampling is that each member of the target population has an equal and independent chance of being included. Independence in this sense means that the selection of a member does not in any way affect the selection of any other member of the population. These techniques were considered due to the homogenous and heterogeneous nature of the exporters and consumers.

Using the simple random and purposive sampling technique the researcher was able to select 25 companies that export to the EU and 90 local and foreign consumers out of the target population. As a result the population was divided into two distinctive categories forming the strata at the population.

In addition to the questionnaires, personal contact interviews were conducted on these two sets of groups in other to fish out for extra information that could not be addressed by the questionnaires. The interview was conducted on almost all who answered the questionnaires. The type of questions asked triggered the right responses.

3.05 Instruments of Data Collection

Two groups of data were obtained; primary and secondary data. Primary data was gathered through the use of tools such as observation, interview and questionnaire.

Secondary data on the other hand was obtained from documented sources such as books and library reviews, publications magazines, journals etc. some of the libraries visited includes; KNUST libraries, Ghana Export Promotion Authority library in Accra and Institute of Packaging Ghana library, Accra .

1. **Observation**

It is the act of recognising and noting fact or occurrences. It can fairly be called the classic method of scientific enquiry. Osuala (2005) and Walliman (2001) define observation as "a method of recording conditions, events and activities through a non-inquisitorial involvement". They further explains that observation can be used for recording the nature or condition of objects. Leedy & Ormrod (2005) state that in qualitative study observations are intentionally unstructured and free-flowing: the researcher shifts focus from one thing to another as new and potentially significant objects and events presents themselves. The primary advantage of conducting observations in this manner is flexibility: The researcher can take advantage of unforeseen data sources as they surface.

A researcher may directly play a part in the situation being observed or be a non-participant. In participatory observation, the observer keenly participates and becomes an insider in the situation being observed so that he or she experiences the event the same way as the participants. The non-participatory observation occurs where the observer (researcher) interacts with the subjects enough to establish a bond but does not really become involved in the behaviours and activities of the group.

The researcher therefore used Personal observation technique in this research work. Direct and close observations were made at selected shopping malls and supermarkets in Accra and Kumasi respectively. These are Accra mall, Koala, Maxmart, Shoprite, Marina Mall, A&C shopping mall, Opoku Trading and Melcom. For over four months, the researcher conducted an observation tour in these shopping malls and supermarkets of customers who were shopping. In all, 20 visits to these shops with each lasting from 20minutes to four hours. The criteria used for the observation includes;

a. Shelf display of locally packaged product and graphical appearance.
b. Customers perception and reaction to made in Ghana products
c. Comparing made in Ghana products shelf display and appearance to imported products.

The researcher used observation checklist (Appendix c) to record the data gathered from the obersevations made from the field.

2. Questionnaire preparation and administration

According to Best (1981) questionnaire is a data gathering device in which respondents respond to questions by way of giving answers to specific questions. He emphasizes that questionnaires are used when factual information is desired.

After identifying the groups of people to be included in this research, questionnaires were designed and sent out to sample their views. In all, two sets of questionnaires was designed and administered personally to sample respondents' views on appearance and visibility of non-traditional export products. The first set was administered to companies the export non-traditional export products to the EU. For example, Home foods and

Cannery, Selassie farms and Groceries ltd, Nkulenu industries ltd, Praise Exports, King Solomon Trading. The questions asked was centred on how the exporters packaged their products before exporting to the EU.

The second set of questionnaire was issued out to people and individuals of diverse background and social status who buy and patronize made in Ghana products that are intended for export. Eg. African Americans, Ghanaians, Europeans and many more. Questions asked were intended to gather information about consumers' behaviour and expectation on package appearance and visibility of made in Ghana products.

All the respondents were randomly selected and the questionnaires administered to them on one-on-one basis. In all 40 and 22 questions were designed and issued out to 90 consumers and 25 exporters. They were open ended and close up questions with possible answers given.

3. Interview

Interviews can yield a great deal of useful information. The researcher can ask questions related to facts (e.g., biographical information), people's beliefs and perspectives about the facts, feelings, motives, present and past behaviours, standards for behaviour, etc. Unstructured interviews are, of course, more flexible and more likely to yield information that the researcher had not planned to ask for; their primary disadvantage is that the researcher gets different information from different people and may not be able to make comparisons among the interviewees. In some cases, a researcher may want to interview several participants simultaneously in a focus group. (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005).

The researcher adopted the unstructured conversational type of interview with officials of Ghana Export Promotion Council and Institute of Packaging, Ghana to find out their views about Ghanaian exports and how they can meet European Union standards and specifications. These interviews were not planned in advance. The researcher only asked questions as the opportunity arose and listened closely and used the respondents' answers to decide on the next question.

3.06 Data Collecting Procedures

The collection of data for this research began by first studying publications of renowned packaging designers such as Walton Thomas (2002), *"Package design: A nexus for creativity and business success",* Rettie & Brewer (2000), *" the Verbal and Visual Component of Package Design etc.* to improve the researcher's understanding of the various issues that affect packaging design. This was preceded by several trips to various libraries, company premises, shopping malls and supermarkets aimed at collecting and assessing packages made by the local people for export. It was noticed that most of the packages found were not attractive enough compared to their foreign counterparts. The method of assessment used is described below;

1. The packages were checked to see if they meet ISO Ghana standard of labelling and specification.
2. A quick glance was made through the whole package; checking for flaws such as bar coding, poor typography or abuse of typeface, choice and application of colour, image quality among others.

3.07 Collection of Primary and Secondary Data

Primary data was gathered from exporters and consumers of made in Ghana products that are intended for export to the EU. Also officials of the Ghana Export Promotion Council and Institute of Packaging Ghana (IOPG) gave out some primary data. The data was collected from their premises through personal interviews, discussions and on-the-spot observation as well as self administered questionnaires.

It is worth noting that the questionnaire was purposefully given to the exporters and the consumers, who could read, digest the questions and needed time to express themselves freely on paper without any personal interaction with the researcher.

Secondary data on the other hand was collected from libraries visited such as the KNUST libraries, Ghana Export Promotion Council, Institute of Packaging Ghana. Data was also collected from documentary sources and unpublished thesis in the KNUST libraries, books from friends, the internet and other publications.

3.08 Reliability and Validity of Data and Information

Data collected and used in this thesis can be said to be reliable and valid. The questionnaire and interview guide after their preparation were pre-tested on few of the respondents to check their clarity. The necessary corrections were therefore made before they were administered.

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CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF DATA, ANALYSIS/ DISCUSSIONS AND FINDINGS

4.00 Overview

In order to ensure that the researcher had achieved the intended objectives stated in the first chapter of this thesis, the following activities were carried out.

First of all, interviews and personal observations were carried out followed by questionnaires. The results of these activities have been presented below. In all, two sets of questionnaires were designed. One set contains fourty (40) questions and the second set contains twenty two (22) questions. A total number of 62 questions were distributed to 25 exporters and 90 consumers who are not Ghanaians but reside in Ghana.

All these questionnaires were retrieved. Using descriptive statistics, the data obtained from respondents have been analysed and presented in the form of tables, charts and graphs using SPSS and Microsoft Excel software.

4.01 Analysis of Data Obtained from Exporters

QUESTION 6

Which type of packaging materials do you use for your EU export products?	**frequency**	**percent**
Plastic package	15	60
Paper package	8	32
Metal package	2	8
Total	25	100

Figure 4: *A pie chart showing respondents reply to question 6.*

SOURCE: field data, 2009

In all 15 respondents representing 60 percent said they normally export products to the EU using plastic materials. Eight of the respondents representing 32 percent said they use paper whiles 2 respondents representing 8 percent packaged their export products using materials made of metal. It could be deduced from their responses that majority of the exporters prefer packaging their export products using plastic materials. This might be because it is common and easy to acquire.

QUESTION 7

Who are your target customers in the EU?	frequency	percent
Ghanaians outside	-	-
Europeans	-	-
African Americans only	-	-
All the above	25	100
Total	25	100

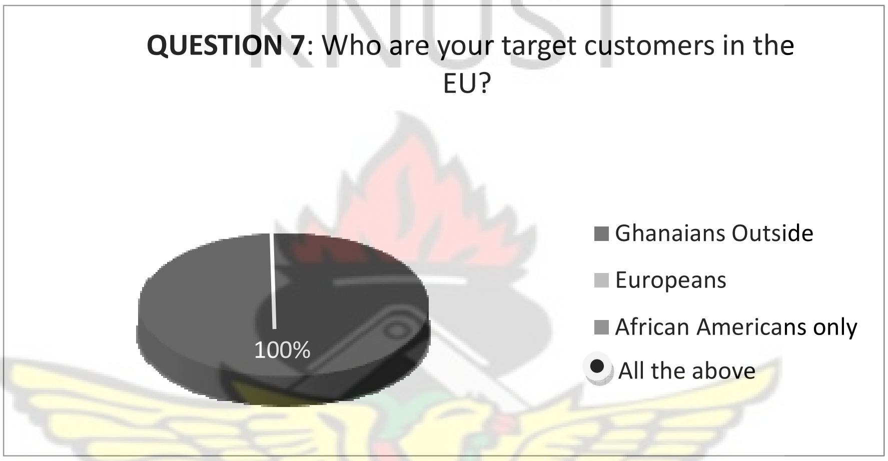

Figure 5: *A pie chart showing respondents reply to question 7.*

SOURCE: field data, 2009

In finding out the exporters target customers in the EU market, all the 25 respondents representing 100 percent admitted that they do not target a specific group of people as their customers. Their main target customers are African Americans, Ghanaians outside, Europeans and any individual interested in made in Ghana products. This clearly shows a large market available for Ghanaian exports. It therefore means that the packaging of these products should meet the needs of everyone in the target market. It is ardent that if the packaging is improved more people and individuals will be attracted to use and patronize Ghanaian products.

QUESTION 8

What comment(s) do you get from customers concerning the standard of your package?	frequency	Percentage (%)
Good package	19	76
Poor package	5	20
Excellent package	1	4
Total	25	100

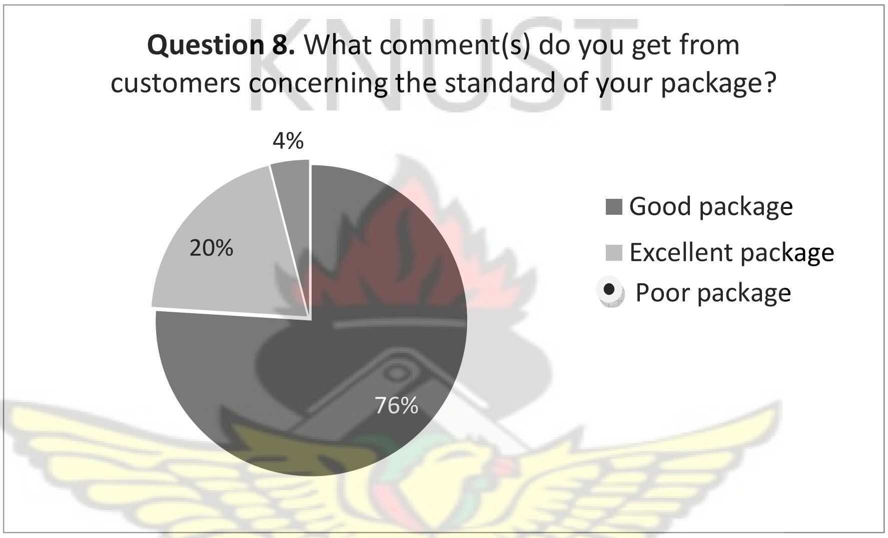

Figure 6: *A pie chart showing respondents reply to question 8.*

SOURCE: field data, 2009

Nineteen respondents representing 76 percent were of the view that customers acknowledge that their product packaging is good. Five of them representing 20 percent admits that customers complain about their product packaging and therefore regard it as a poorly packaged product. Only 1 respondent representing 4 percent said their product packaging is excellent. Inferring from the above statement, it appears that most of the exporters are content with customers perception of their products packaging even though, generally, there is far more room for improvement.

QUESTION 9

Are you familiar with ISO (International Organisation for Standardisation) standard for labelling and packaging in the EU market?	**frequency**	**percent**
Yes	1	96
No	24	4
Total	25	100

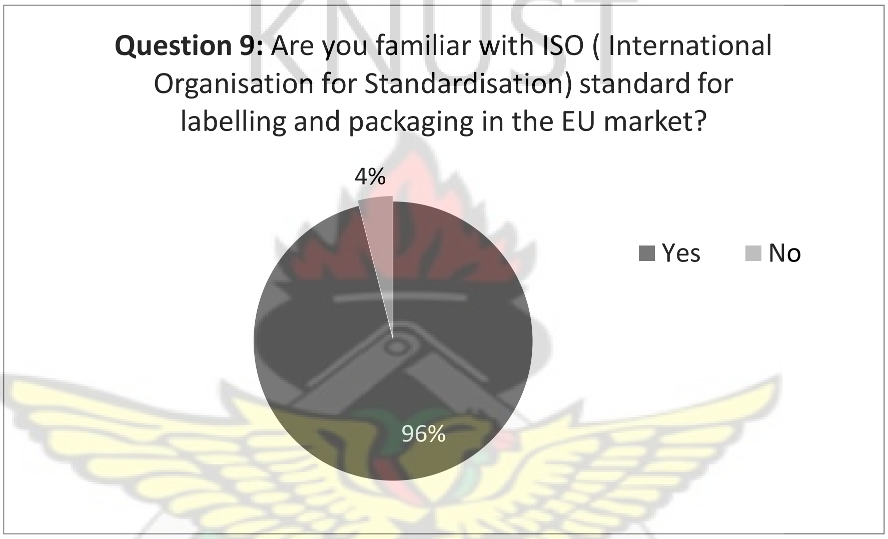

Figure 7: *A pie chart showing respondents reply to question 9.*

SOURCE: field data, 2009

As far as familiarity with ISO rules are concerned, question 9 revealed that 24 respondents representing 96 percent said they are not familiar with ISO (International Organisation for Standardisation) rules. Only 1 respondent representing 4 percent said he/she is familiar with ISO rules. This means that majority of the respondents are not familiar with ISO rules for labelling and packaging in the EU market. It is however possible that this revelation by the exporters might account for some of the flaws identified in packaging of Ghanaian export products. Applying ISO rules in the design of packages seems to be a challenge for exporters.

