

Abstract

Purpose - The purpose of this study is to examine the environmental actions UK supermarkets have taken in their efforts towards reducing the amount of excess packaging their food products, reducing the distribution of plastic bags used and given to customers and reducing the level of food wasted. It also aims to identify how consumers have responded to these practices in terms of their food shopping behaviour.

Method - The aims and objectives of this study have been fulfilled with the use of primary and secondary research methods. 50 questionnaires and ten structured interviews were carried out in the Greater London area.

Results - UK supermarkets have implemented a number of incentives and initiatives in their aims to become an environmentally friendly industry. Consumers have responded to supermarkets aims of reducing the distribution of plastic bags, more positively than the reduction of packaging and food waste, and this can be seen in their purchasing decisions. However, in regards to all three environmental actions, the overriding factor which rules their purchasing decisions is the quality and price of the products they are purchasing.

Conclusion – This study has shown that UK supermarkets have some level of responsibility to their customers in encouraging their purchasing decisions to be environmentally friendly. However, in doing this they must maintain the quality and price of products in order for their customers to be responsive to the environmental actions they take.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

1.0 Introduction

Issues surrounding ethics and the level of responsibility firms have towards their stakeholders and the environment has been an inherently controversial issue. Despite years of research, academics continue to face conflicting and challenging views about the value of ethical practices on purchase behaviour.

Protection of the environment and climate change in particular are among some of the greatest challenges facing the UK today. It is more important now that manufacturers, retailers and consumers take action to counteract the effects of climate change and other environmental issues on society. There has been an increase in the number of consumers who are more environmentally aware since the early 21st century. They are now trying to integrate these concerns with everyday practices to combat environmental issues e.g. recycling at home. However, there still remains a clear gap between interest in the environment, changing one's lifestyle and how much a consumer is willing to pay for 'green' products (Mintel, 2009).

This study endeavours to raise some of these issues concerning consumers and their food purchasing behaviour in UK supermarkets.

1.1 Background and Research Justification

The impact businesses have on the environment has become a subject of increasing concern over the past 30 years (Gadenne et al, 2009). This concern has not only stemmed from environmental groups but also from consumers, local communities, suppliers, financial institutions and employees. More people have become conscientious of their impact on the planet (Patel, 2008).

The last fifty years have seen major changes in the way people buy their food. Previously, people brought food from specialist food shops like greengrocers. Currently, £76bn is spent on groceries in the UK and approximately 80% of this is spent in supermarkets. This change in food retailing has had an adverse impact on the environment (Friends of the Earth, 2005).

Most of the literature available has focused on the ecological responsiveness and the environmental behaviour of corporations. (Bansal and Roth, 2000; Williamson et al, 2006; Schaper, 2000). They focus upon the impact that business practices have on the environment, the implications on corporate social responsibility and their competitive advantage. This study will add to the existing literature by analysing supermarkets' environmental awareness and focusing on whether this affects consumers' purchase behaviour of food products.

1.2 Project Aims and Objectives

This study endeavours to observe UK supermarkets environmental ethics towards three main issues concerning the way supermarkets conduct business. These are supermarkets' efforts towards reducing excess packaging on their food products, reducing the distribution of plastic bags and reducing the level of food wastage. This study aims to identify whether consumers have responded to these efforts in terms of their environmental food purchasing decisions. This aim is underpinned by the following objectives:

- 1. To examine what actions UK supermarkets have taken to reduce their packaging, use of plastic bags and level of food waste.**

In order to achieve this objective, secondary research was conducted to analyse how supermarkets attitude towards the environment has affected consumer' purchase behaviour.

- 2. To investigate if consumers have responded to these changes made by UK supermarkets through their shopping behaviour by considering packaging, plastic bags and food waste.**

To achieve this objective primary research was conducted through a questionnaire, examining consumer' purchase decisions based on these three factors.

- 3. To explore whether these practices by UK supermarkets have encouraged consumers to be more environmentally friendly.**

To complete this aim, primary research has been undertaken in the form of structured interviews. This has helped to understand consumers' environmental ethics in more depth.

1.3 Chapter Synopsis

Chapter 1 has provided a brief introduction to this project and has given an insight into the topic of this dissertation. It has also identified the objectives that this project aims to achieve.

Chapter 2 introduces and evaluates existing literature on the environmental ethics of businesses and consumers. It also provides an insight into the UK supermarket industry, focusing on the top four supermarkets and their green practices.

Chapter 3 outlines and justifies the research methods that were used to gather data for this study.

Chapter 4 provides the results and findings of this project.

Chapter 5 discusses and compares these findings to existing literature and previous research.

Finally, Chapter 6 concludes the project by providing a comprehensive overview of the objectives summarised at the start of this project. It outlines the recommendations for this study, discussing the limitations and the potential for further research.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

Media attention on environmental matters has grown substantially over the years, and food retailers have stated their intentions to help change consumer behaviour and bring ethical

behaviour into the mainstream (Intel, 2007). This chapter of the project reviews the recent literature on ethical practices within the business society, and focuses specifically on environmental ethics. An insight into environmentally conscious consumers is provided in the latter part of this chapter. This is followed by an intense look at the UK supermarket industry, their intentions towards reducing excess packaging, the distribution of plastic bags and the level of food waste.

2.1 Ethical Practices

Unethical acts have been committed throughout history; Christianity has Adam eating the forbidden fruit and Cain's murder of his brother Abel. In the last 30 years, the study of business ethics has become a popular topic of discussion amongst stakeholders. However, there has been confusion by academics as to what business ethics really mean, as with most concepts theorists have defined ethics differently (Tsalikis and Fritzsche, 1985).

Wood (2002) (cited in McCraw et al, 2008), likens ethics as 'a set of formal and informal standards or conduct that people use to guide their behaviour'. These standards and behaviours originate from 'values such as honesty, integrity, and respect' (McCraw et al, 2008). Henderson (1982) defines business ethics as 'a set of principles prescribing a behaviour code that explains what is good and right or bad and wrong.' However, he acknowledges that this is a static definition as it assumes that there is an overall agreement for ethical principles, yet throughout the years the ever changing business environment means that there in fact is not. Ethics can no longer be viewed as a static code, therefore, Crane and Matten's (2007 pg 5) definition of business ethics as 'the study of business situations, activities, and decisions where issues of right and wrong are addressed' is one which is more dynamic, as it emphasises and considers the fluctuations in the business environment.

Information about a firm's ethical behaviour is thought to influence product sales and the consumer's overall image of the company (Mohr et al, 2001). Therefore, it seems that it is no longer suitable for leading retailers to simply provide superior product value and a high level of customer service; they are also expected to be 'good citizens'. As Adams (2002) acknowledges, consumers are not only concerned with what retailers sell and at what price, but also 'with the conditions under which the merchandise was produced and made available for sale.' Adams

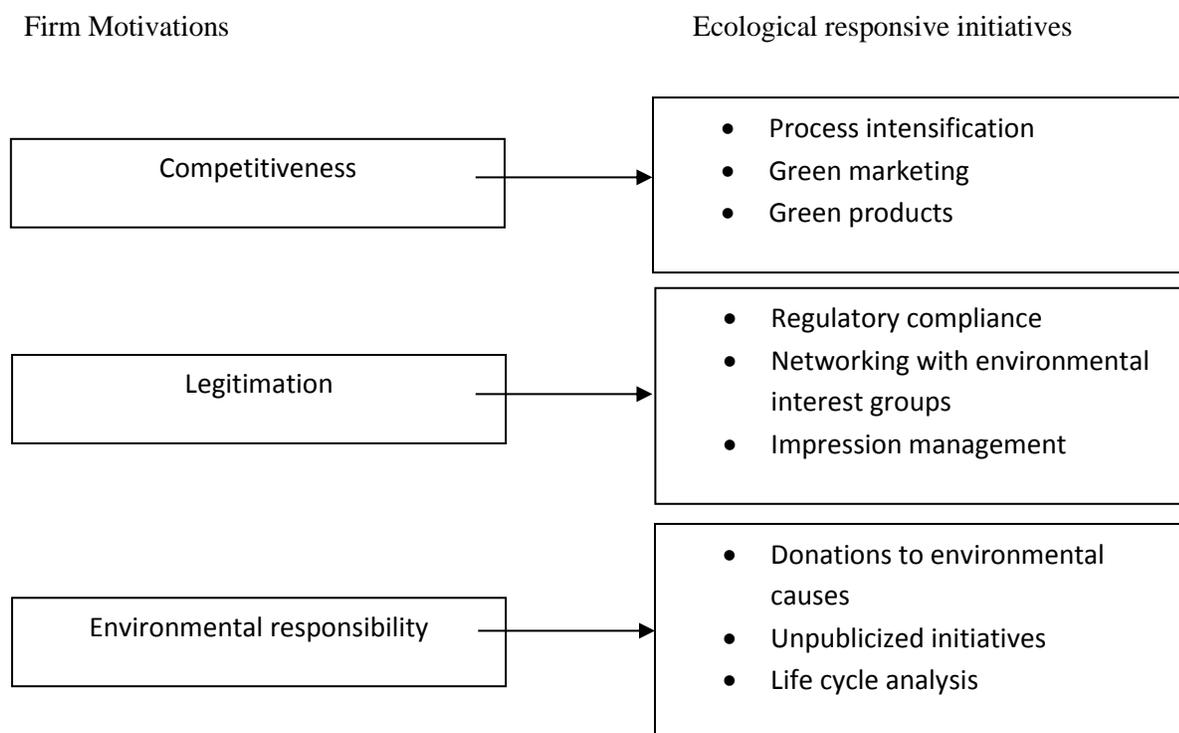
(2002) continues to mention that the ‘social contract’ between retailers and society has changed, and retailers must have a greater responsibility for human wellbeing in all areas of the supply chain.