QUESTION 11

Who does your labels for you?	frequency	percent
Advertising agency	2	8
Specialist packaging firms	5	20
Printing presses	18	72
Total	25	100

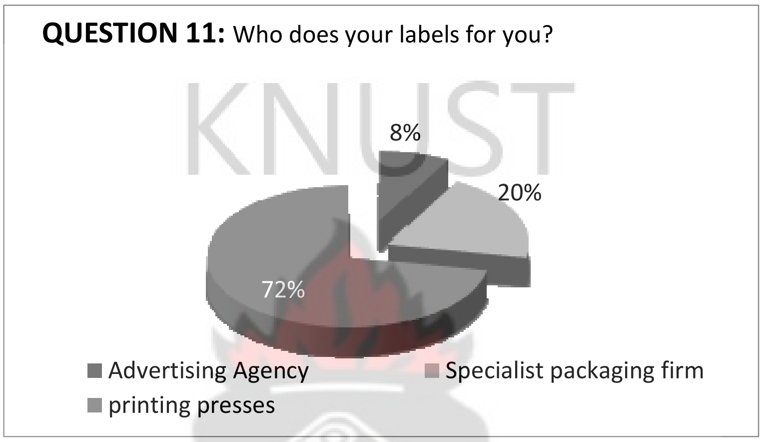

Figure 8: *A pie chart showing respondents reply to question 11.*

SOURCE: field data, 2009

Out of 25 respondents, 5 representing 20 percent said specialist packaging firms does their labels for them. Eighteen representing 22 percent said they engage the services of printing presses in designing and printing of their labels and boxes. Only two of the respondents said they engage advertising agencies. From the above data, it is clear that specialist packaging firms are not often engaged in designing and developing packages for most of the made in Ghana products we see on the market. The printing presses are rather preferred. This might be because most of the printing presses charge less for packaging and labelling design and product development. It is recommended that if possible expert packaging and labelling designers should work together with the printing presses.

QUESTION 12

Do you engage packaging professionals in dealing with your package designs and labelling?	frequency	percent
Yes	5	20
No	20	80
Total	25	100

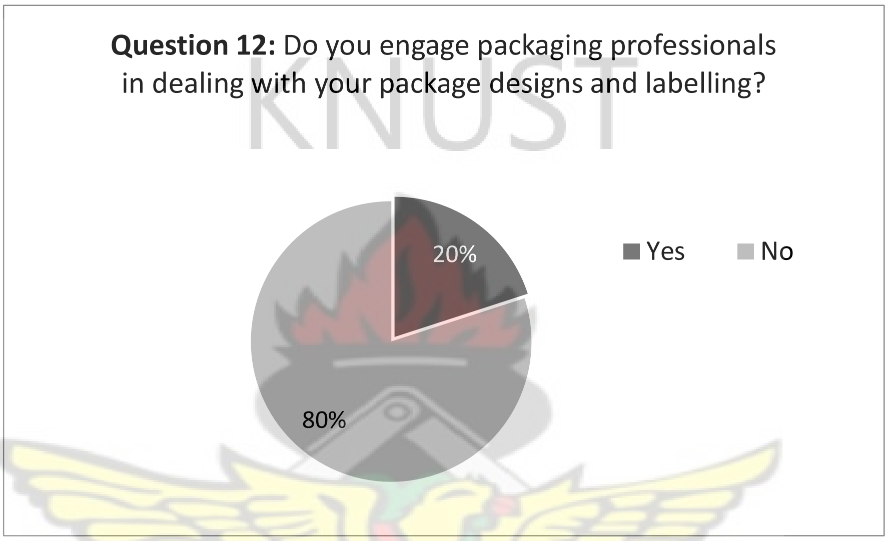

Figure 9: *A pie chart showing respondents reply to question 12.*

SOURCE: field data, 2009

The research revealed that, out of the 25 respondents representing the views of companies that engage the services of packaging professionals in dealing with their package designs and labelling, 5 representing 20 percent agree to the above statement. Twenty of the respondent on the other hand disagree with the above statement that they engage the services of packaging professionals in dealing with their packaging design and labelling. This could be attributed to the fact that most of the companies feel it is expensive dealing with the specialist packaging firms.

QUESTION 13

Do you spend more on primary packaging than secondary	frequency	percent
Yes	15	60
No	10	40
Total	25	100

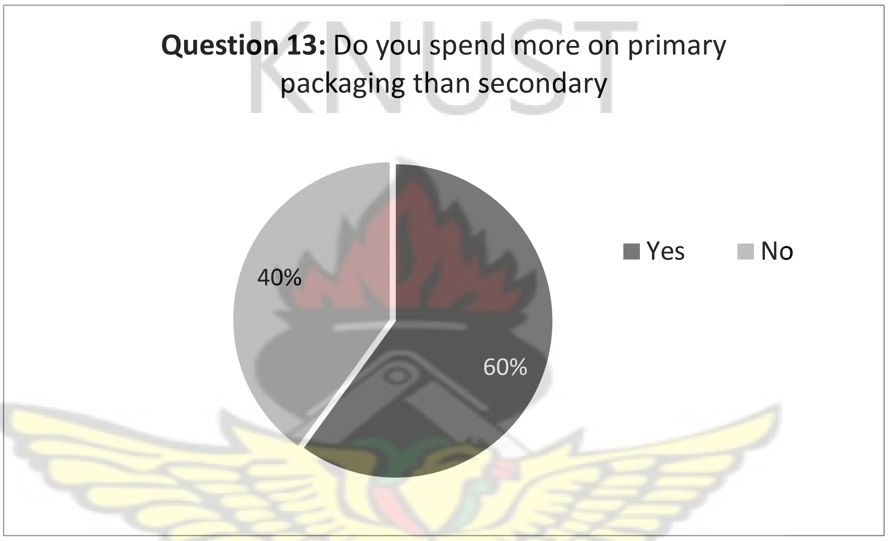

Figure 10: *A pie chart showing respondents reply to question 13.*

SOURCE: field data, 2009

When asked whether they spend more on primary packaging than secondary, 15 of the respondents representing 60 percent said yes to the above statement. Ten representing 40 percent however said no, they do not spend more on primary packaging than secondary. The inference from this information is that majority of respondents spend more money and resources on primary packaging.

QUESTION 14

Are the current packaging (primary, secondary, tertiary) and packing methods affordable and suitable for the product?	**frequency**	**percent**
Yes	3	12
No	22	88
Total	25	100

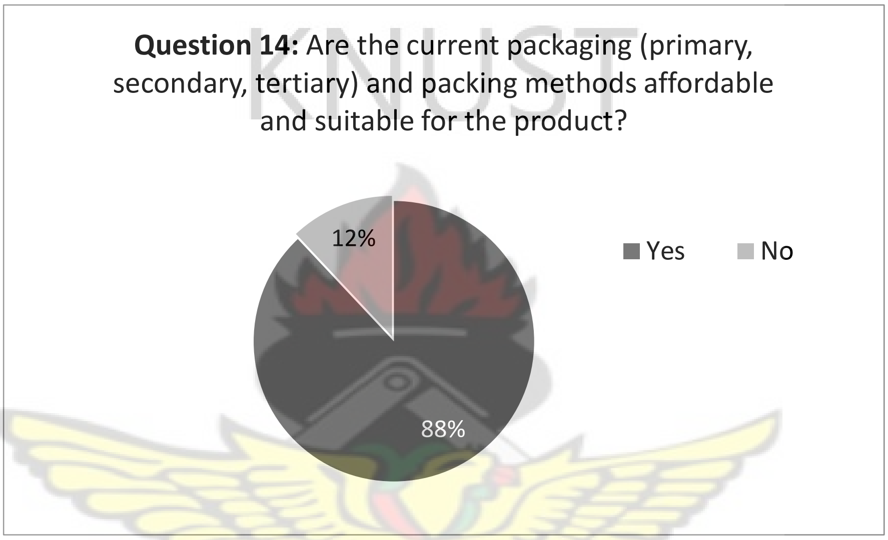

Figure 11. *A pie chart showing respondents reply to question 14.*

SOURCE: field data, 2009

To the above statement 22 of the respondents representing 88 percent admitted that their current packaging and packing methods are not affordable and suitable for the product. Only 3 representing 12 percent said they are satisfied with their current packaging and packing methods in terms of affordability and appropriateness. This means that most respondents are of the view that their current packaging and packaging methods are expensive and not suitable for the product. It could also mean that the Ghanaian market does not have good and quality packaging materials and resources available for exporters to acquire and use for packaging.

QUESTION 15

Which one of these is the greatest challenge that affects your products in the EU country?	**frequency**	**percent**
Quality of product (content)	1	4
Transportation	5	76
Quality of packaging and labelling	19	20
Total	25	100

Figure 12. *A pie chart showing respondents reply to question 15.*

SOURCE: field data, 2009

When asked exporters the greatest challenge that affects their products in the EU market, only 1 respondent representing 4 percent said it is the quality of product (content). Five, representing 20 percent of respondents, said transportation and 19 representing 76 percent said the quality of packaging and labelling is their greatest challenge to export trade with the EU. They admitted that an attractive label designs, poor printing methods, limited packaging materials available in the market are some of the reasons that affect the quality of their packaging and labelling.

QUESTION 16:

Where do you get your packaging materials from?	frequency	percent
Imported	5	20
Locally made	16	64
Both locally made and imported	4	16
Total	25	100

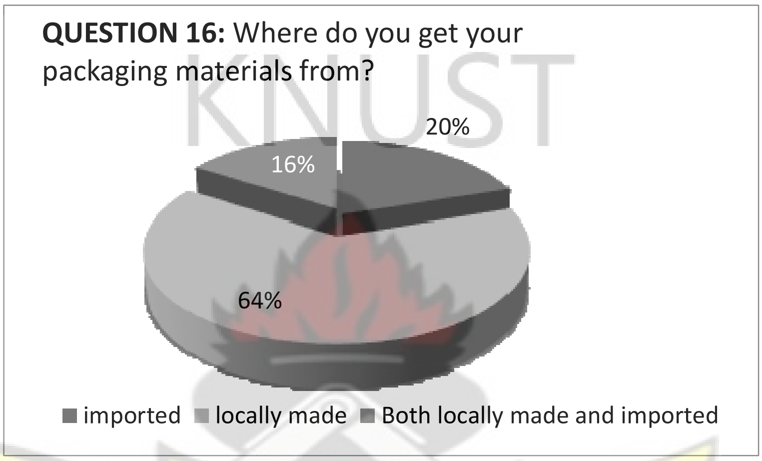

Figure 13. *A pie chart showing respondents reply to question 16.*

SOURCE: field data, 2009

Majority of the exporters get their packaging materials from local sources. The above table shows that 5 representing 20 percent acquire their packaging materials from outside (imported) whiles 16 representing 64 percent materials are locally made. Four of them representing 16 percent said their materials are both locally made and imported. This means that most of the materials used for packaging Ghanaian export products are locally made. These local materials are cheaper and easy to acquire and use even though they might not be of the best quality compared to imported ones. This also means that if the local materials are improved in terms of quality and appeal it will go a long way to boost standards of our packaging and design. This will also create more job opportunities for people.

QUESTION 17

Are you aware of customers' expectation in the EU countries?	frequency	percent
Yes	2	8
No	23	92
Total	25	100

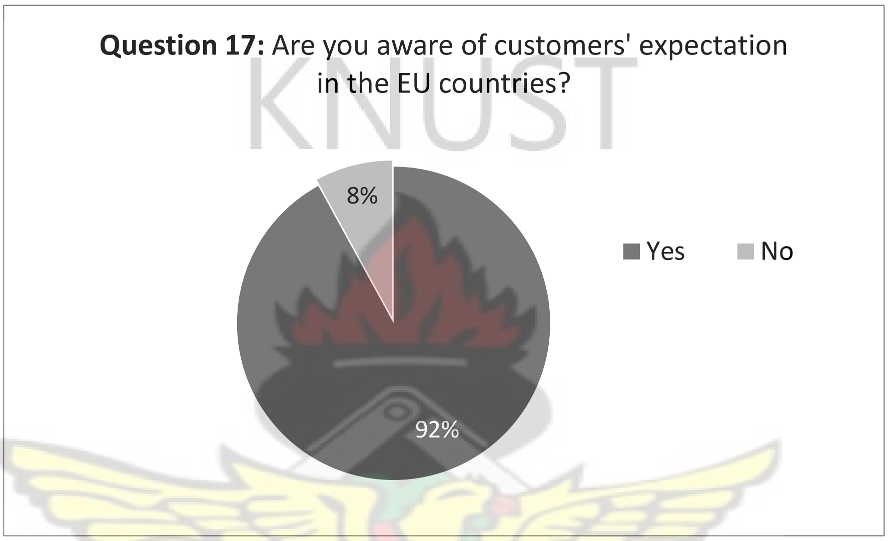

Figure 14. *A pie chart showing respondents reply to question 17.*

SOURCE: field data, 2009

Twenty three respondents representing 92 percent agree that they are not aware of customer's expectation in the EU countries. Two representing 8 percent however agree that they are aware of customer's expectation in the EU countries. This indicates that most of the respondents are not aware of what customers expect from them. That is why communicating these expectations through appropriate graphic medium to customers are most often overlooked. Therefore customers are not satisfied with these products.

QUESTION 18

Are there any special restrictions that might hamper the sale of your export products?	frequency	percent
Yes	21	84
No	4	16
Total	25	100

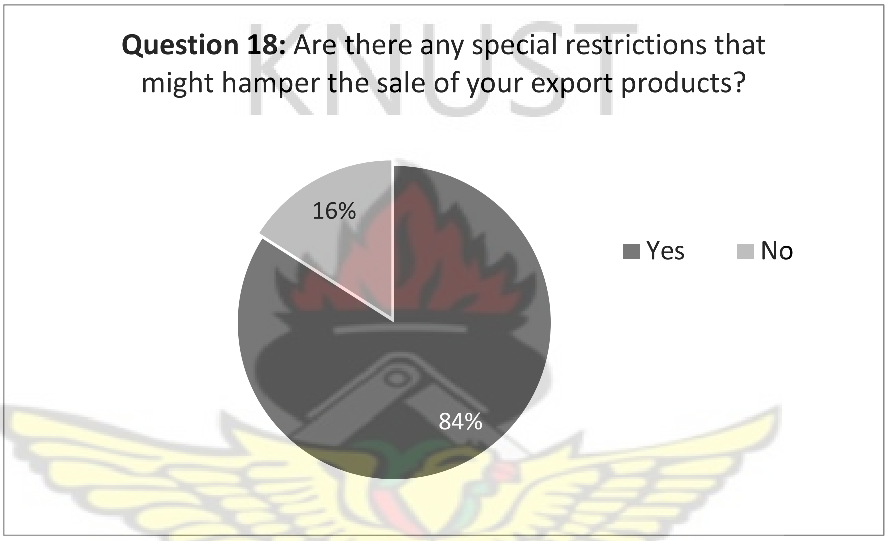

Figure 15. *A pie chart showing respondents reply to question 18.*

SOURCE: field data, 2009

With question 18 the researcher wanted to find out whether there are any special restrictions, especially in the EU that might hamper the sale of a particular export product. Here, out of the 25 respondents, 4 respondents representing 16 percent said no and 21 respondents representing 84 percent said yes. It appears here that some products cannot be exported because of the restrictions placed on them.

QUESTION 19

Do you have any knowledge about how your products are retailed and displayed on shelves in the EU markets?	frequency	percent
Yes	3	12
No	22	88
Total	25	100

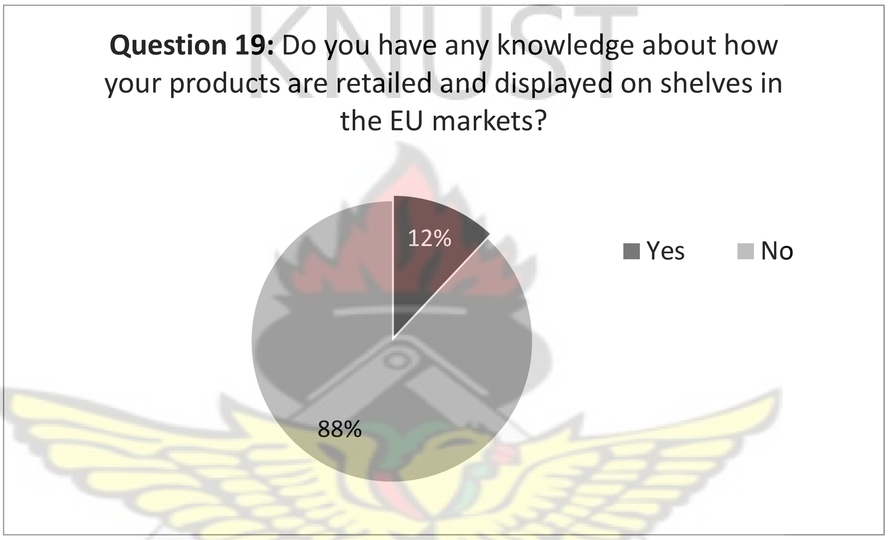

Figure 16. *A pie chart showing respondents answer to question 19.*

SOURCE: field data, 2009

Three respondents representing 12 percent said yes and 22 respondents representing 88 percent said no. The latter do not have any knowledge about how their products are retailed and displayed on shelves in the EU market. The logic that can be made from the information obtained is that majority of the people do not have any knowledge about how their products are retailed and displayed on shelves in the EU markets. This vital information will help packaging designers and manufacturers to design and produce effective packages that will meet the EU markets specifications and needs.

QUESTION 20

Have the information on your packaging and labelling been approved in the EU countries?	frequency	percent
Yes	25	100
No	-	-
Total	25	100

Figure 17. *A pie chart showing respondents reply to question 20.*

SOURCE: field data, 2009

To the above question, all 25 respondents representing 100 percent said that their information on their packaging and labelling has been approved in the EU countries. The deduction from this data is that exporters of made in Ghana products make available appropriate information and certification needed on their labels and packaging before exporting to the EU. That is why their products are approved in the EU countries.

QUESTION 21

Are you aware of competing brands in the EU market?	**frequency**	**percent**
Yes	25	100
No	-	-
Total	25	100

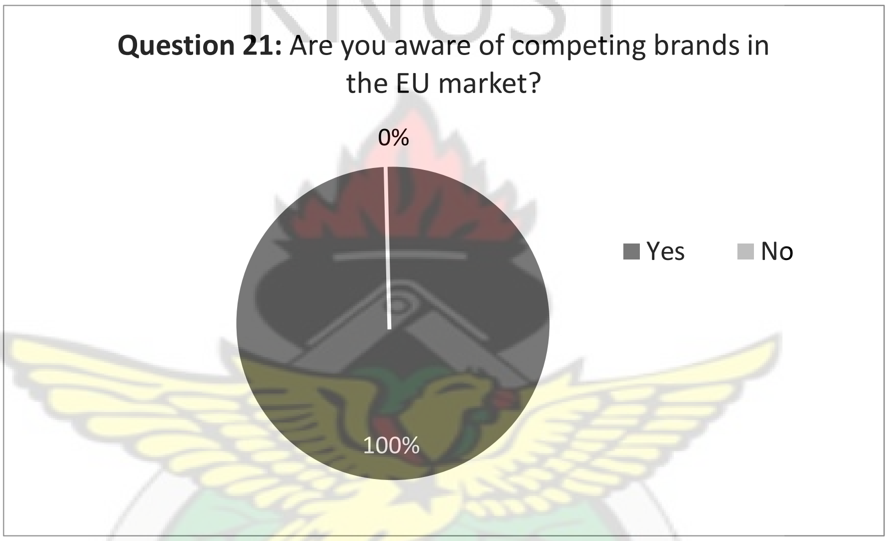

Figure 18. *A pie chart showing respondents reply to question 21.*

SOURCE: field data, 2009

In order to ascertain whether exporters are well informed about competing brands from other countries in the EU market, all the 25 respondents said yes to the above question. None of the respondents said no. This implies that all the exporters are aware of the competition that exists in the EU market. It is therefore prudent that efforts should be made to increase non-traditional export market share in the EU market through effective packaging design.

QUESTION 22

Have any of your products been rejected as a result of poor packaging?	frequency	percent
Once only	5	20
Twice only	15	60
Never before	5	20
Total	25	100

Figure 19. *A pie chart showing respondents reply to question 22.*

SOURCE: field data, 2009

The researcher's quest is to ascertain whether any exporters' products have been rejected in the EU market as a result of poor packaging. Data gathered indicate that 5 respondents representing 20 percent said once and 15 respondents representing 60 percent said twice. It is only 5 respondents representing 20 percent that said that the products have never been rejected before. The explanation from this statistics is that majority of the exporters are unable to meet all expectations of the EU market especially regarding packaging and labelling.

QUESTION 23

Are your packaging designs based on market research?	Frequency	percent
Yes	-	-
No	25	100
Total	25	100

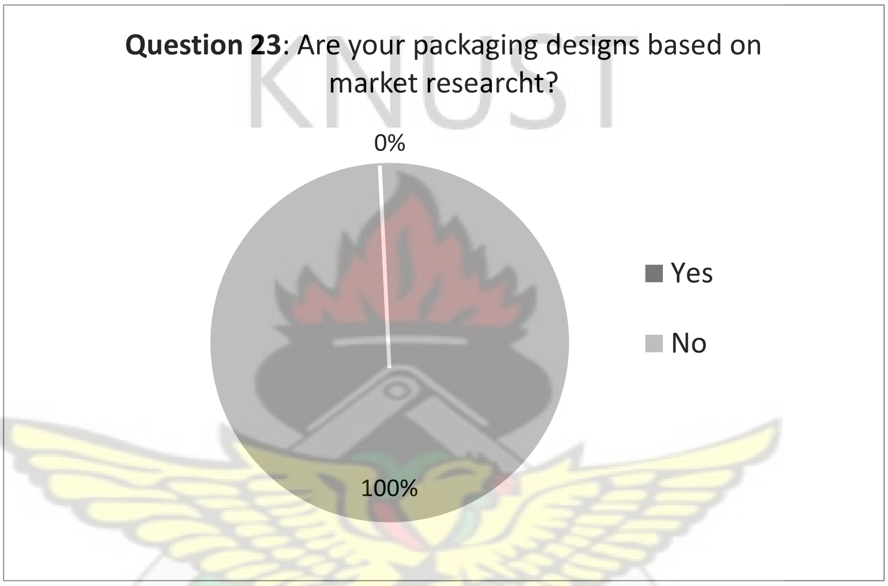

Figure 20. *A pie chart showing respondents reply to question 23.*

SOURCE: field data, 2009

All 25 respondents said the design of packaging of their products is not based on any market research. Deducing from this statistics, exporters are of the view that they do not take any marketing research before coming up with a packaging design. This might affect the acceptability and functionality of the packaging design. Understanding the demography, lifestyle, purchasing power, likes and dislikes of the target market are all critical factors that should be given the needed attention and consideration when designing and developing packages (Byett et al, 1997).

QUESTION 24

Do your packages and packaging materials meet legal and other consumer protection needs in the target market?	**Frequency**	**percent**
Yes	25	100
No	-	-
Total	25	100

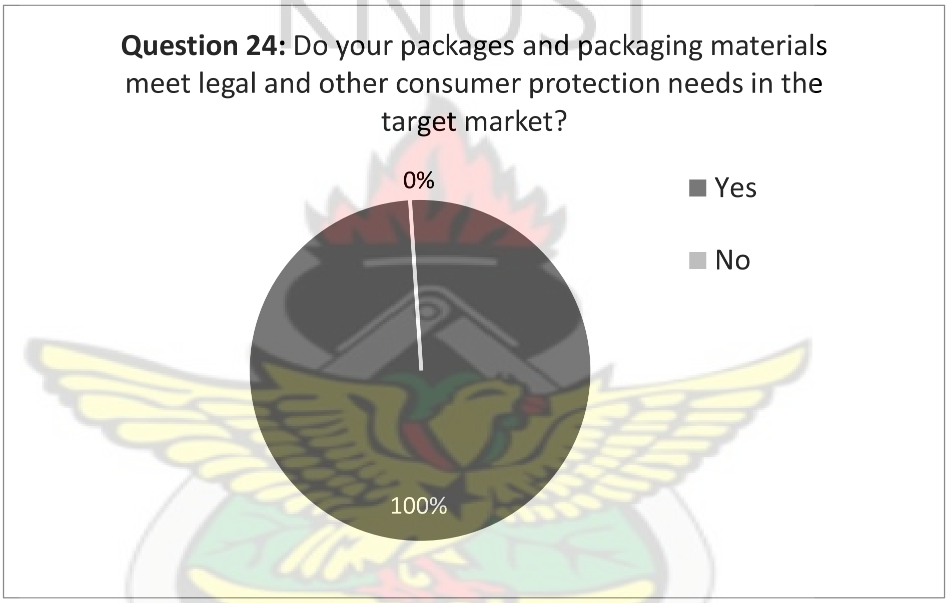

Figure 21. *A pie chart showing respondents reply to question 24.*

SOURCE: field data, 2009

Again, all 25 respondents said that their packaging materials meet legal and other consumer protection needs in the target market. It is evident that exporters meet all legal and other consumer protection needs in the EU.

QUESTION 25

Has the product been adopted /modified to the consumers taste and requirement in the target market: has this been verified by field test?	frequency	percent
Yes	20	80
No	5	20
Total	25	100

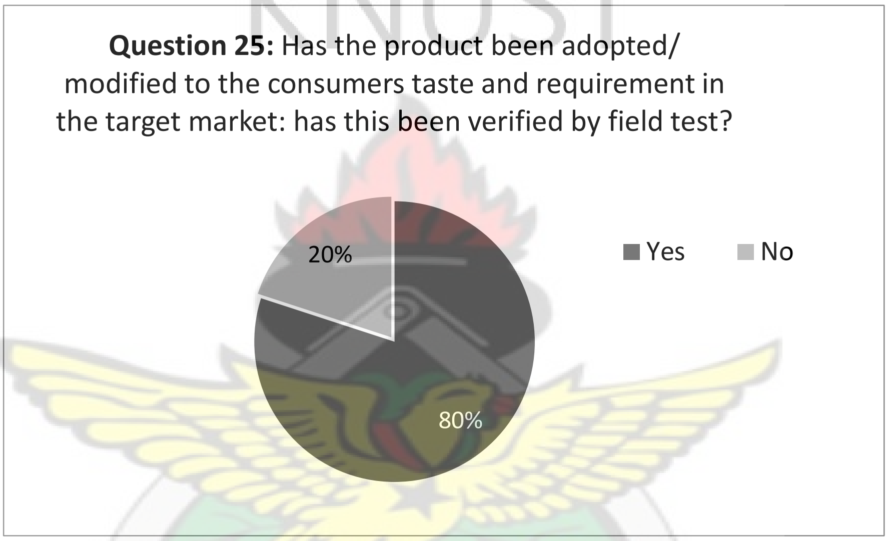

Figure 22. *A pie chart showing respondents reply to question 25.*

SOURCE: field data, 2009

Out of the 25 respondents, 20 representing 80 percent said yes their product has been adopted /modified to the consumers taste and requirement in the target market and has been verified by field test. Yet 5 respondents representing 20 percent said no. The logic that can be made from this information is that majority of the respondents agree that the adopted products have been modified to the consumers' taste and requirement in the target market and has been modified by field test.

QUESTION 26

Are the sizes of your packages suitable for consumers as regards volume of contents, number of servings, measurements of home storage facilities etc?	frequency	percent
Yes	19	76
No	6	24
Total	25	100

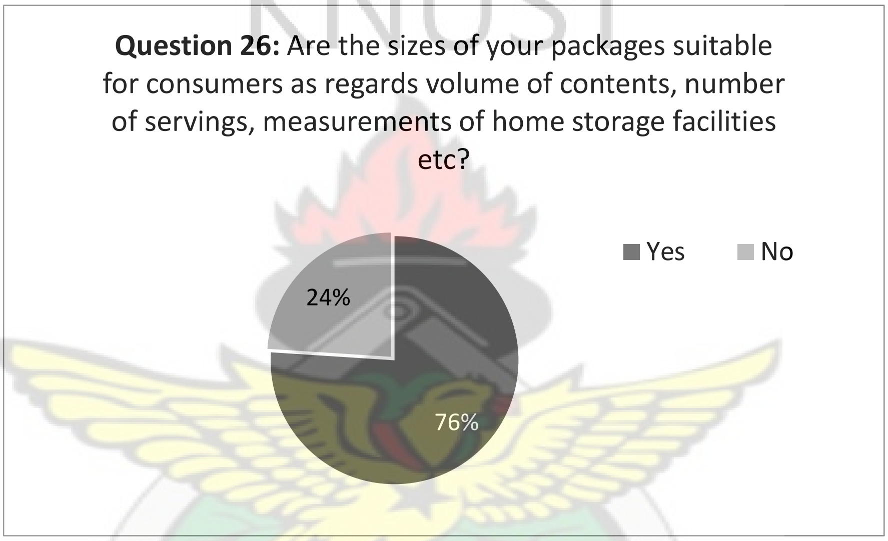

Figure 23. *A pie chart showing respondents reply to question 26.*

SOURCE: field data, 2009

Based on the statistics 19 Out of the 25 respondents, said yes, the sizes of their packages are suitable for consumers as regards volume of contents, number of servings and measurements of home storage facilities. Yet, 6 respondents said no they do not always consider this attributes. This implies that majority of the respondents consider all the above mentioned attributes to be able to penetrate the EU market.

QUESTION 27

Is the package consumer-friendly; easy to handle, open, close, empty, dispose off?	frequency	percent
Yes	25	100
No	-	-
Total	25	100

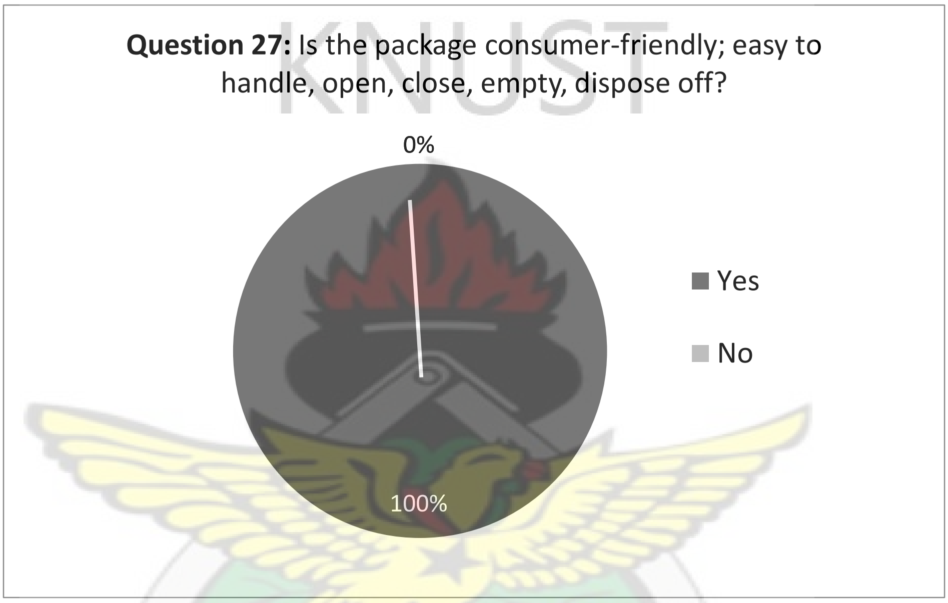

Figure 24. *A pie chart showing respondents reply to question 27.*

SOURCE: field data, 2009

The data obtained revealed that, all the 25 respondents are of the view that their packages are consumer-friendly; easy to handle, open, close, empty, dispose off. The sense that can be made from this data is that, majority of the exporters make it a point to ensure that all the vital elements required in any given package are in place to ensure consumer satisfaction.