2.1.1 Environmental Ethics

Interestingly, there was a time when corporations used the environment as a free and unlimited resource. However, the magnitude of environmental abuse, by industries and human activities, has awakened an international awareness of the need to protect the environment (Weiss, 2009, p250). Environmental ethics aims to provide principles to govern humanity’s relationship with nature. A ‘green’ firm will agree to apply environmental codes and strategies at all stages of the value chain (Mellahi and Wood, 2003, p51). Therefore, environmentally conscious businesses set up corporate initiatives aimed at their firm’s impact on the environment. These include changes to production and policies resulting in a reduction of energy consumption and waste generation (Bansal and Roth, 2000).

Whilst the philosophy of environmental management has been known to businesses for a number of years, the benefits have been particularly visible in the retail sector. The retailer is provided with attractive benefits of cost and service improvements through green retailing. The emphasis on businesses to alleviate environmental damage has emerged from regulatory forces, consumer expectations and other stakeholder groups, who have urged them to embrace green practices (Lai et al, 2010). Contrary to this, research conducted by Bansal and Roth (2000) found that the ecological responsiveness of businesses is motivated by competitiveness, ‘legitimation’ and ecological responsibility (Figure 2.1). They found that competitive advantage could be gained from environmental responsibility, increasing a business’s long-term profitability. ‘Legitimation’ was a second motivation for ecological responsiveness, referring to the desire by a firm to keep within the established regulations, norms and values of society. Finally, environmental responsibility was a third motivation for businesses. Donating money to NGOs and local communities provided ‘feel good’ factors to businesses, encouraging them to become more environmentally friendly.

Figure 2.1 Model of the ecological responsiveness of businesses



(Source, adapted from Bansal and Roth 2000)

Regardless of the factors which motivate retailers to implement environmental changes into their business, the fact still remains that environmental ethics, green retailing and environmental management are aspects which retailers need to understand and integrate into their long-term business strategies. As Borin et al (2011) suggest that if businesses provide clear explanations of the environmental impact of their products, both good and bad, then ‘consumer evaluations of green products will improve and, ultimately, a larger percentage of consumers will purchase green products.’

2.2 Ethical and environmentally conscious consumers

Over the past 15 years the practice of ethical consumption has elevated in popularity (Pelsmacker et al, 2005), with the purchase of fair-trade products in the UK reaching £799 million in 2009 (Fair Trade, Annual Review, 2009). Crane and Matten (2004) (cited in Yurchisin et al, 2009) have defined ethical consumption as ‘the conscious and deliberate decision to make certain

consumption choices due to personal moral beliefs and values'. Hence, consumers express their feelings towards ethical companies by their purchases. Conversely, a number of researchers suggest that negative information will influence a consumers' purchase behaviour more than positive information (Carrigan and Attalla, 2001). Pelsmacker et al (2005) suggest that an ethical consumer has a feeling of responsibility towards society and expresses this responsibility by his/her purchasing decisions. In some situations, consumers have been willing to pay a higher price in order to buy ethical products as demonstrated by research conducted by Blend and Van Ravenswaay (1999), Loureiro et al (2002) and Trudel and Cotte, (2008).

When consumers decide on what they are likely to purchase, their decisions take place in a context of 'goals they are striving for, needs they want to accomplish and drives that colour their thoughts' (Bock and Kenhove, 2010). Businesses must, therefore, integrate ethical practices and take responsibility for the effect of these practices on society and the environment.

Recent research shows that British consumers are not as interested in environmentally friendly products as other nations. The Greendex survey sponsored by the National Geographic Society and Globescan Inc., measures green consumer behaviour by scoring people's responses via their consumption of housing, transportation, food and goods. Britain has been ranked in 15th place out of 17 countries in terms of progress towards more sustainable consumption. However, the index which scored the consumption of food products by consumers, ranked Britain in 4th place (National Geographic, 2010). Lai et al (2010) proposed that retailers 'are under the influence of consumers' evolving preferences for environmentally friendly merchandise.' They also suggest that it is highly appealing to this consumer segment if products and services are developed ethically. Therefore, it seems that the characteristics which connect purchases to environmental problems are becoming more significant (Thogersen, 1999). Unless there are other characteristics which will influence a consumer's purchase decision over their moral environmental beliefs e.g. price, Thogersen (1999) suggests that if an individual has a high degree of concern over an environmental issue, then this will translate into their buying decisions. Furthermore, while this segment is expanding consumers are increasing their expectations and standards in evaluating the green practices of retailers (Lai et al, 2010).

2.3 UK Supermarkets

This study focuses upon UK supermarkets, and the actions they have implemented to become more environmentally friendly. The UK food retail market is a highly competitive industry, and has four major retailers; Tesco, Sainsbury's, Asda and Morrisons who account for more than two thirds (62%) of all food retail sales. With the Co-Operative Group, Marks and Spencer and Waitrose following respectively in their level of sales and market share. Consumer research conducted by Mintel, emphasised that there was no single factor which determined a supermarkets success, rather it was a number of factors. (Mintel, 2010).

Food retailers had a difficult year in 2010, as sales growth was weak and there was evidence that consumers were cutting back. The implications for UK food retailers in 2011 are set to be similar, as the VAT increases to 20% in January. Consumers are expected to be shopping more at those supermarkets offering hard discounts (Mintel, 2010). This leads to the question of whether supermarkets' efforts in becoming more environmentally friendly, will be reflected in consumers' food shopping behaviour.

In some cases supermarkets have been painted as the villains due to a 'perceived promotion of consumerism through multi-buy offers, unseasonal, unnatural, heavily-processed produce and excess packaging' (Mintel, 2007). In recent years, however, environmental organisations have highlighted food retailers as potential catalysts to encourage positive consumer behaviour. Supermarkets have a significant role to play in promoting 'green' behaviour, and the major retailers have now developed environmental policies which aid their corporate social responsibility. This will inevitably educate consumers about their choices (Mintel, 2007).

In a bid to become more sustainable, supermarkets have implemented policies and set personal targets to encourage positive consumer behaviour. Three main categories will be the focus of this section thus fulfilling the first aim of this study; these include supermarkets actions towards reducing excess packaging, the distribution of plastic bags and the level of food waste. The discussion will be centrally focused around the four major UK supermarkets.

2.3.1 Packaging

Packaging is vital to protect the products that supermarkets sell and to prevent perishable products from deteriorating. However, the Local Government Association (LGA) found that

almost 40% of packaging found in a typical shopping basket is unnecessary and not recyclable (Meikle, 2009). It is paramount for supermarkets to distinguish between packaging which protects food, and packaging which is unnecessary (Bolland, 2009).

Tesco are committed to reducing packaging without compromising the protection and preservation of their products. Their commitment is covered in five principles: 'Packaging should be fit for purpose; use the lightest weight materials; use materials from the most sustainable sources; maximise opportunities for recycling and recovery; and be designed to have the lowest carbon impact keeping in mind the product and value chain' (Tesco plc, 2009). Their main priority lies in reducing the weight of their packaging, and to date they have reduced it by 100,000 tonnes since 2007. Asda have reduced the packaging on their products by 25%, and at least 92% of their packaging is recyclable (Asda, 2010). Sainsbury's is committed to working with the government to make as much of their packaging as recyclable as possible (J Sainsbury, 2011). In adhering to their packaging reduction programme, Morrisons have reduced packaging on their own brand products by 15%, and 17,155 tonnes of packaging has been removed from their products (Morrisons, 2011).

2.3.2 Plastic Bags

'Many supermarkets have adapted to using the plastic bag as a means of demonstrating their green credentials and commitment to the environment' (Supermarket.co.uk, 2010). Plastic bags are high on the agenda of green campaigners; up to 17 billion plastic bags are given away annually and take up to 1,000 years to decompose. Unless retailers take greater steps to reduce the number of plastic bags used, the Government has warned that they will consider a levy of 10p for the use of plastic bags (Thomas, 2008).

Tesco are one of the major distributors of plastic bags, distributing 3 billion plastic bags annually. They are now trying to stop the mass distribution of plastic bags in their stores, by keeping bags under the tills and only providing them if requested (BBC, 2006). Asda have reduced single use carrier bags by 50%, as well as offering their customers bags for life (Asda, 2010). Sainsbury's carrier bags contain 50% of recycled material, and they are encouraging customers to reuse their carrier bags and rewarding them with Nectar points if they do (J

Sainsbury, 2011). Morrisons offer a range of environmentally friendly bags including; reusable woven shopping bags and reusable wine carriers made from recycled plastic bottles. This effort has resulted in a reduction of 631 million carrier bags used (Morrisons, 2011).