QUESTION 28

Is the design of the package acceptable in the target market: has this been field tested?	**frequency**	**percent**
Yes	25	100
No	-	-
Total	25	100

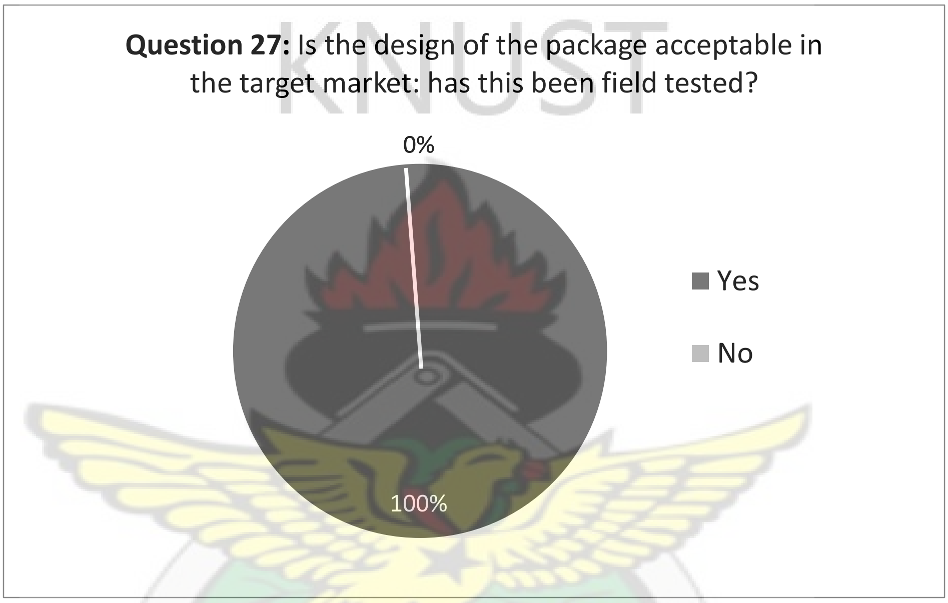

Figure 25. *A pie chart showing respondents reply to question 28.*

SOURCE: field data, 2009

From the statistics obtained, all the 25 exporters responded yes to Q. 28. Based on the consensus of the majority, the probable explanation that can be made from this information is that, the design of the package is acceptable in the target market and has also been field tested.

QUESTION 29

Is the information on your package understandable and adequate?	Frequency	percent
Yes	25	100
No	-	-
Total	25	100

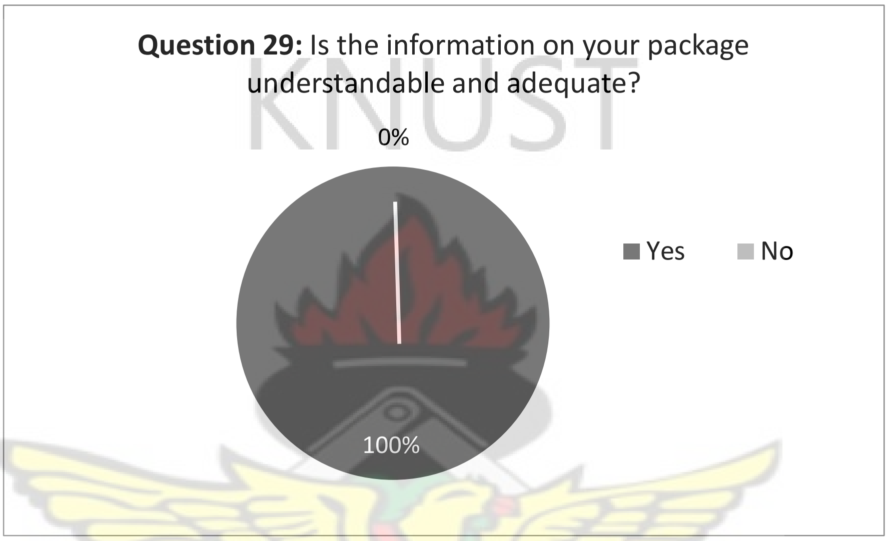

Figure 26. *A pie chart showing respondents reply to question 29.*

SOURCE: field data, 2009

The study revealed that, all the 25 exporters were of the view that the information on their packages is understandable and adequate. This data show that the exporters ensure that the information they want to provide to consumers are put in the most appropriate manner to facilitate legibility and clearer understanding of product advantages to consumers.

QUESTION 30

Have you observed the EU market standards, laws and regulations including those related to the environment?	Frequency	percent
Yes	25	100
No	-	-
Total	25	100

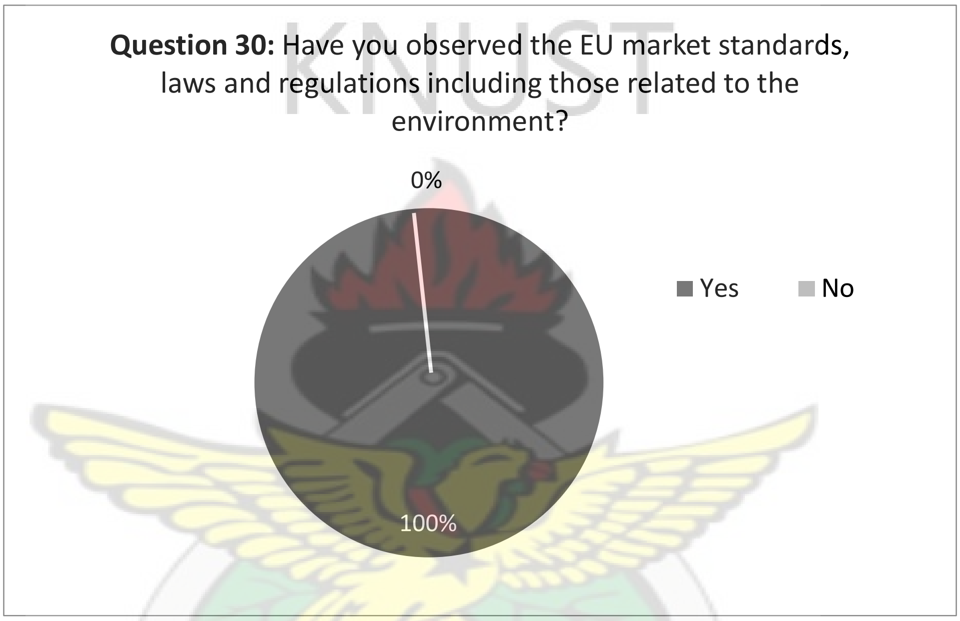

Figure 27. *A pie chart showing respondents reply to question 30.*

SOURCE: field data, 2009

All the 25 exporters responded yes, they have observed the EU market standards, laws and regulations including those related to the environment. Inferring from this data the exporters also pay attention to the disposal of packages and also ensures that whatever they design are also environmentally friendly since it is currently a global concern.

QUESTION 31

Is the packaging designed to protect against shocks, and stresses during transport and storage?	Frequency	percent
Yes	20	80
No	5	20
Total	25	100

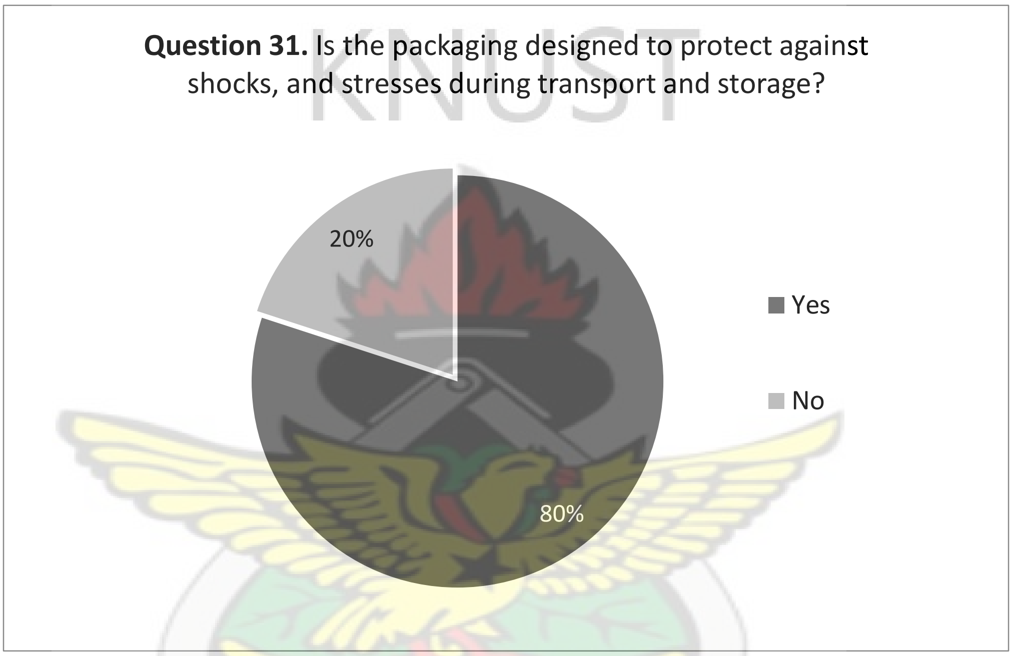

Figure 28. *A pie chart showing respondents reply to question 31.*

SOURCE: field data, 2009

Out of the 25 respondents, 20 said their packages are designed to protect against shocks and stresses during transport and storage. Whereas 5 said their prime focus for packages are not designed against shocks, and stresses during transport and storage. Using the consensus of the majority, most of the Ghanaian packages are designed with great emphasis on the above mentioned attributes of packages.

QUESTION 32

Are you aware of the climatic conditions your product will go through during distribution?	**Frequency**	**percent**
Yes	-	0
No	25	100
Total	25	100

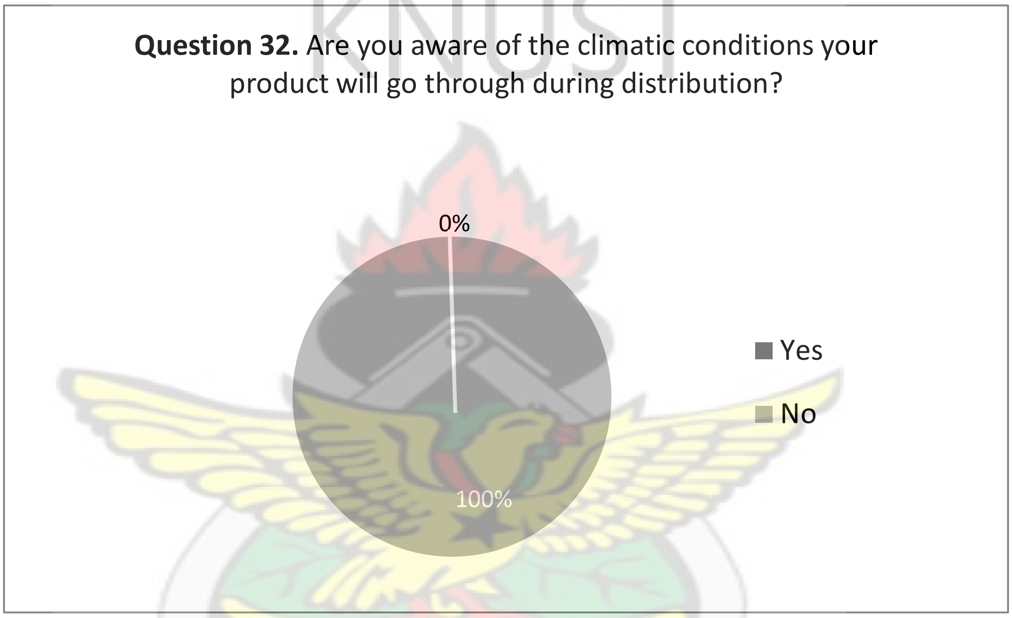

Figure 29. *A pie chart showing respondents reply to question 32.*

SOURCE: field data, 2009

This data revealed that all 25 respondents are not aware of the climatic conditions their products will go through during distribution. Using the consensus of the majority, it can be inferred that it is therefore no surprise that some exporters package designs are such that they will not be able to meet the climatic conditions in the EU.

QUESTION 33

Do you have a different package for the domestic market and the EU?	Frequency	percent
Yes	25	100
No	-	-
Total	25	100

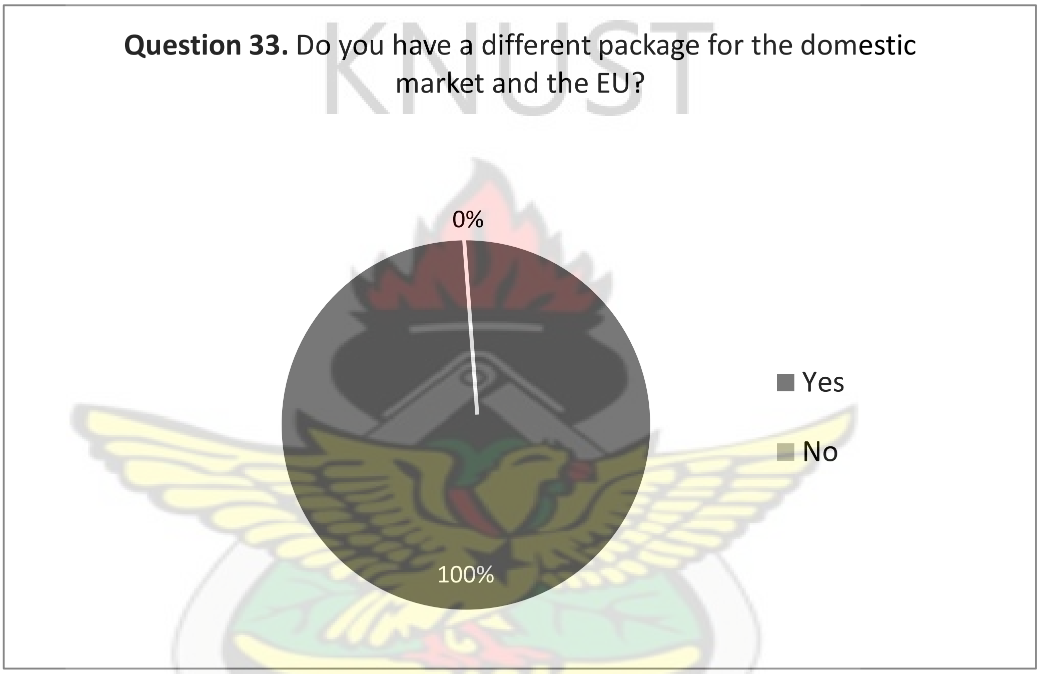

Figure 30. *A pie chart showing respondents reply to question 33.*

SOURCE: field data, 2009

All 25 respondents said they have different packages for the domestic market and the EU. Based on the agreement of the majority, it can be deduced that most exporters segment their markets to ensure that they are able to satisfy each market demand.

QUESTION 34

Have you considered the environmental impact of your packaging materials?	Frequency	percent
Yes	9	35
No	17	65
Total	25	100

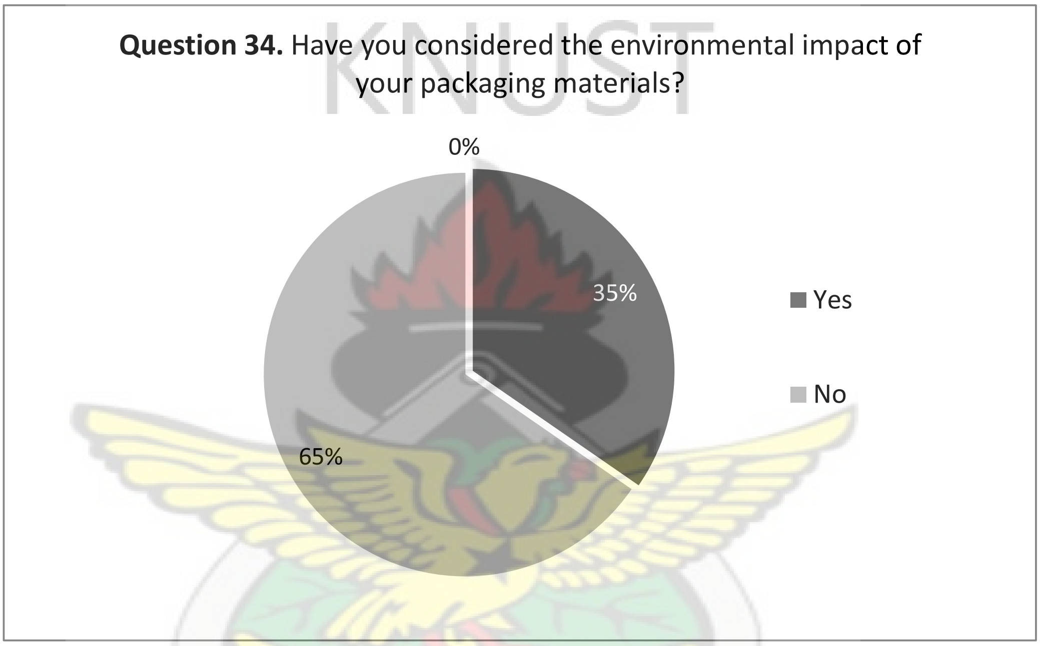

Figure 31. *A pie chart showing respondents reply to question 34.*

SOURCE: field data, 2009

Out of the 25 respondents 9 said yes they consider the environmental impact of the packaging materials. On the other hand, 17 said they have not considered the environmental impact of their packaging materials. The logic that can be made from the statistical analysis is that most exporters are not aware of the environmental impact of their packaging materials.

QUESTION 35

Has the use of recycled materials been considered ?	Frequency	percent
Yes	5	20
No	20	80
Total	25	100

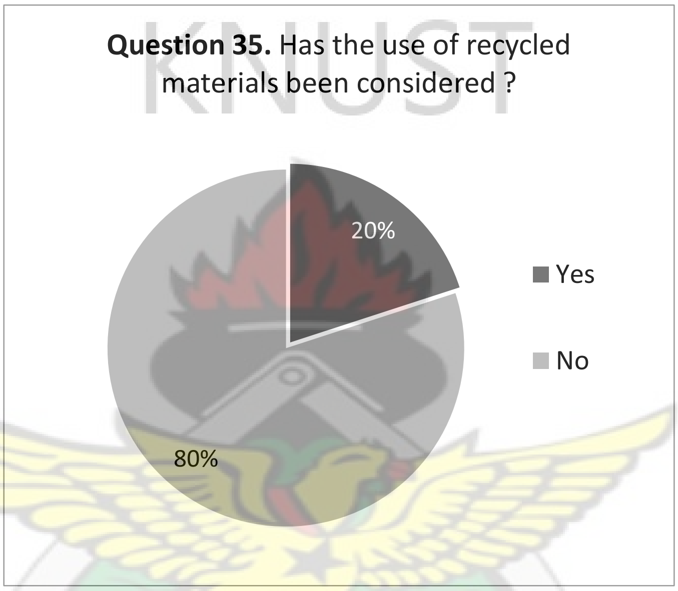

Figure 32. *A pie chart showing respondents reply to question 35.*

SOURCE: field data, 2009

This follow up Question to the previous question showed that 20 respondents said yes, they consider the use of recycled materials. Whereas 5 respondents said they do not consider recycled materials. This information implies that very few exporters do not consider recycled material. Thus the majority who consider the use of recycled materials for their products are at a better advantage for their products to be purchased than the others.

QUESTION 36

Does the package design allow for the package to be recovered, cleaned and reused, if necessary	Frequency	percent
Yes	7	28
No	18	72
Total	25	100

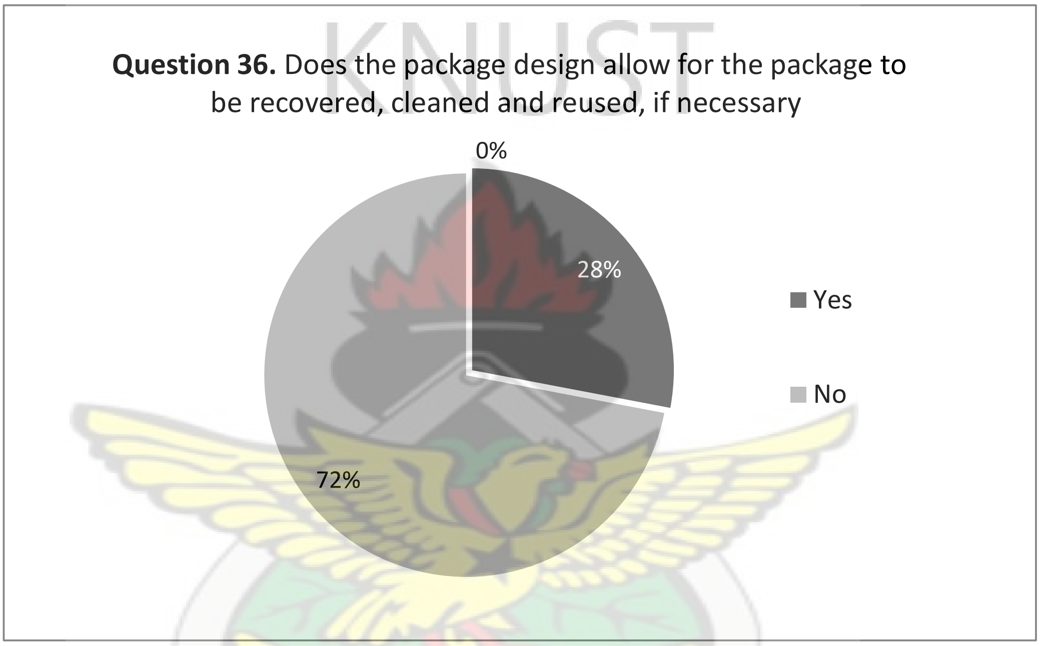

Figure 33. *A pie chart showing respondents reply to question 36.*

SOURCE: field data, 2009

Out of the 25 respondents, seven said yes, their package design allow for the package to be recovered, cleaned and reused, if necessary. But 18 said their package design does not allow for the package to be recovered, cleaned and reused. This statistics show that, majority of exporters do not pay much attention to designing the package in a way that will make it have other advantages.

QUESTION 37

Have you considered using bar code on your package?	**Frequency**	**percent**
Yes	23	92
No	2	8
Total	25	100

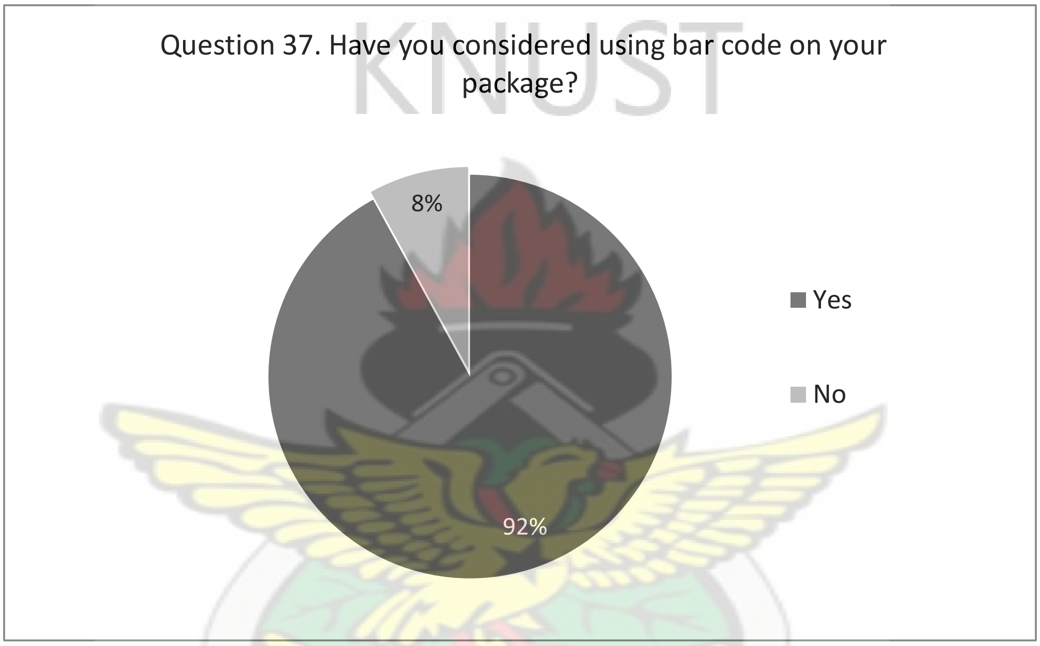

Figure 34. *A pie chart showing respondents reply to question 37.*

SOURCE: field data, 2009

23 respondents said that they have considered using bar code on their package designs. Yet, two said they have not considered using bar code on their packages. The supposition that can be made from the statistics, using the consensus of the majority, is that most of the exporters use bar code on their packages.

QUESTION 38

Is your product well known in the target market?	Frequency	percent
Yes	24	96
No	1	4
Total	25	100

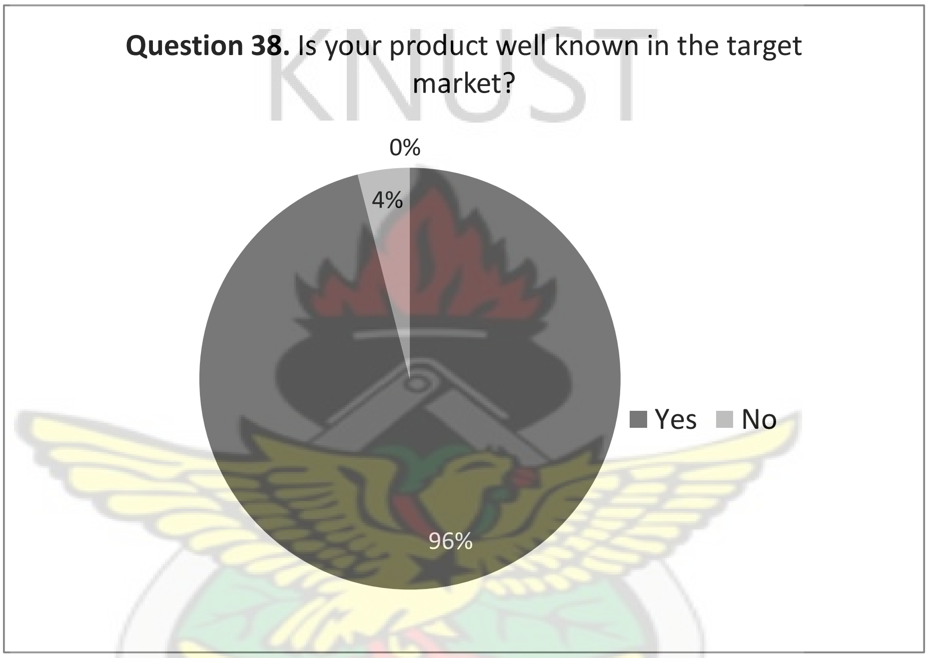

Figure 35. *A pie chart showing respondents reply to question 38.*

SOURCE: field data, 2009

24 respondents said that most of their products are well known in the target market. Still, one respondent said his product is not well known in the target market. The data indicates that, most exporters have their product well known in the EU markets.

QUESTION 39

Are your labels suitable enough when compared to foreign products?	Frequency	percent
Yes	20	80
No	5	20
Total	25	100

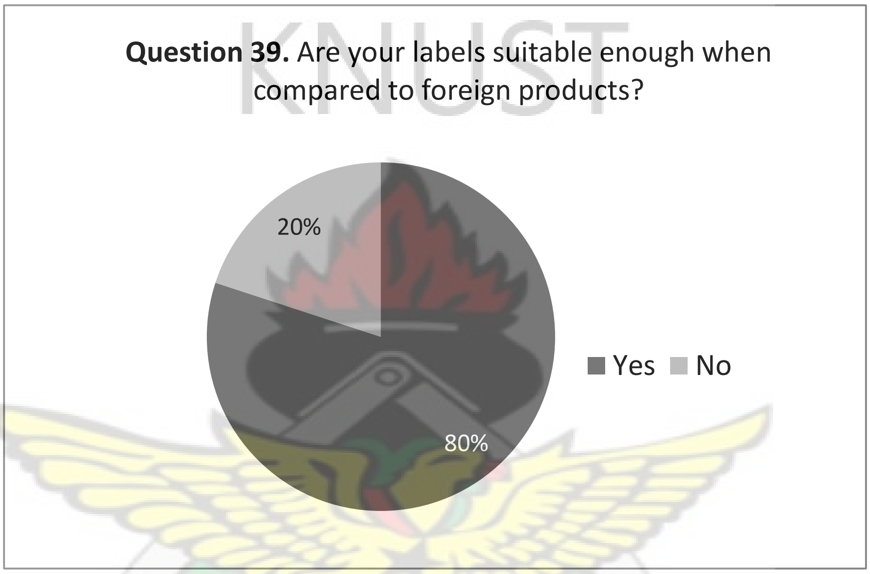

Figure 36. *A pie chart showing respondents reply to question 39.*

SOURCE: field data, 2009

From the study, 20 respondents said that their labels are suitable enough when compared to foreign products. Whereas 5 respondents said their labels are not suitable enough when compared to foreign products. Based on the agreement of the majority, it can be deduced that, most exporters' labels are not as suitable as those in the EU markets.