2.3.3 Food Waste

In Britain alone, at least 3.3 million tonnes of food is thrown away every year, most of this food goes to landfill sites where methane emissions are released adding to global warming (Hickman, 2007). This is due to the fact that it's the cheaper and easier option for retailers, rather than giving it to those in need. Campaigners are finding this shocking and immoral as most of the food wasted by retailers is perfectly edible. For example, there is EU legislation which states that EU produced bananas should be straight rather than curved, showing that food is being thrown away simply because it is the wrong shape (BBC, 2005). This absurdity is one which is causing food waste to be built up on landfills. Organisations such as Fareshare, a national charity which redistributes supplies from the food industry to the homeless and those in need, and WRAP (Waste & Resources Action Programme) who work with individuals and businesses to help them reap the benefits of reducing waste, are currently working with UK supermarkets to help them reduce the amount of wastage.

Since August 2009, Tesco have managed to divert 100% of their waste from going directly to the landfill, by reducing, reusing and recycling. They have also implemented a new initiative of 'Buy One Get One Free - Later' of perishable goods, where customers can pick up their free product when required (Tesco, 2009). Asda are currently putting their efforts into standardizing their portion sizes with the help of the Food and Drink Federation and the Institute of Grocery Distribution. They are also supporting the Government's 'Love Food Hate Waste' campaign, coordinated by WRAP (Asda, 2010). Sainsbury's are diverting 30,000 tonnes of waste from the landfill every year and sending this to anaerobic digestion plants, which is an alternative way to produce energy (J Sainsbury, 2011). Morrisons are offering information to customers on the difference between 'use by' and 'best before' dates. As well as conducting research to find out which fresh produce needs packaging to prevent damage and thus reducing waste of the product. (Morrisons, 2011).

2.4 Summary

From the literature that has been discussed, it seems that the four major UK supermarkets have acknowledged environmental issues concerning their businesses. This study has been based around how these actions have determined consumer purchase behaviour.

Through the lack of information surrounding how consumers have responded to the conduct of supermarkets, questionnaires and structured interviews have been specifically designed to find out consumer responses. The next chapter provides a thorough description of the research methods which have been used to gather the relevant data.

Chapter 3

Research Methodology

This chapter explores the research methods chosen to gather the necessary data for this project. It outlines the techniques used and justifies the applied research methods.

3.1 Research Philosophy

The research philosophy relates to the ‘development of knowledge and the nature of that knowledge’ (Saunders et al, 2007). A number of philosophies including positivism, realism, interpretativism, objectivism, pragmatism etc. have been considered for this project.

A positivism philosophy has been chosen for this study. Saunders et al (2007) states that this philosophy is one which uses ‘existing theory to develop hypotheses’, and goes on to mention

that these ‘hypotheses will be tested and confirmed, in whole or part, or refuted.’ This is relevant to the theories discussed in the literature review.

3.2 Research Approaches

There are two types of research approaches which can be used to obtain research. The first approach is called deductive, this type of reasoning works from the more general to the more specific. Firstly, a theory will be thought out and narrowed down to specific hypotheses. These hypotheses are then tested with the data gathered either confirming or not confirming the theories. The second approach is called inductive, this type of reasoning moves from specific observations to broader theories. Firstly, specific observations will be made and patterns and regularities will be detected. There will be a formulation of hypotheses which can be explored and may lead to a development of some general conclusions and theories (Trochim, 2006).

In this study a deductive approach to the research has been chosen. The data gathered has been tested with the aim to find out whether the environmental actions of UK supermarkets have influenced consumers’ food shopping behaviour.

3.3 Research Strategy

The research strategy chosen for this project is the use of research surveys in the form of questionnaires. Saunders et al (2007) mention that this strategy is ‘associated with the deductive approach.’ This is the most suitable strategy for this project, as it allows the collection of large amounts of data from a large population. Therefore, it enables the researcher to gain useful data on consumers’ environmental behaviour towards supermarkets.

3.4 Research Methods

A mixed-method research approach has been used within this study. Saunders et al (2007) define mixed-method research as using ‘quantitative and qualitative data collection techniques’. This ensured that an accurate and credible outcome can be achieved.

3.5 Primary Research

In order to gather and process the data on how consumers have responded to the environmental efforts of UK supermarkets, self-completion questionnaires and structured interviews were used. This has led the researcher to identify trends in regards to the environmental purchase decisions made by consumers.

The sample size for the self-completion questionnaires were 50 randomly selected people. A further ten people were randomly selected for interviews. The samples were based upon those consumers who shopped at UK supermarkets. These sample sizes were chosen as it was believed they were adequate to reach valid and reliable conclusions.

3.5.1 Questionnaire

The questionnaire contained 16 questions, and consisted mainly of closed-ended and rating style questions (See Appendix 3). It was designed in this way so that the researcher could gain precise data on specific issues. A Likert-scale rating was used in certain questions, this technique was used as it seemed the best way to examine the importance of the relationship between the environmental behaviour of supermarkets and consumers' attitudes. Furthermore, questions of the open-ended orientation were not developed into the self-completion questionnaires, as the depth of information participants give can vary enormously, and answers maybe given which are of limited value to the researcher (Wilson, 2006).

A pilot questionnaire was conducted in order to receive feedback to identify improvements which could be made. The pilot questionnaire found that there were some questions which were unclear and irrelevant to the aim of the project. As a result, the questionnaire was restructured to show these improvements and was then distributed to the targeted respondents. The pilot questionnaire can be found in Appendix 2.

In total 50 questionnaires have been distributed to UK consumers aged 18 and above.

3.5.2 Structured Interviews

Saunders et al (2007) state that 'the use of interviews can help to gather valid and reliable data', they also argue that in order to better understand consumers' attitudes and behaviour, questionnaires should be complemented by interviews. Consequently, ten structured interviews

were carried out with consumers aged 18 and above in the North London region. These were conducted in order to make more valid and reliable conclusions on consumers' environmental ethics (Appendix 4).

Structured interviews were chosen as they allowed the researcher to ask more complicated questions and identify any general patterns to the data collected (Saunders et al, 2007). The interview questions were designed and evaluated after the data was collected from the questionnaires. This allowed the findings from the questionnaire to be enhanced, which meant that valid and consistent conclusions were made on how UK supermarkets encouraged and promoted consumers to become 'green'.

3.6 Secondary Research

Secondary research has been obtained for the purpose of this study as it provides a theoretical background to environmental ethics and ethical consumers. Saunders et al (2007) describe secondary research as data 'collected for some other purpose', usually it is data collected by authors for their own reasons. Therefore, the secondary data has only included information which is relevant and supportive to the aims of this project. Moreover, as there are many types of secondary data available from media accounts and television recordings, information for this particular study has been obtained from documentary written materials. These include journals such as the *Journal of Business Ethics* and electronic databases such as ABI Inform, as well as information from various academic books and articles. The secondary research has been analysed in the literature review.

3.7 Research Analysing

The quantitative data which have been collected from the questionnaires and structured interviews have been analysed with the use of Microsoft Excel. This allowed the researcher to produce tables, charts and graphs. The software programme SPSS was also used as it allowed the researcher to produce descriptive statistics to analyse the data. The mean and standard deviation was calculated for some questions in order to analyse the average answer given by participants, and to work the variance between these answers. It meant that any relationships or trends could be identified clearly to provide a greater understanding.

3.8 Limitations of research methods

As with most research this study also has its limitations. Firstly, only 50 questionnaires and ten interviews were conducted in the Greater London Area. This means that the results are not representative of the purchase behaviour of UK consumers as a whole, and can only be applied to a select number of UK consumers. The project also does not take into account other factors which may influence consumers purchase behaviour, such as ethnicity and nationality. The project also faced time and resource constraints.

3.9 Research Ethics

The information which is collected from the primary research will remain confidential, anonymous and will only be used for the purpose of this study.

All participants were informed of the research objectives and aims (Appendix 1). The questionnaires contained the contact details of the researcher if there were any queries from the participants. Regardless of this, participants were briefed and were told that this research was optional and could stop or leave at any time.

3.10 Summary

Both primary and secondary research methods have been applied to this study. The approaches of both types of research have been clearly reviewed and justified in this chapter. The use of questionnaires and interviews has meant that accurate and reliable results have been gathered. Furthermore, the limitations and research ethics have been highlighted in reference to the primary research.

The following section illustrates and analyses the results and findings from this research.

Chapter 4

Results and Analysis

The results of the questionnaire and the structured interviews have been presented in this chapter. The following provides an overview of the gathered data in the form of graphs, tables and descriptive statistics.

4.1 The sample

The sample included 50 questionnaire participants and ten interviewees. The gender of the questionnaire respondents were distributed somewhat equally with 42% of male participants and 58% of female participants. The gender of the interviewees ranged from 40% male participants to 60% female participants. 26% of participants were from the 18-30 age group, 20% from the age group 31-40, 30% from the 41-50 age group, 14% from the 51-60 age group and 10% of participants from the age over 60.