4.02 Analysis of Data Obtained from Consumers

Table 2

Age ranges	Frequency	Percent
16-25	5	5.7
26-35	25	27.7
36-45	40	44.4
46-65	20	22.2
Total	90	100.0

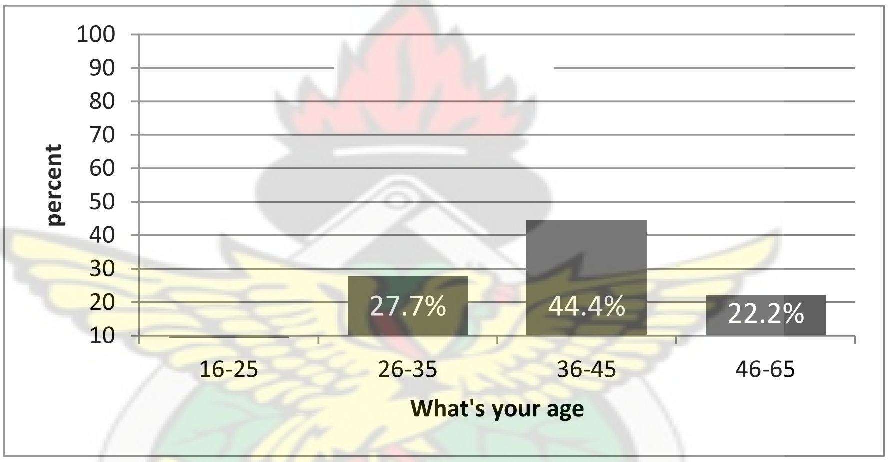

Figure 37. *A bar chart showing respondents answer to table 2*

SOURCE: Field Data, 2009

Out of the ninety respondents, 5 representing 5.7 percent are between the ages of 16 to 25. Twenty five respondents representing 27.7 percent were between the ages of 26 to 35. From the ages of 36 to 45 the respondents were 40 representing 44.4 percent. Only 20 respondents were between the ages of 46 to 65. This shows that majority of the respondents to the questionnaire were young adults who can reason and make good judgments.

Table 3

what's your gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	30	33.3
Female	60	66.7
Total	90	100.0

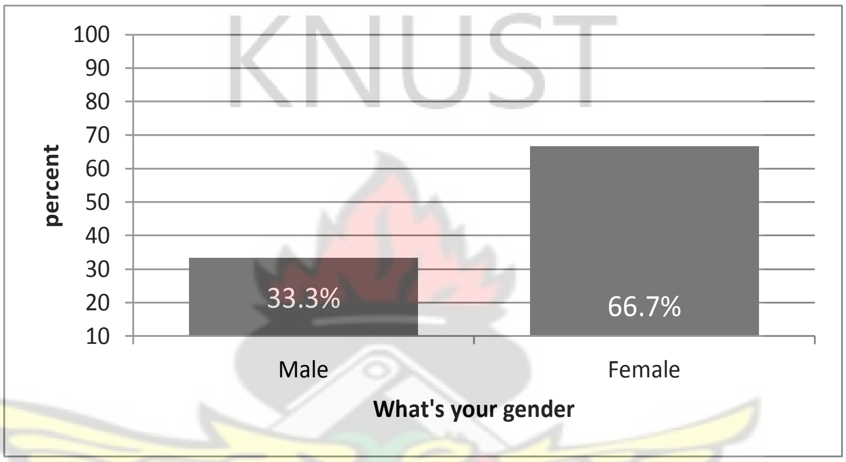

Figure 38. *A bar chart showing respondents answer to table 3*

SOURCE: Field Data, 2009

Thirty of the respondents representing 33.3 percent were males whiles the females were 60 representing 66.7 percent. This clearly shows majority of the respondents who answered the questionnaire were females. This is because it is assumed that women shop more than men and that they will be in a better position to give authentic and accurate answers about the performance of made in Ghana products on shelves whenever they go on shopping.

Table 4

Marital status	Frequency	Percent
Single	34	37.8
Married	56	62.2
Total	90	100.0

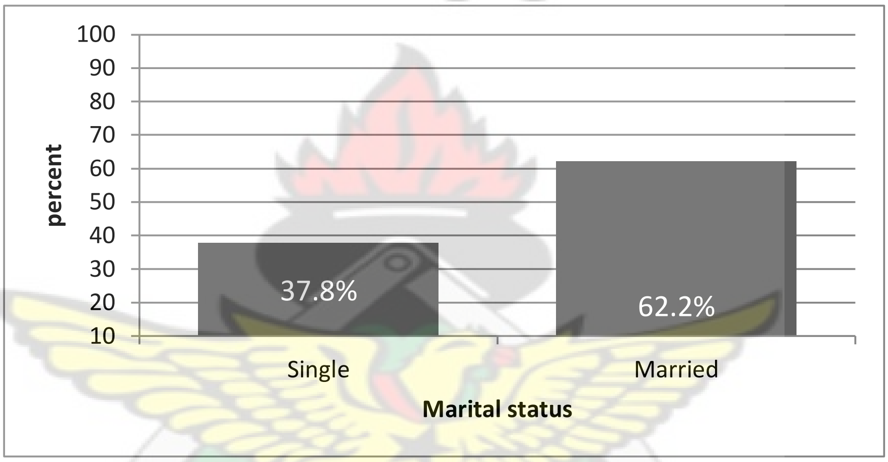

Figure 39. *A bar chart showing respondents answer to table 4*

SOURCE: Field Data, 2009

Thirty four of the respondents representing 37.8 were single whiles 56 representing 62.2 percent were married. Deducing from the above it means that majority of the consumers involved in this research work were married.

Table 5

What is your occupation	Frequency	Percent
White colour work	68	75.5
Non white colour work	22	24.4
Total	90	100.0

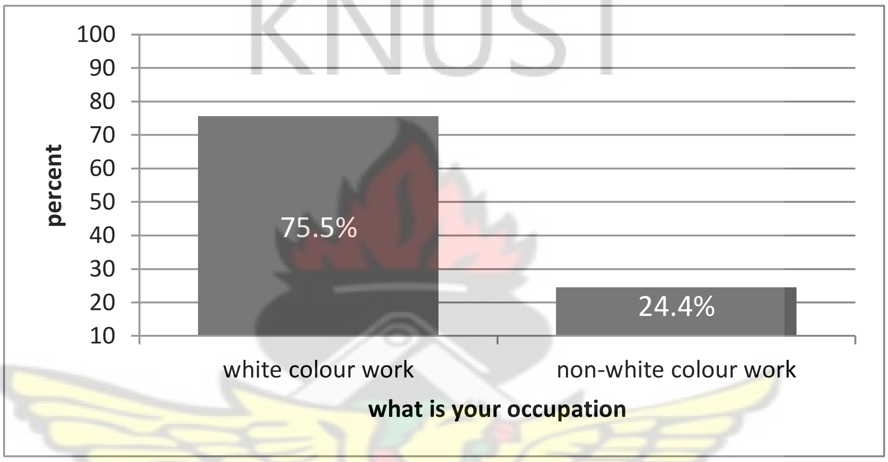

Figure 40. *A bar chart showing respondents answer to table 5*

SOURCE: Field Data, 2009

In this question it was inferred that 68 respondents representing 75.5 percent do some kind of white colour work like banking, office work, etc. Twenty two of them representing 24.4 percent earn their income through some form of work other than white colour i.e. petty trading, farming, mason, labour work etc. This is an indication that majority of the respondents are in a formal employment.

Table 6

Consumer groups	Frequency	Percent
Foreign Consumer	64	71.1
Local consumer	26	28.9
Total	90	100.0

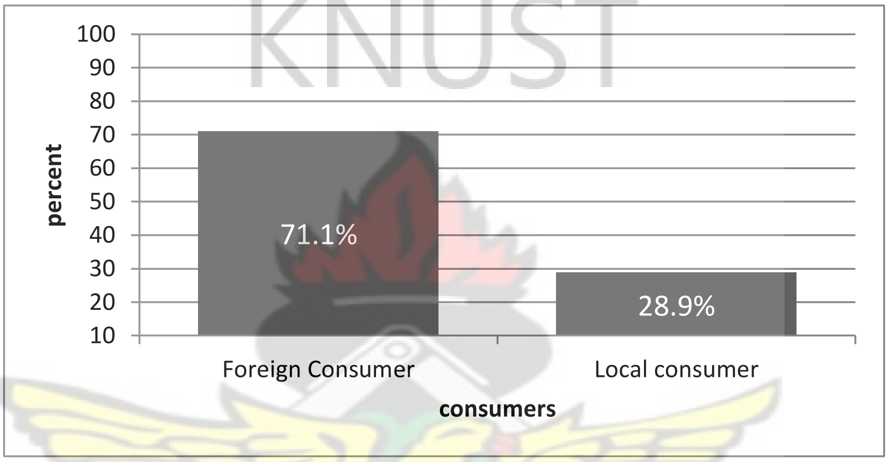

Figure 41. *A bar chart showing respondents answer to table 6*

SOURCE: Field Data, 2009

From the field data gathered it was noticed that 64 respondents representing 71.1 percent were Europeans living in Ghana. In contrast 26 respondents representing 28.9 percent were Ghanaians who have lived in Europe but are now back to Ghana. This clearly shows that majority of the respondents interviewed were Europeans. These respondents were purposefully selected to find out their views on packaging of local products especially outside Ghana.

Table 7

Where do you normally shop?	Frequency	Percent
Supermarket	22	24.5
Grocery store	10	11.1
Open market	18	20.0
Shopping mall	40	44.4
Total	90	100.0

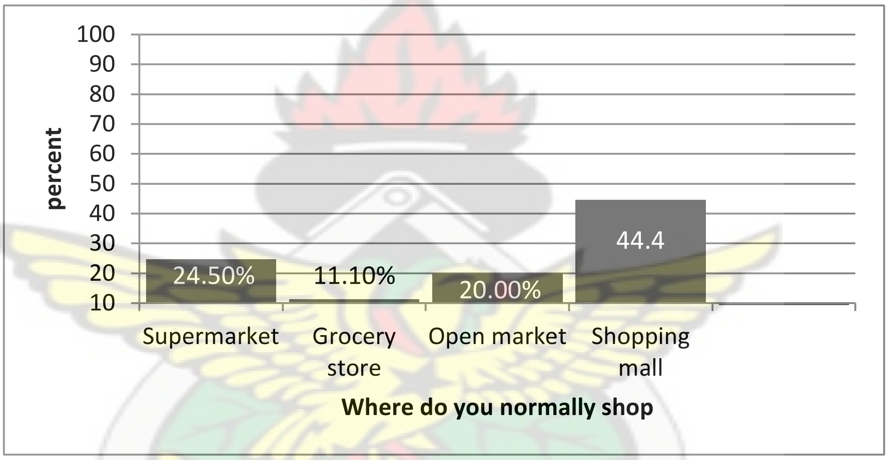

Figure 42. *A bar chart showing respondents answer to table 7*

SOURCE: Field Data, 2009

Here, twenty two of the respondents representing 24.5 percent do normally shop at the supermarket. Ten representing 11.1 percent shop normally at the grocery store. The open market is on the other hand preferred by 18 respondents representing 20.0 percent. Finally, 40 respondents representing 44.4 percent prefer shopping at the shopping mall. It is concluded that majority of the respondents prefer shopping at the shopping mall regularly than any other place. These shops are located in Accra and Kumasi.

Table 8

How often do you visit the shop	Frequency	Percent
Daily	12	13.3
Weekly	43	47.8
Monthly	20	22.2
Not often	15	16.7
Total	90	100.0

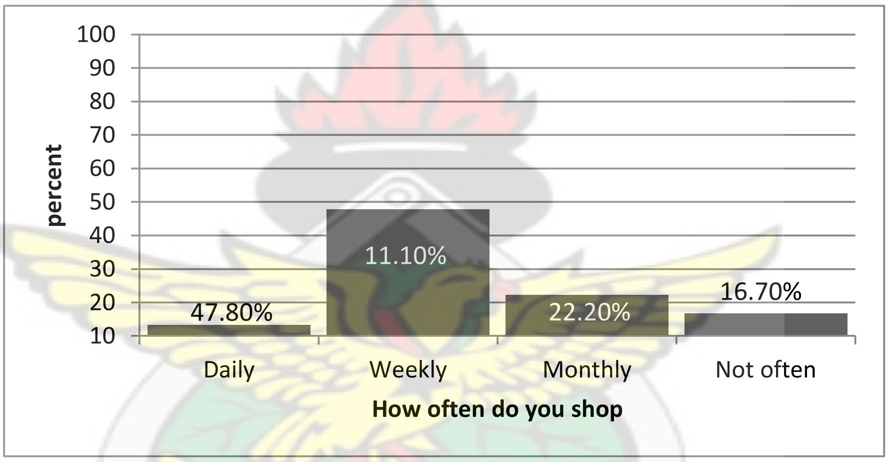

Figure 43. *A bar chart showing respondents answer to table 8*

SOURCE: Field Data, 2009

Twelve respondents representing 13.3 percent admitted that they visit the shop daily. Fourty three representing 47.8 said that their visit to the shop is weekly. For monthly visits, only 20 respondents representing 22.2 percent said they shop once in a month. However 15 respondents representing 16.7 percent visit the shop anytime they like. This is an indication that majority of the respondents visit the shopping mall at least once a week.

Table 9

Which types of products do you normally purchase?	Frequency	Percent
Packaged	67	74.4
Non packaged	23	25.6
Total	90	100.0

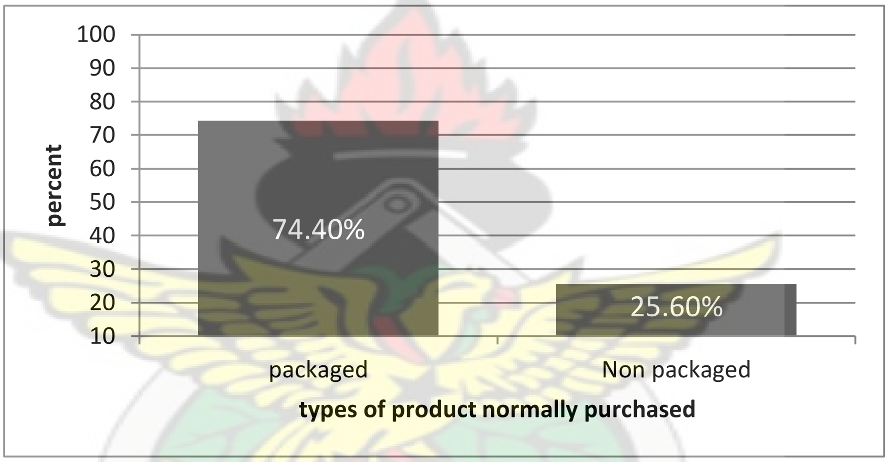

Figure 44. *A bar chart showing respondents answer to table 9*

SOURCE: Field Data, 2009

The result gathered from this data shows that 67 respondents representing 74.4 percent which forms the majority prefer to buy packaged products. In contrast, 23 respondents representing 25.6 percent prefer to buy non-packaged products instead. This could be attributed to the fact that packaged products are handy and easy to carry to the house. It also easy and safe to transport packaged products than non-packaged products.