4.2 UK Supermarkets-an overview

Figure 4.1: The most popular UK supermarket. (Q3 from Questionnaire, Q1 from Interview)

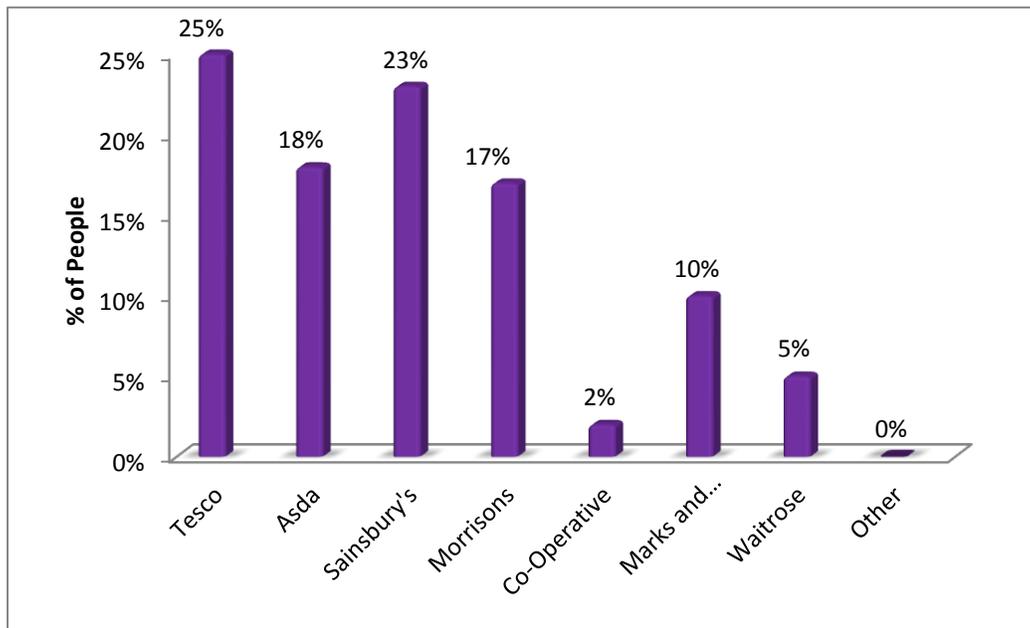


Figure 4.1 shows that 28% of respondents prefer to shop at Tesco whereas 23% of participants prefer to shop at Sainsbury's.

The main reason for consumers choosing their preferred supermarket was for their own personal convenience. There is strong evidence from both primary researches that the environmental values and practices of UK supermarkets are of little importance to consumers' purchasing decisions, affecting only 16% of participants in total, as shown in Figure 4.2 and Figure 4.3.

Figure 4.2 The reasons for choosing preferred UK supermarket (Q5 from Questionnaire)

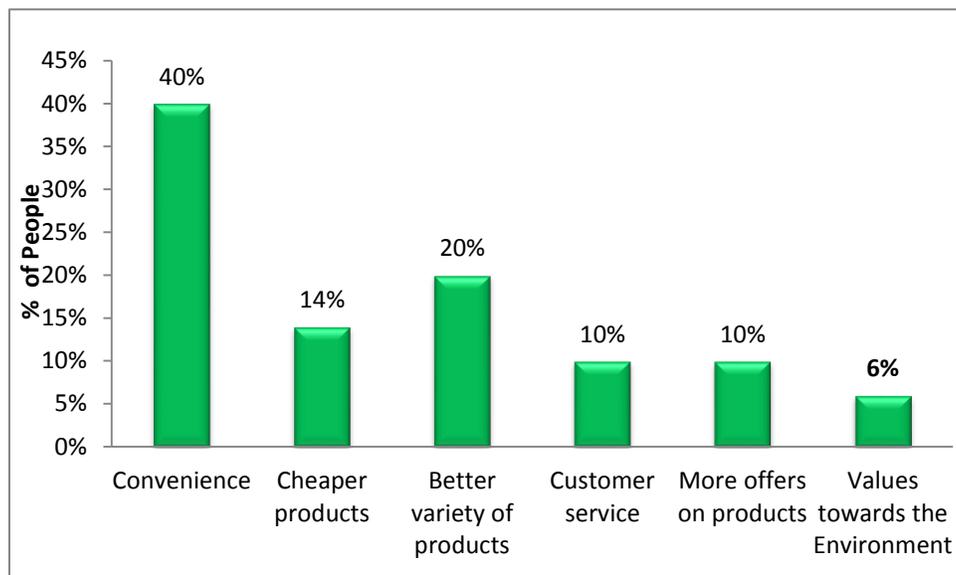
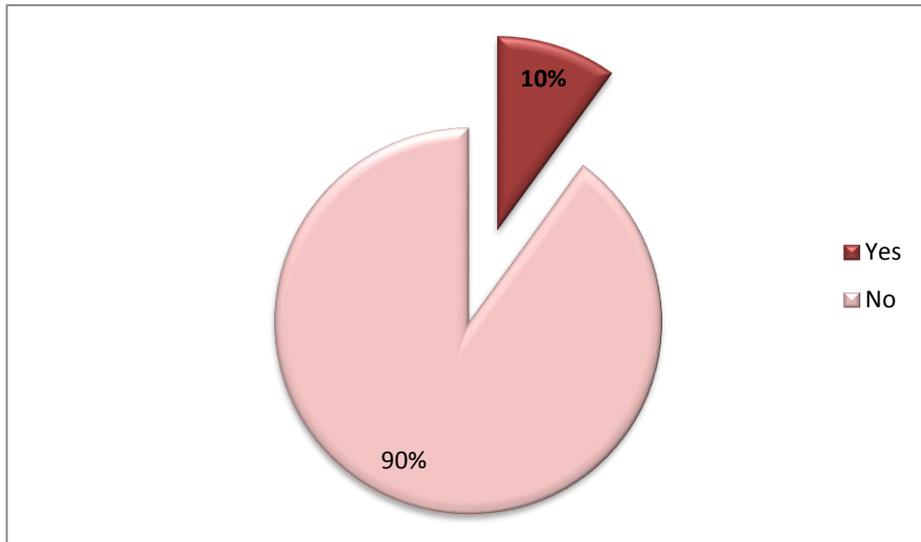


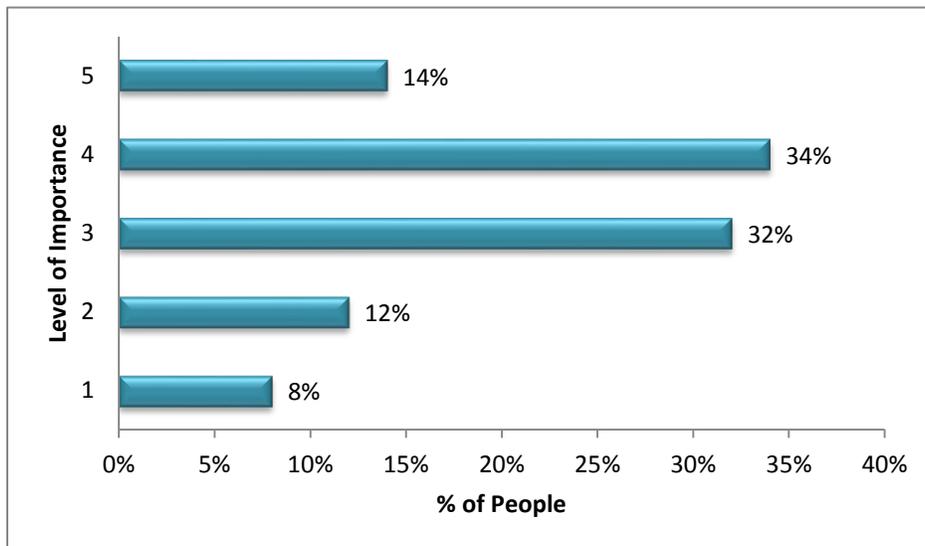
Figure 4.3 Environmental practices on consumer supermarket choice (Q2 from Interview)



This goes in line with what Thogerson (1999) suggests, that if there are other influences that affect consumers' product choices, then this will prevail over their moral purchasing decisions.

Figure 4.4 shows the level of importance a supermarkets environmental actions have on consumer purchase behaviour.

Figure 4.4 Importance of a supermarket's environmental practices. (Q7 from Questionnaire)



48% of consumers suggested that if their supermarket was acting irresponsibly towards the environment then they would boycott that supermarket. This confirms the findings of many

researchers who have suggested that consumers are more likely to respond to a business's immoral actions more than their ethical behaviour.