Table 10

Do you prefer foreign products to local ones?	Frequency	Percent
Yes	54	60.0
No	36	40.0
Total	90	100.0

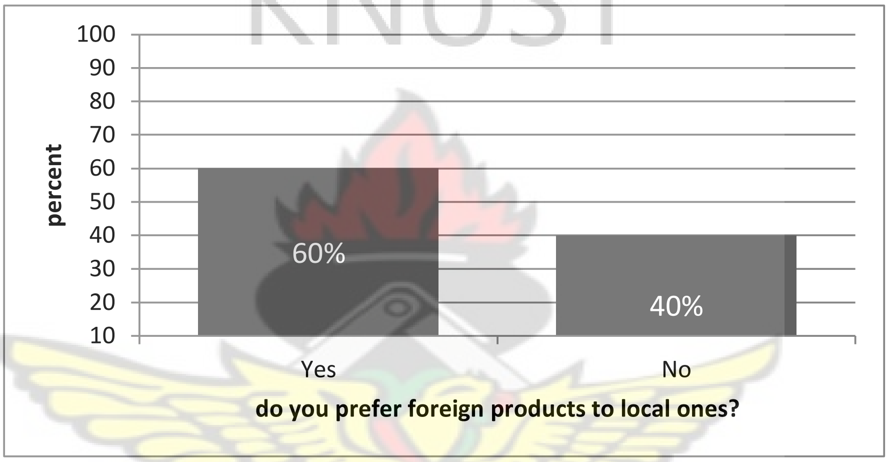

Figure 45. *A bar chart showing respondents answer to table 10*

SOURCE: Field Data, 2009

Fifty four of the respondents representing 60.0 percent interviewed admitted that they prefer to buy foreign products. This is because the foreign products are well packaged and posses a high visual presence. 36 respondents representing 40.0 percent said they prefer buying local products than the foreign ones. This clearly shows that majority of the respondents prefer to buy foreign products because of they look attractive and presentable compared to the local product.

Table 11

Is it easy to notice Ghanaian products displayed on supermarket shelf.	Frequency	Percent
Yes	11	12.2
No	79	87.8
Total	90	100.0

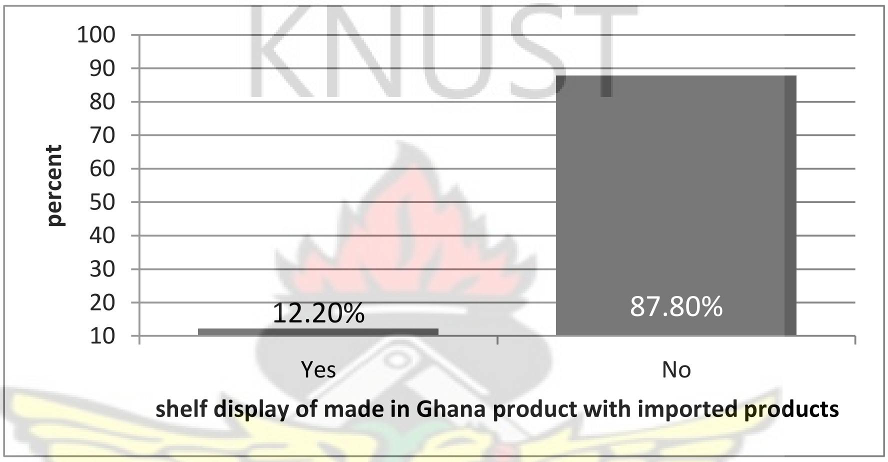

Figure 46. *A bar chart showing respondents answer to table 11*

SOURCE: Field Data, 2009

Out of the 90 respondents 11 representing 12.2 percent said they easily notice Ghanaian products displayed on supermarket shelves. On the other hand, 79 respondents representing 87.8 percent said they hardly see Ghanaian products displayed on shelves in European supermarkets. Majority of the respondents are of the view that Ghanaian products are not easily noticed when compared with European ones.

Table 12

Which of these attracted you most to prefer a particular product over the other	Frequency	Percent
Its overall packaging	42	46.7
Shape	13	14.4
Colour	15	16.7
Appearance	20	22.2
Total	90	100.0

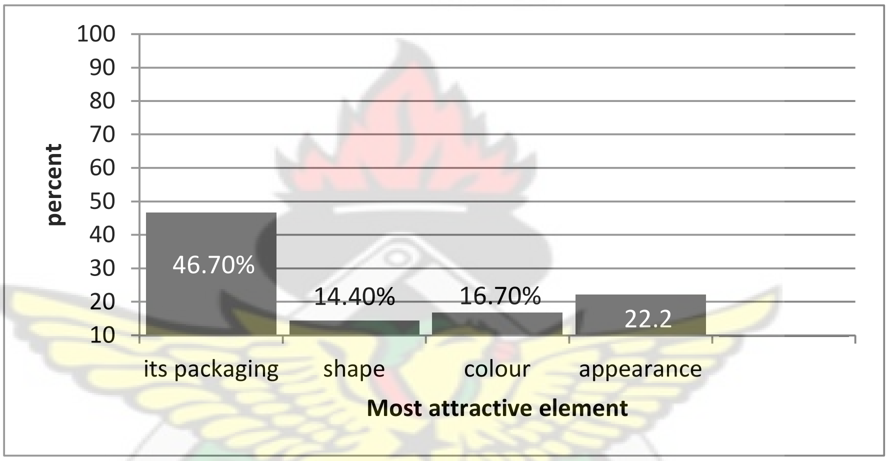

Figure 47. *A bar chart showing respondents answer to table 12*

SOURCE: Field Data, 2009

The above data revealed that majority of the respondents were attracted to a particular product mainly because of its overall packaging. Fourty two respondents representing 46.7 percent said they were attracted to prefer a particular product over the other because of the packaging. 13 representing 14.4 percent said it was the shape. Colour attracted 15 respondents representing 16.7 percent. Finally 20 respondents representing 22.2 percent were attracted to a product because of its attractiveness. It is noticed here that something actually draws consumers attention to a product and in this case majority of the respondents identified packaging as the major key to drawing their attention.

Table 13

Which one of these product packages do you prefer	Frequency	Percent
Attractive and decorated packages	48	53.3
Portable or handy packages	22	24.4
Simply built and non-decorated packages	8	8.9
Other	12	13.3
Total	90	100.0

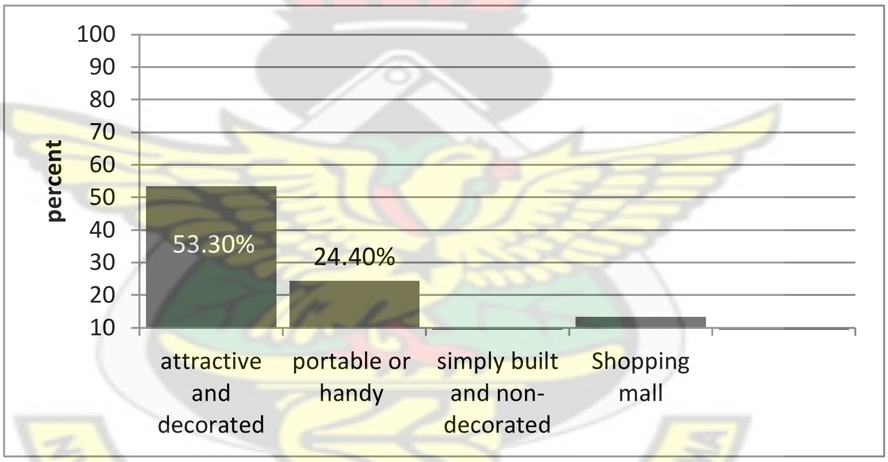

Figure 48. *A bar chart showing respondents answer to table 13*

SOURCE: Field Data, 2009

Fourty eight respondents representing 53.3 percent said they prefer attractive and decorated packages whiles 22 representing 24.4 percent choose portable or handy packages. Simply built and non-decorated packages were chosen by 8 respondents representing 8.9 percent. Other product packages were preferred by 12 respondents representing 13.3 percent.

Table 14

In buying a product have you been influenced by the package	Frequency	Percent
Yes	67	74.5
No	23	25.6
Total	90	100.0

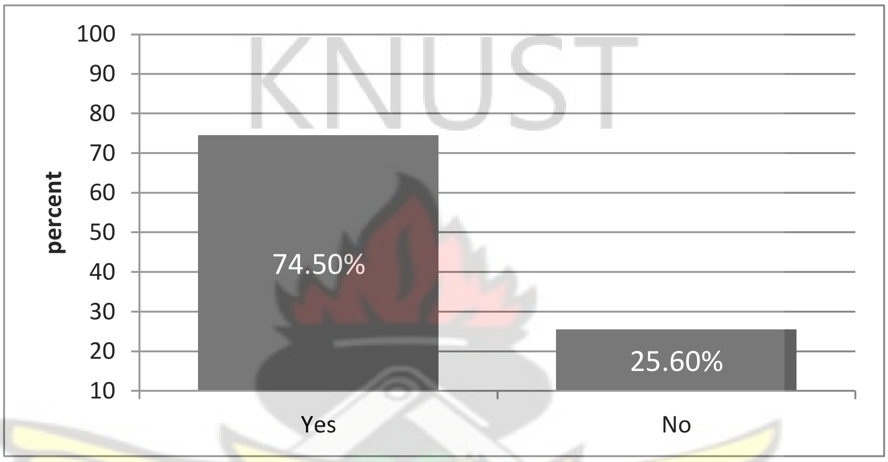

Figure 49. *A bar chart showing respondents answer to table 14*

SOURCE: Field Data, 2009

In buying a product 67 respondents representing 74.5 percent said they have been influenced by the package. In contrast 23 respondents representing 25.6 percent said they are not influenced by the package when buying a product form a shop. This shows that majority of the purchasing decision is based on how the product is packaged. Packages play important role in selling the product by attracting attention and communication (Prendergast & Pitt, 1996).

Table 15

What normally influenced your decision?	Frequency	Percent
1. Appearance and content of the packaging	65	72.2
2. The price	25	27.8
Total	90	100.0

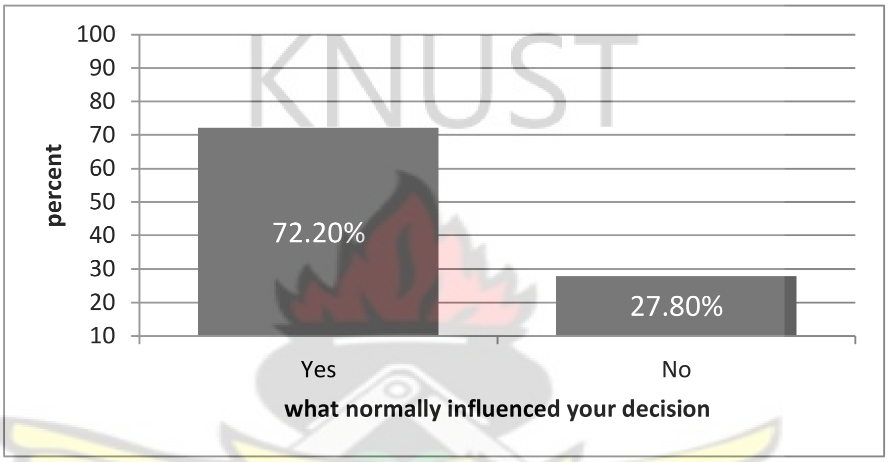

Figure 50. *A bar chart showing respondents answer to table 15*

SOURCE: Field Data, 2009

It was realised that appearance and the content of the packaging normally influence customer's decision to purchase one product over the other. Thirteen respondents representing 72.2 percent attested to the above fact. On the other hand 5 respondents representing 27.8 percent said it is the prices that influence their decision to purchase. This means that special attention should be placed on how the package appears when placed on shelf.

Table 16

Have you in anyway refuse to purchase a product as a result of its poor package	Frequency	Percent
Yes	60	66.7
No	30	33.3
	90	100.0

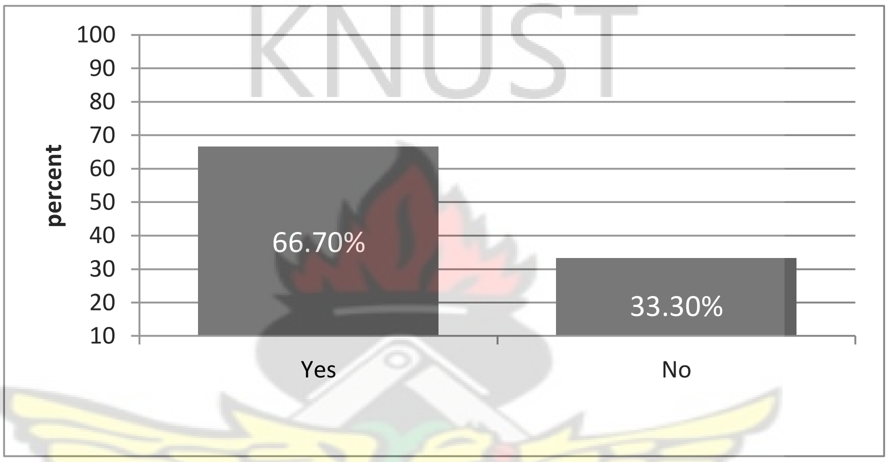

Figure 51. *a bar chart showing respondents answer to table 16*

SOURCE: Field Data, 2009

Sixty respondents representing 66.7 percent said yes, they have refused to purchase a product as a result of its poor packaging. Thirty respondents representing 33.3 percent on the other hand said no, they have not refused to purchase a product as a result of its poor packaging.

Table 17

Why do you think that Ghanaian products do not compete favourably with foreign products in the European Union Markets	Frequency	Percent
Because package design and labelling are poorly done	23	25.6
Shape and size are not portable and handy	15	16.7
Lack of package attractiveness	10	11.1
Does not meet ISO standard of specification	12	13.3
All the above	30	33.3
Total	90	100.0

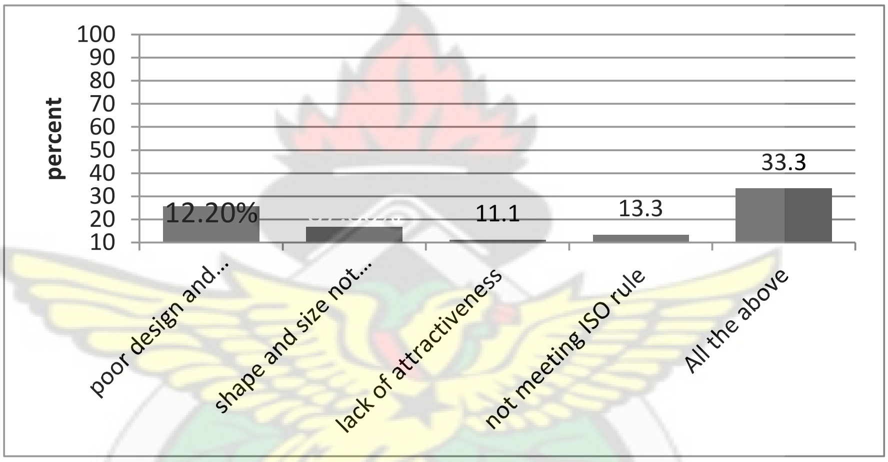

Figure 52. *A bar chart showing respondents answer to table 17*

SOURCE: Field Data, 2009

Twenty three respondents representing 25.6 percent said it was because package design and labelling were poorly done. 15 representing 16.7 percent said the shape and size were not portable and handy. Lack of meeting ISO standard of specification were chosen by 12 respondents representing 13.3 percent. Ten respondent representing 11.1 said it is the lack of package attractiveness. Most importantly 30 respondents representing 33.3 percent said all the above.