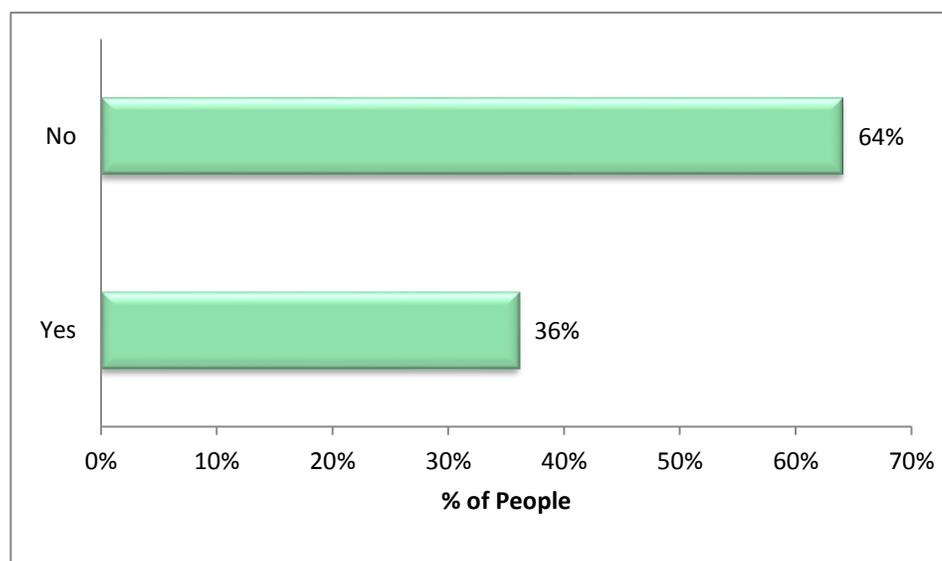
Figure 4.5 shows the amount spent on food shopping by consumers on a weekly basis. 30% of participants spend £50-£70 on their shopping, whilst 36% of consumers spend over £70.

Figure 4.5 The amount spent on food shopping per week. (Q4 from Questionnaire)



Participants were then asked if the recession had affected the way they shop at the supermarket; the results are shown in Figure 4.6. 64% of participants have stated that their food shopping behaviour has not been affected by the recession.

Figure 4.6 The recession of 2008 and food shopping behaviour (Q6 from Questionnaire)



A Mintel (2010) report suggested that consumers are more likely to shop at those supermarkets offering hard discounts, due to the forecasted economic environment. It can be assumed from these results that consumers will not change how much they spend on their food shopping, regardless of the economic environment.

4.3 Packaging

Table 4.1 illustrates that the packaging on food products is fairly important to consumers. It shows on average that most consumers value packaging as important or very important to their purchasing decisions.

Table 4.1 The importance of packaging to consumers (Q9 from Questionnaire)

(A

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
The Importance of Packaging to Consumers	50	1	5	3.10	1.182
Valid N (listwise)	50				

scale where 1=Least Important and 5=Most Important)

However, further analysis of this dimension proves that the importance of packaging to consumers is purely on a convenience level and not a personal environmental concern, as demonstrated in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2 Consumers response to excess packaging (Q5 from Interview)

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
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(A)

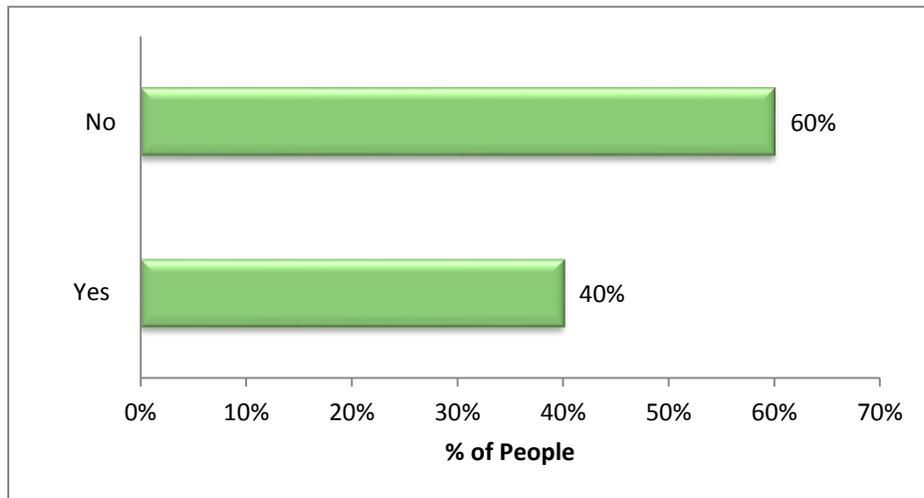
'It annoys me when there is excess packaging on food products, and it is a chore to recycle them'	10	2	5	3.70	1.252
Valid N (listwise)	10				

scale

where 1=Strongly Disagree and 5=Strongly Agree)

This analysis is further justified as 60% of consumers would not pay extra for packaging which is more sustainable (Figure 4.7), hence, the assumption can be made that factors such as price will override moral values.

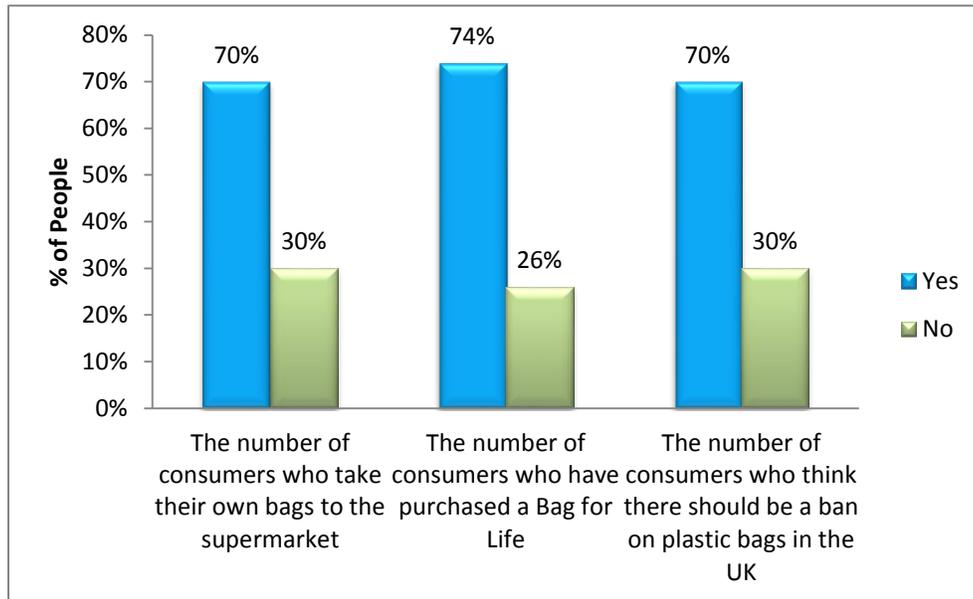
Figure 4.7 Sustainable Packaging (Q10 from Questionnaire)



4.4 Plastic Bags

Figure 4.8 illustrates the number of consumers who take their own bags to the supermarket or have purchased a Bag for Life. As well as those consumers who believe that there should be a complete ban of plastic bags in the UK.

Figure 4.8 Plastic bags and Bag for Life. (Q11 and Q12 from Questionnaire, Q10 from Interview)



The effort that UK supermarkets have put into reducing the amount of plastic bags distributed to consumers has had a positive influence on their environmental decisions. 70% of consumers take their own bags with them when they go to the supermarket, and 74% of consumers have purchased a 'Bag for Life' or the equivalent, showing the strong influence and positive impact this has had on consumers.

Moreover, 70% of interviewees believed that the distribution of plastic bags should be completely banned and that UK supermarkets should only offer cotton/linen reusable bags.

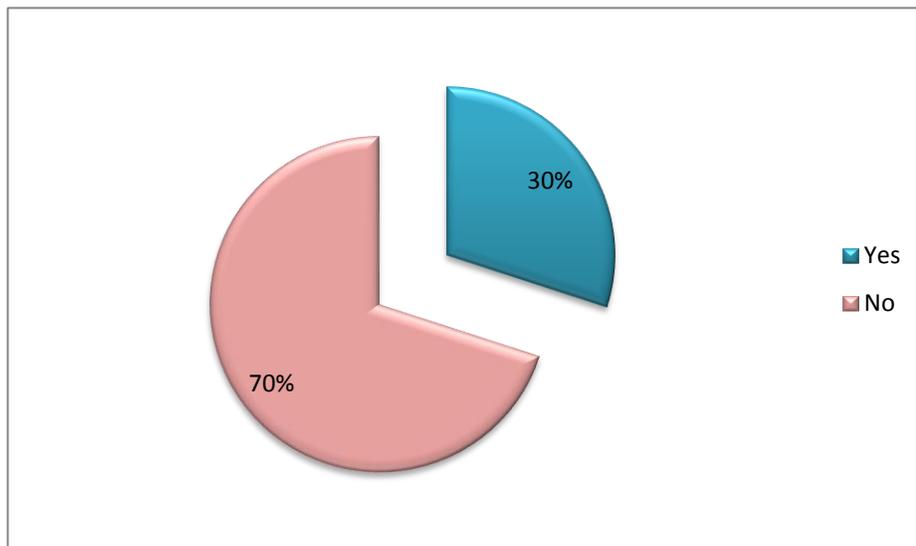
When asked why they thought that reusable bags should be implemented into UK supermarkets, the majority of consumers said that plastic bags were an inconvenience to them, some went as far to say that 'supermarkets give out too many plastic bags, one for each item sometimes.'

Participants identified that if cotton/linen reusable bags were implemented in UK supermarkets, then it would help towards saving the environment.

4.5 Food Waste

Figure 4.9 presents the percentage of consumers who would take advantage of a 'Buy One Get One Free' offer on a perishable item.

Figure 4.9 'Buy One Get One Free' offers (Q14, from Questionnaire)



Only 30% of consumers would take advantage of a 'Buy One Get One Free' (BOGOF) offer on a perishable item even if they would not be able to consume both items. It could therefore be assumed that Tesco's 'Buy One Get One Free-Later' incentive, maybe an attractive option for the 70% of consumers who stated that they would not take advantage of the BOGOF offer.

Table 4.3 shows the factors which consumers believe would encourage them to throw away less food.

Table 4.3 Throwing away less food (Q7 from Interview)

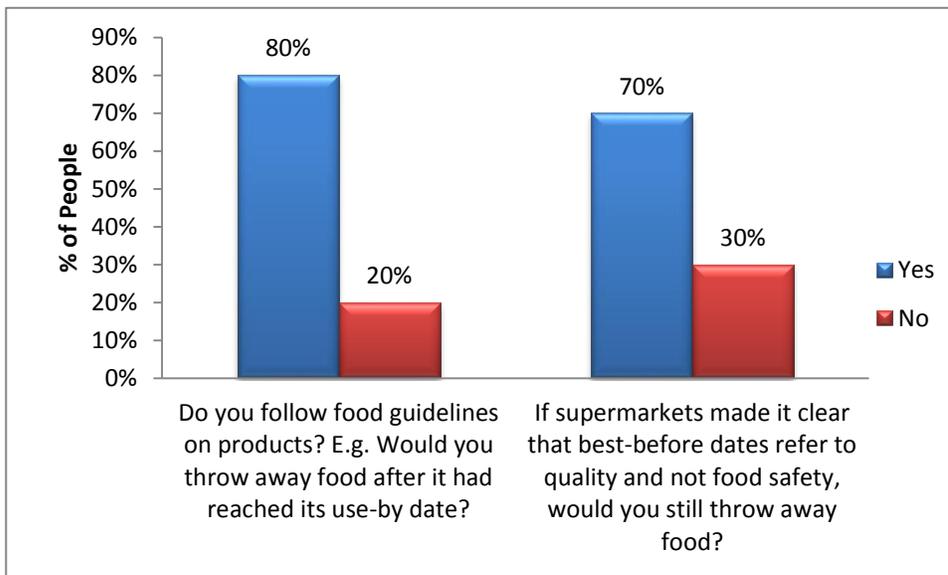
Descriptive Statistics					
If supermarkets...	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Provided information on how food is best kept	10	2	3	2.90	.316
Provided recipes on how to cook leftover food	10	1	3	2.80	.632
Provided guidelines of portion sizes for shoppers	10	1	3	2.30	.949
Valid N (listwise)	10				

(A scale where 1=Least Encourage and 3=Most Encourage)

The most encouraging factor for consumers to throw away less food is if supermarkets provided information on how food was best stored. This is shown by the minimal variance in the value for standard deviation.

The questions were then asked if consumers followed food guidelines on products and if they would throw away less food if they knew what ‘best-before’ dates really meant. The results can be seen in Figure 4.10.

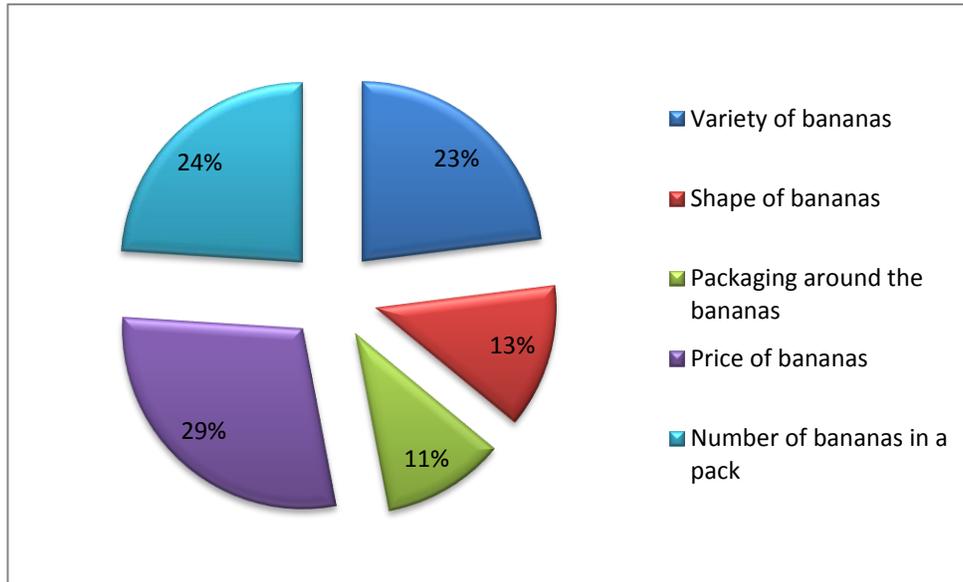
Figure 4.10 ‘Use-by’ and ‘best-before’ dates. (Q6 and Q8 from Interview)



The result showed that 80% of consumers would throw away products if the ‘use-by’ date had been reached. However, if UK supermarkets made it clear to their consumers that ‘best-before’ dates refer to the quality and not the food safety of the product, then this would mean that 70% of consumers who would throw away less food.

Figure 4.11 shows the factors that consumers consider when purchasing a bunch of bananas. This question was asked to raise awareness that food is wasted due to qualities such as the shape and size of a product.

Figure 4.11 Qualities of a bunch of bananas (Q8 from Questionnaire)



From result,

this the price

of bananas was the most important factor affecting 29% of consumers, with a mere 13% attracted to the shape of bananas. Thus, this result is not supportive of the EU legislation concerning the shape of bananas.

In relation to this 70% of interviewees did not consider the shape of a fruit or vegetable as an important quality which attracted them to buy a product, as presented in Table 4.4.

Table 4.4 The shape of a product and purchasing decisions (Q9 from Interview)

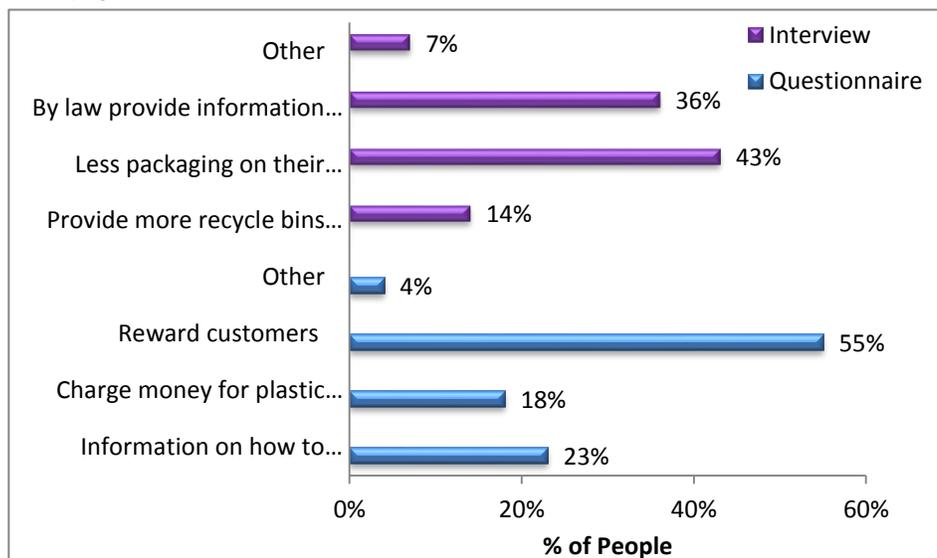
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	No	7	70.0	70.0	70.0
	Yes	3	30.0	30.0	100.0
	Total	10	100.0	100.0	

In fact the majority of consumers were concerned with the quality and taste of the product more so than anything else. One participant stated that ‘the shape is not important, we eat it anyway, and as long it tastes nice.’ On the other hand, the shape of products did affect 30% of interviewees who all stated that the shape makes the product more attractive, with one participant suggesting that ‘if something is attractive, then you are more likely to buy it, if something looks better it is most likely to taste better.’

4.6 The responsibility of UK Supermarkets

Figure 4.12 shows how participants thought supermarkets could encourage them to become more environmentally friendly.

Figure 4.12 How supermarkets can encourage consumers to be environmentally friendly (Q13 from Questionnaire, Q4 from Interview)

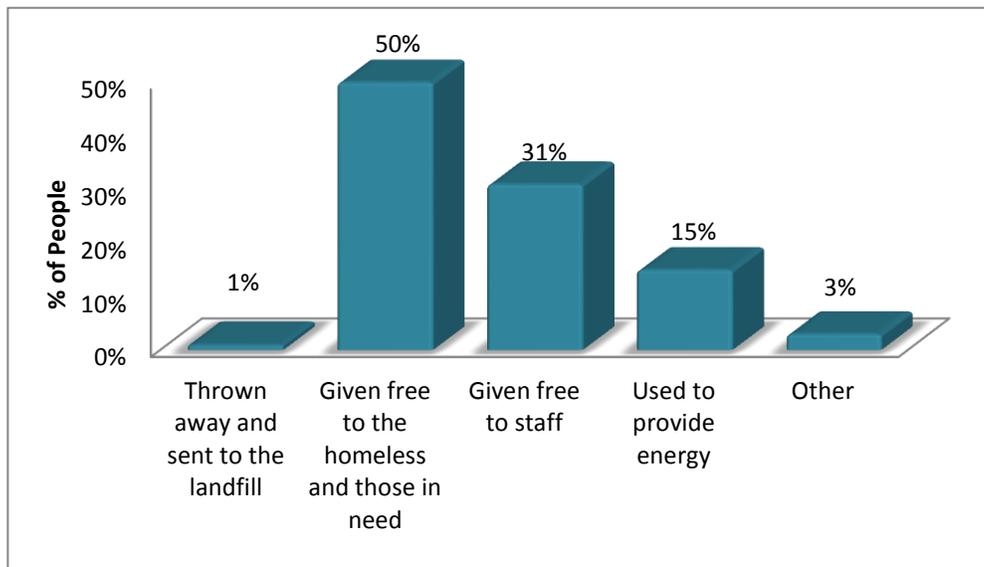


55% of consumers believed that supermarkets could enhance consumers green credentials if they rewarded customers who were environmentally friendly. Only 18% of people believed that a

charge on plastic bags would encourage consumers to become more environmentally friendly. It was found that 43% of participants would be encouraged to recycle at home if supermarkets reduced the amount of packaging on their products.