4.03 Discussions and Findings

From the research conducted, several findings were made through the analysis drawn from the questionnaires and observations at various shopping malls, supermarkets and stores in Accra and Kumasi respectively. These are therefore discussed below;

1**. Lack of education and research -** Most of the companies included in this research are small scale business enterprises. It was observed that most of the exporters do not have formal training in the industry especially when it comes to international trade. The situation is even worse when it comes to the issue of packaging. To the Ghanaian exporter, packaging is the least important item on his/her table. IOPG and Ghana Export Promotion Council have been putting up measures to educate exporters about packaging and its value to their products, but much more needs to be done. We still see poorly packaged products in our markets and shopping malls every day.

The researcher also noticed that there is not enough research work on how local resources and materials can be harnessed to improve packaging. There are a lot of local materials such as bamboo, rattan which can be used creatively for packaging fruits and vegetables. These materials are common and cheap to acquire. More so, thorough research is not conducted before developing packages for most of the products. For example, question 23 of the researcher's questionnaire shows that all 25 respondents do not conduct market research and testing for their packages.

2**. The pre-conceive notion that packaging is expensive and a waste-** Most of the exporters interviewed admitted having problem with their packaging but do not have the technical know and resources needed to correct them.. Admittedly, they think that once the product is covered it is enough. There is no need spending too much money in printing labels for example when it will end up in the trash can. That is why most of the exporters prefer doing their labels with the printing presses than specialised packaging firms. However a specialised packaging firm will charge for market research, product design and development, consultancy in addition to printing.

3. **Lack of expertise and training –** It can be inferred from the research conducted that, there are not enough specialist packaging firms and training institutions for packaging. Those that exist are small scale and not well known to the exporters. Responses gathered from the field revealed that exporters find it difficult to get the right people to help them solve their packaging problems. As a result, they do what they feel is appropriate. Apart from the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology that offers some aspect of packaging, there are no other training institutions that offer training in packaging in the country as of now. Human resource in packaging design is very inadequate and of substandard quality. All these affect the quality and standard of packaging of Ghanaian exports.

4. **Lack of exposure to standard requirements and regulations of the EU market.**

Most of the exporters interviewed attest to the fact that they are not familiar with the standard requirements and regulations regarding exports in the EU market. In designing and selection of materials for their products packaging, they do not pay any special attention to health, safety and environmental impact of their packaging materials. This is a key requirement for the EU market which every exporter is expected to comply. It is availability and price that influence their choice of appropriate materials for packaging.

5. Poor use of graphics and printing quality

In many cases, exporters compromise the cost of the package with its quality and standard. Observations made at shopping malls and supermarkets reveal that made in Ghana products packages have inappropriate use of text, inconsistent colour choices, pexilated and low quality images often downloaded from the internet. It is noticed that most of the packages observed have poor printing and weak material selection problem as well. Printing quality is low and colours fade easily. This is as a result of employing cheap printing methods or less expensive containers.

Finally, the researcher believes that this research justifies his course of study. It is clear that packaging design has the potential to transform the export sector of the Ghanaian economy. This is manifested in the extensive research review conducted which validate the researcher's contention that, Ghanaian exporters and packaging designers must invest more substantially in packaging design than in primary product development.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.00 Overview

This chapter presents a summary of the study and draws conclusions from the findings. It also offers recommendations to Government of Ghana and other stakeholders in the export industry on how to meet customers' expectation through packaging design.

5.01 **Summary**

Packaging design plays a pivotal role in international trade and commerce today. This research work sought to find out how Ghanaian Exports, especially non-traditional exports, can meet EU customer expectation through the application of packaging design. Also the research intended to investigate the causes of poor packaging in the Ghanaian export sector. Again, the research compared best packaging practices with local processes.

Extensive related literature was reviewed on the topic: packaging design. Issues discussed were mainly on packaging design, its role in international trade, physical attributes of a good package, Ghanaian export trade with the EU, Major causes of poor packaging design of our export products. The research also dealt with the Customers expectation of Ghanaian export products in the EU.

In all, it was noticed that packaging design goes beyond protecting and carrying the product to the ultimate consumer. Packaging designs that are effective in the EU market today are those that thoughtfully consider environmental accountability or sustainability, strong visual presence and also the ability to communicate trust and credibility in the minds of the consumer. All these are integrated creatively in the designing of a package. Images and text appear simple but command strong visual appearance.

In researching into the causes of poor packaging of Ghanaian exports, two sets of questionnaires were designed and administered respectively. The first set contained 40 questions and was sent to 25 exporters that export processed food and spices to EU. The questionnaire was designed to uncover current behaviour of Ghanaian exporters regarding package appearance and labelling, legal rules of the importing country, standards and specification and other requirements. Also questions were asked concerning customers' expectation of the export products and whether these considerations were made during packaging and labelling. The second set of questionnaire contained 22 questions and it was tailored to foreign consumers who were residing or visiting Ghana. Additionally, the researcher visited selected shopping malls in Accra and Kumasi to assess how easy it is to identify or spot Ghanaian products on shelves from the foreign products. This exercise was to assess how strong Ghanaian packages are when displayed on shelves.

It is therefore prudent that Ghanaian exporters invest more into packaging of their exports. The package serves as a vehicle through which the product's values and benefits are clearly communicated to the ultimate customer.

5.02 Conclusion

The discussions in this research have so far been centred on Ghanaian exports and how to meet the European Union customer expectation through the application of packaging design. The research also pointed out that in exports such as Ghanaian exports; packaging design plays an important role in marketing and promoting export products to consumers. Specifically, this research has assessed the impact packaging design can make on Ghanaian exports especially to the European Union.

Finally, Evidence shows that packaging design has the potential to transform the export sector of the Ghanaian economy. This is manifested in the extensive research work conducted which validates the researcher's contention that, Ghanaian exporters and packaging designers must invest more substantially in packaging design than in primary product development. The administration of questionnaires and analysis, observation at various shopping malls, and interviews conducted with stakeholders in the packaging industry, all attest to one fact; that if we improve our packaging by adding value, our exports will also increase tremendously.

It is clear from the first chapter to the last page of this thesis that packaging plays a major role in nation building. It serves as a means of identification and communication. Packaging helps to develop human culture.

5.03 Recommendations

Packaging design has made impact and can make more impact if attention is given to it. On the bases of these findings, the following recommendations have been made to the government, NGO's and other stakeholders in the industry:

1. **Education**

Government agencies, institutions, SMEs (Small Scale Enterprises) and other stakeholders in the export industry should be educated about the requirements, needs and expectations of the importing country especially regarding packaging. This can be done through periodic organisation of seminars, symposia, publications and short courses for stakeholders. Education will help reduce the rejection of export products in the international market. This will improve promotion and sale of Ghanaian products.

2. **Employment of professionals**

The researcher advises strongly that professionals who understand every aspect of packaging should be engaged in handling packaging and labelling especially for products intended for the export market. The advantage here is that packaging professionals will be able to develop a particular product through proper pretesting and evaluation before it enters the market. A package can appear attractive and beautiful but will not be able to satisfy the needs of the target consumer. All these can be detected and improved if the appropriate methods are employed through professionals. Also a professional package designer or firm always works with a team of other professionals like material scientists, marketing executives, quality control personnels and brand analysts.

3. **Government policies**

It is recommended that the Government of Ghana and its allied agencies should be able to draw up good policies that will encourage and promote packaging innovation in Ghana and provide incentives in tax regimes.

4. **Research and development**

Sound Research centres with modern equipment should be created and situated in especially Accra, Kumasi, Tamale and Takoradi attached to Small Business Development Units. Also, people should be trained to conduct research work particularly on our local materials and processes. Students in tertiary institutions and colleges should also be encouraged to do their thesis or dissertation in packaging. This can be done by allocating special funds or awards for students all over the country. Additionally, a packaging resource centre with adequate educational facilities in two universities especially at KNUST.

5. **Investment**

The researcher calls for the encouragement of foreign direct investment with partners from leading packaging companies in the world. There are good packaging firms and institutions in US, China, India, South Africa, and Germany who can offer assistant in diverse ways. Apart from that, individuals in Ghana can also come together and invest in packaging design and development.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

SAMPLE QUESTIONNAIRE ONE

QUESTIONNAIRE DESIGNED TO SAMPLE A SECTION OF THE EXPORTERS VIEWS ON GHANAIAN EXPORTS

This questionnaire is designed to sample (exporters) views on Ghanaian export to the EU. This exercise is strictly for academic purposes. You are hereby assured that whatever information you provide will be treated as confidential.

Please tick, ☐ *where applicable.*

1. Name of company..
2. When did you start exporting your products to the EU?.................................
3. Which countries do you export to?...
   ....
4. Which products do you export? ....
   ....
5. How do you export your products? ☐ By Air ☐ By Sea
   ☐ Any other...

CURRENT BEHAVIOUR

6. Which types of products do you normally export to the EU?
   ☐ Plastic package
   ☐ Paper package
   ☐ Metal package

7. Who are your target customers in the EU? ☐ Ghanaians outside ☐ Europeans ☐ African Americans only ☐ All the above
   ☐ Any other..

8. What comment(s) do you get from customers concerning the standard of your package? ☐ Good package ☐ Excellent package
   ☐ Poor package ☐ Other...

9. Are you familiar with ISO (International Organisation for Standardisation) standard for labelling and packaging in the EU market? ☐ Yes ☐ No

10. Does your packaging and labelling follow ISO rules in the target markets?
    ☐ Yes ☐ No

11. Who does your labels for you? ☐ Advertising agency ☐ Specialist packaging firms ☐ Printing presses
    ☐ Others...

12. Do you engage packaging professionals in dealing with your package designs and labelling? ☐Yes ☐No

13. Do you spend more on primary packaging that secondary? ☐ Yes ☐No

14. Are the current packaging (primary, secondary, tertiary) and packing methods affordable and suitable for the product? ☐ Yes ☐ No

15. Which one of these is the greatest challenge that affects your products in the EU country? ☐Quality of product (content) ☐Quality of packaging & labelling ☐ Transportation ☐Other………………..

16. Where do you get your packaging materials from
☐Imported ☐Locally made ☐others.....................................

17. Are you aware of customers' expectation in the EU countries?
☐ Yes☐ No

18. Are there any special restrictions that might hamper the sale of your export products?
☐Yes ☐ No

19. Do you have any knowledge about how your products are retailed and displayed on shelves in the EU markets? ☐Yes ☐ No

20. Have the information on your packaging and labelling been approved in the EU countries? ☐ Yes☐ No

21. Are you aware of competing brands in the EU market? ☐Yes ☐No

22. Have any of your products been rejected as a result of poor packaging?
☐ Once Only ☐ Twice only ☐ Never before ☐ Other...................................

23. Are your packaging based on market research?
☐ Yes ☐ No

CUSTOMER EXPECTATION

24. Do your packages and packaging materials meet legal and other consumer protection needs in the target market? ☐ Yes ☐ No

25. Has the product been adopted/modified to the consumers taste and requirement in the target market: has this been verified by field test?
☐ Yes ☐ No

26. Are the sizes of your packages suitable for consumers as regards volume of contents, number of serving, measurement of home storage facilities etc? ☐ Yes ☐ No

27. Is the package consumer-friendly; easy to handle, open, close, empty, dispose of?
☐ Yes ☐ No

28. Is the design of the package acceptable in the target market: has this been field tested? ☐ Yes ☐ No

29. Is the information on your package understandable and adequate?
☐ Yes ☐ No

30. Have you observed the EU market standards, laws and regulations including those related to the environment? ☐ Yes ☐ No

31. Is the packaging designed to protect against shocks, and stresses during transport and storage? ☐ Yes ☐ No

32. Are you aware of the climatic conditions your product will go through during distribution? ☐ Yes ☐ No

33. Do you have a different package for the domestic market and the EU?
☐ Yes ☐ No

34. Have you considered the environmental impact of your packaging materials? ☐ Yes ☐ No

35. Has the use of recycled materials been considered ? ☐ Yes ☐ No

36. Does the package design allow for the package to be recovered, cleaned and reused, if necessary ☐ Yes ☐ No

37. Have you considered using bar code on your package? ☐ Yes ☐ No

38. Is your product well known in the target market? ☐ Yes ☐ No

39. Are your labels suitable enough when compared to foreign products?
☐ Yes ☐ No

40. What do you consider when choosing packaging for your products
....
....
....
....
....
....

Thank you for taking time to answer this questionnaire

APPENDIX B

SAMPLE QUESTIONNAIRE TWO

QUESTIONNAIRE DESIGNED TO SAMPLE A SECTION OF FOREIGN RESIDENTS VIEWS ON GHANAIAN EXPORTS.

This questionnaire is designed to sample (customers) views on Ghanaian export to the EU. This exercise is strictly for academic purposes. You are hereby assured that what ever information you provide will be treated as confidential.

Please tick, ☐ *where applicable.*

1. Name...
2. Age . ☐16-25 ☐26-35 ☐36-45 ☐46-65
3. Gender ☐male ☐Female
4. Marital status ☐Single ☐married
5. Occupation...
6. Nationality...

SECTION A

7. Where do you normally shop? ☐supermarket ☐grocery store ☐ open market ☐ shops
8. How often do you visit the shop? ☐daily ☐weekly ☐Monthly ☐other (specify)...
9. Which types of products do you normally purchase?
   ☐Packaged
   ☐Non-packaged
10. Do you prefer foreign products to local ones? ☐Yes ☐ No
11. Why...
   ....
   ....
   ....
12. Is it easy to notice Ghanaian products displayed on supermarket shelf? ☐ Yes ☐No
13. What attracted you to prefer (buy) a particular product over the other. ☐Its packaging ☐shape ☐Colour ☐attractiveness
   ☐other...
14. Which one of these products packages do you prefer?
   ☐Attractive and decorated packages
   ☐Portable or handy packages
   ☐Simply built and non-decorated packages
   ☐Other………………………………………………………………...

SECTION B

15. In buying a product have you been influenced by the package?
☐Yes ☐ No

16. What normally influenced your decision...
....
....

17. Have you in anyway refused to purchase a product as a result of its poor package? ☐Yes ☐ No

18. Give reasons..
....
....

19. Have you in anyway purchase a product as a result of it attractive packaging?
☐Yes ☐ No

20. Why do you think that Ghanaian products do not compete favourably with foreign products in the European Union markets
☐Because package design and labelling are poorly done
☐Shape and size are not portable and handy
☐Lack of package attractiveness
☐Does not meet ISO standard of specification
☐All the above
☐Any other (specify)...
....

21. Can you suggest ways in which Ghanaian products can compete favourably well with foreign products..
....
....
....
....

22. What do you think Ghanaian product should have in other to compete favourably with foreign products in the international market...
....
....
....
....

Thank you for taking time to answer this questionnaire.

APPENDIX C
OBSERVATION CHECK LIST

1. Shelf display of made in Ghana products and graphical appearance.
2. Customers perception and reaction to made in Ghana products
3. Comparing made in Ghana products shelf display and appearance to imported products.
4. Checking packages and labels of made in Ghana products to see if they meet ISO Ghana standard of labelling and specifications.
5. A quick glance made through the whole package of made in Ghana products; checking for flaws such as bar coding, poor typography or use of typefaces, choice and application of colour and images among others.