Figure 4.13 shows what participants believe should happen to food not sold at the supermarket.

Figure 4.13 Food not sold at the supermarket. (Q15 from Questionnaire)



This shows

result that

consumers believe that supermarkets have a responsibility to the community outside of their day to day business. 50% of participants stated that food not sold at the supermarket should be given to the homeless and those in need. Only 15% of participants thought that leftover food should be used to provide energy. Thus, it seems that the work of Fareshare is one which is supported by respondents.

Table 4.5 demonstrates the response of consumers who would change their purchasing decisions if they had more information on the impact that packaging, plastic bags and food waste had on the environment.

Table 4.5 More information on the environment (Q16 from Questionnaire)

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation

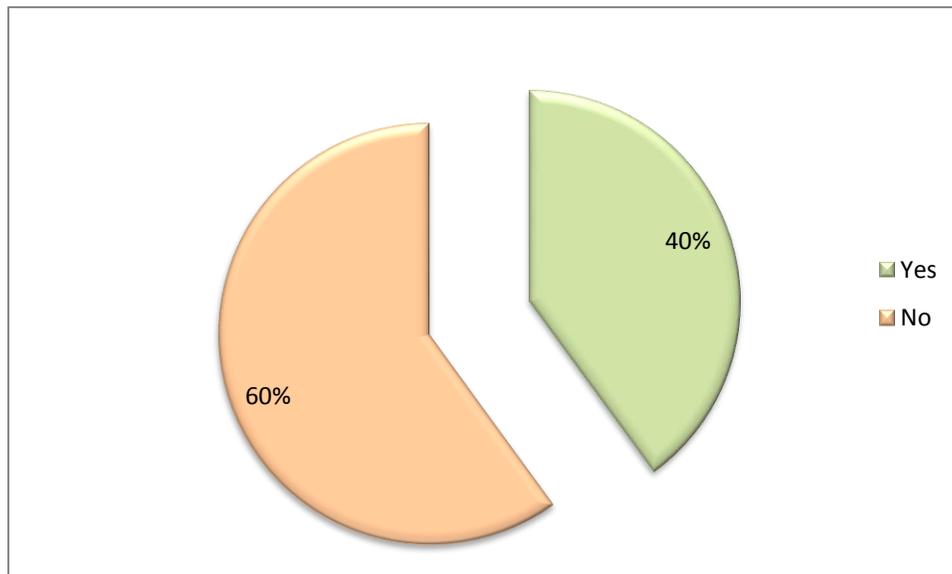
Would your food shopping behaviour change if you knew the impacts of excess packaging, the distribution of plastic bags and the level of food waste on the environment?	50	1	2	1.20	.404
Valid N (listwise)	50				

(A scale where 1=Yes and 2=No)

Consumers would consider changing their food shopping behaviour and becoming ‘green’ consumers if they had access to more information which would encourage them to do so. This is supported by 80% of participants and is shown by the minimal value of the standard deviation, showing that most people answered ‘yes’ to the question.

The most fundamental aspect, however, is that even though consumers’ food shopping behaviour would change if they knew more of the impacts on the environment, they do not believe that it is the UK supermarkets responsibility to educate its customers, as shown in Figure 4.14.

Figure 4.14 Supermarkets responsibility in educating customers (Q11 from Interview)



This graph reveals that 60% of consumers believe that it should be the responsibility of the government and information should be communicated to the public through means of mass

media. One interviewee stated that ‘you can’t be educated while you are shopping; usually people want to do their shopping and get out of the supermarket as quick as possible.’

4.7 Summary

The results of the questionnaires and interviews have been presented and analysed in this chapter. The next section focuses on the discussion of the findings of this study, and compares the results to the existing literature and previous research presented in Chapter 2.

Chapter 5

Discussion

This chapter focuses on the significance of data gathered from primary sources. It compares and contrasts the findings to the existing secondary data discussed in Chapter 2. This discussion also analyses key findings in relation to the research objectives outlined in Chapter 1.

5.1 Objective 1

‘To examine what actions UK supermarkets have taken to reduce their packaging, use of plastic bags and level of food waste.’

The secondary data has revealed that the top four UK supermarkets have implemented environmental policies concerning their aims to reduce excess packaging, distribution of plastic bags and level of food waste.

Mellahi and Wood (2000, p.51) stated that a green firm will agree to apply environmental codes and strategies at all stages of the value chain. It is clear from the secondary data that the top four UK supermarkets have done this. By implementing these actions they have sought to enhance their ecological responsiveness which is fundamental in this highly competitive industry. Competition as a motivator for ecological responsiveness is prominent in this industry as identified by Bansal and Roth's (2000) model of the motivations of ecological responsiveness. Competitiveness of this industry is clearly shown by the responses of 25% of consumers who stated that they shopped mostly at Tesco, and the minority at Sainsbury (23%), followed by Asda and Morrisons at 18% and 17% respectively.

The Greendex survey carried out by the National Geographic Society and Globescan Inc., have ranked Britain in 15th place out of 17 countries in terms of consumers progression towards sustainable consumption (National Geographic, 2010). There is evidence that this information is a true representation of British consumers, as only 7% of respondents acknowledged that they would take into consideration a supermarkets environmental values and practices when purchasing from them. Adams (2000), stated that consumers are not only concerned with what a business sells and at what price, but also the way the product was made. However, the results do not agree with this view, as a vast majority of respondents continue to base their purchasing decisions on factors such as convenience, cheaper products, better variety of products, customer service and the availability of more offers.

5.2 Objective 2

'To investigate if consumers have responded to these changes made by UK supermarkets through their shopping behaviour by considering packaging, plastic bags and food waste.'

The findings show that the influence of packaging, plastic bags and food waste have various impacts on consumers' food shopping behaviour.

The first aspect to consider is consumer responses to excess packaging on products. Thogerson (1999) suggested that if there are other influences that affect consumers' product choices, then this will prevail over their moral purchasing decisions. This is confirmed by 44% of respondents who stated that the packaging of a product was important to their purchasing decision; however 60% of consumers stated that they would not pay more for sustainable packaging. Thus, price in

this case is the influence. Conversely, Blend and Van Ravenswaay (1999), Loureiro et al (2002) and Trudel and Cotte, (2008), all suggested that consumers would pay a premium for ethical products.

The second aspect to consider is consumer responses to the distribution of plastic bags. Sainsbury's offer Nectar points and Tesco's offer Clubcard points to those customers who take their own bags when they go shopping. This incentive is popular among participants, and is supported by 55% of consumers who stated that if they were rewarded by their supermarket for reusing bags, it would encourage them to become more environmentally friendly. Furthermore, all four supermarkets encourage their customers to reuse plastic bags and to purchase Bags for Life. This action has influenced 70% of respondents to take their own plastic bags when going shopping and 74% who have purchased a Bag for Life. In addition, the results also support previous findings which state that supermarkets use plastic bags as a way to demonstrate their green credentials, and their commitment to the environment (Supermarket.co.uk, 2010). It seems that this particular environmental action is one which is extremely influential to consumers' purchasing decisions.

The final aspect to consider is consumer responses to the level of food waste. A BBC (2005) report concerning the legislation that EU produced bananas should be straight rather than curved, is one which does not concern 76% of consumers. In fact they considered the price of bananas as the most important factor which influences their purchasing choice. The BBC viewed this legislation as one which was 'shocking and immoral' (BBC, 2005), and this view was clearly shared by respondents.

A report conducted by Mintel (2007) suggested that supermarkets are perceived as villains as they advertise multi-buy offers to consumers which encourage them to waste food. The majority of respondents agreed with this suggestion as 70% of consumers would not take advantage of a 'Buy One Get One Free' offer on perishable items. It can be assumed from this that Tesco's incentive of 'Buy One Get One Free-Later' is one which would be popular amongst respondents.

5.3 Objective 3

‘To explore whether these practices by UK supermarkets have encouraged consumers to be more environmentally friendly.’

Tesco’s attempts to reduce excess packaging by ‘maximising opportunities for recycling and recovery’ (Tesco plc, 2009), and Asda using packaging which is 92% recyclable (Asda, 2010) is supported by 50% of interviewees. They agreed that excess packaging is ‘annoying’ and a chore to recycle. Also, 36% of respondents believe that information should be readily available as to which types of packaging are recyclable. Consumers are more affected by excess packaging than the materials which make the packaging, and supermarkets need to take account of these concerns.

Borin et al (2001) suggested that if businesses provide information of the environmental impact of their products then this will lead to a larger percentage of consumers purchasing green products. This was confirmed as 80% of consumers would change their food shopping behaviour if they knew more about the affect of their purchasing decisions on the environment. The literature also stated that supermarkets have a significant role to play in promoting green behaviour and educating consumers about the choices they make (Intel, 2007). Nonetheless, this view was not shared by 60% of interviewees, who stated that it is the responsibility of the government to educate consumers, and should be communicated to the public through the media.

Another aspect which will encourage consumers to be more environmentally friendly is if UK supermarkets completely banned plastic bags and sold cotton/linen bags instead. A large number of consumers are already highly influenced through the actions which UK supermarkets have implemented in their bid to reduce the distribution of plastic bags, as shown in Objective 1. Nevertheless, 70% of consumers would like to see a complete ban on plastic bags. This finding supports the distribution of reusable woven shopping bags already implemented by Morrisons. It seems that if all supermarkets implemented a ban on plastic bags, then this will not only have a positive effect on the environment, but also consumers and their purchasing decisions.

Finally, Morrisons provide information to their customers about the differences between ‘use-by’ and ‘best-before’ dates. This practice implemented by them is supported by 70% of participants

who would be encouraged to throw away less food if this information was more readily available.

5.4 Summary

The findings have illustrated that consumers are affected by the environmental practices implemented by UK supermarkets. It has been found that the most influential action on consumers' food purchasing behaviour is the distribution of plastic bags. However, in most cases consumers are more influenced by the quality and price of products rather than their environmental attributes. This supports previous studies which suggest that quality and price are the most influential factors affecting consumers' purchasing decisions. This discussion has also shown that access to information and further educating consumers about the affects of their food purchasing decisions on the environment, is fundamental to enhance both supermarkets' and consumers' green credentials.

Finally, this discussion has provided answers to the objectives stated in the introduction. From the previous chapters of this study, a conclusion to this project can be formed, which is illustrated in the next chapter.

Chapter 6

Conclusion

The following chapter provides a conclusion to the project, outlining recommendations and limitations of this study. It also discusses the potential for future research.

6.1 Conclusion

The aim of this project was to identify what practices UK supermarkets have implemented in order to improve their green credentials in regards to the reduction of packaging, distribution of plastic bags and the level of food waste. Also, how these practices have affected consumer purchase decisions.

It is true to say that the four major UK supermarkets have implemented a number of initiatives and changes to their production and policies in regards to the three environmental issues. The general response to these practices by consumers has been a positive one. This is shown by their actions towards initiatives promoting reusable plastic bags and their purchasing decisions towards incentives condoning food waste.

However, in all three of the environmental issues researched, it seems that the price of a product is the prevailing factor which attracts consumers to buy certain products. This has clearly been

demonstrated by the purchase behaviour of respondents towards sustainable packaging, their views on paying for plastic bags and their behaviour towards purchasing products for their price and not other qualities e.g. shape. It, therefore, seems that certain practices and initiatives implemented by UK supermarkets are not taken into account by consumers when they are shopping.

Furthermore, it seems that consumers are not attracted to shop at a particular supermarket for their environmental values, but for their convenience. Nevertheless, if UK supermarkets offer rewards and provide further information on the effects consumers' purchase decisions have on the environment, then their food shopping behaviour is likely to change.

Moreover, it seems that consumers personal environmental behaviour is affected by the way they shop at the supermarket. The majority of respondents agree that supermarkets need to improve their products to make it easier for consumers to become environmentally friendly.

Finally, information gathered from primary and secondary research, show that UK supermarkets do have some level of responsibility to their customers in encouraging their purchasing decisions to be environmentally friendly. Fundamentally, they must tackle this in a way which does not compromise the quality, price and other factors concerning the way people shop.

6.2 Recommendations

Firstly, UK supermarkets need to continue to find ways to reduce the amount of packaging around their products. This is more important to consumers than sustainable packaging.

Supermarkets need to remember that the majority of customers look for convenient products and ones which they can recycle easily. Hence, they need to facilitate this by encouraging more consumers to recycle at home and to become greener.

Secondly, it is fundamental that UK supermarkets take into account what consumers expect from their products and the incentives they respond to. For instance, the reward system whereby consumers are rewarded for being environmentally friendly is a popular choice in encouraging them to develop their green credentials. Therefore, supermarkets should consider extending incentives like these, in order to provide an effective way to encourage their customers to become more environmentally friendly.

Finally, in order for consumers to improve their environmental practices they need to have easy access to information. This ability to have information on products could be extremely beneficial to consumers as it would make it easier for them to implement environmental activities into their daily lives. Furthermore, supermarkets could also reap the benefits of this as it will increase their environmental responsibility.

6.3 Limitations of this study

This study also has its limitations. As mentioned in Chapter 3, 50 questionnaires were distributed, and ten interviews conducted, thus the findings cannot be generalised to the UK population. The views and opinions were restricted to 60 participants in total. Furthermore, the research was restricted to one geographic location, and was gathered solely within London. Moreover, the nationality and ethnicity of participants were not included as part of the demographics of the research, and these aspects are likely to have an influence on a consumer's purchasing decisions. This project was conducted over a six month period, therefore; further environmental actions and policies could have been implemented within UK supermarkets over this time, thus have not been included within this project.

6.4 Future research

The limitations of this study could provide an opportunity for further research. Nationality, ethnicity, age and sample size are factors which all need consideration. Hence, various consumer segments could be formed providing in-depth analysis. Research into other environmental actions implemented by supermarkets could be taken into account, rather than just focusing on the three discussed in this project. In addition, the views of supermarket managers could also be included as part of this research, to gain an insight into how they believe their policies have helped customers to become more environmentally friendly. Additionally, future research could focus on the practices of all UK supermarkets, as well as supermarkets in other countries. Also, the environmental practices in other areas of the retail industry could also be considered e.g. the apparel industry.

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Appendix 2: Pilot Questionnaire

I would appreciate it if you could take a moment of your time to fill out a series questions relating to how you shop at your supermarket. All of the information given within this questionnaire will be kept completely confidential. Thank you.

Please tick or circle where necessary.

1. What is your gender?

Male Female

2. What age category do you fall into?

18-30 31-40 41-50 51-61 60+

3. On average, how many people do you buy for when you do your weekly shop?

.....

4. On average how much money do you spend on your weekly shop?

<£30 £30-£50 £50-£70 £70-90
£90+

5. Which supermarket are you most likely to do your weekly shop?

Tesco
Asda
Sainsbury's
Morrisons
Marks and Spencer
Waitrose
Other

6. Why do you choose to shop at this particular supermarket?

Convenience
Cheaper Products
Better Variety of Products

Customer Service

More offers on Products

Values towards the Environment

7. Has the recession of 2008, affected the way you shop at the supermarket?

Yes No

8. Do you consider yourself as a 'green' consumer?

Yes No

9. On a scale of 1 to 5 how important is it to you that your supermarket is acting responsibly towards the environment, i.e. would you boycott your supermarket if they were not responsible towards the environment? (1 being not at all important, 5 being extremely important)

1 2 3 4 5

10. If you were to buy a pack of apples for example, what qualities would attract you to those apples?

Brand of apples

Shape of the apples

Packaging around the apples

Price of apples

Amount of apples within the pack

11. When buying a product, how important is the way the product has been packaged for you? (1 being not at all important, 5 being extremely important)

1 2 3 4 5

12. Would you be prepared to pay more for a product which used more sustainable packaging? (e.g. the packaging contained recycled materials)

Yes

No

13. Do you take your own bags with you when you go shopping, or have you purchased a 'Bag for Life' or the equivalent offered by the supermarket?

Yes

No

14. In your opinion how can supermarkets encourage and help their customers to become 'green' consumers?

Provide information on the best way to store perishable foods

Give reusable bags (Bag for Life) free on a promotional basis

Have visible recycling bins at their stores

Reward customers who are being environmentally friendly (bringing their own bags)

Other (Please Specify)

15. Scenario: 'There is a buy one get one free offer on a pack of yoghurts (a perishable item) available at your supermarket, knowing that you only consume one pack of yoghurts a week, would you pick up the second pack and take advantage of the offer available?'

Yes

No

16. In your opinion what do you think should happen to food not sold at the supermarket?

Thrown away and sent to the landfill

Given to the homeless and those in need

Given free to staff

Used for energy

Other (Please Specify)

17. Do you think your food shopping behaviour would change if you knew more about the affects of excess packaging, the use of plastic bags and the level of food waste has on the environment?

Yes

No

This is the pilot questionnaire which was later edited as participants were unsure about some of the questions. Hence, some questions were either omitted or changed in order to appropriately fulfil the aim of the study. The edited questionnaire which was distributed to participants is available in the next appendix.

Appendix 3: Questionnaire

I would appreciate it if you could take a moment of your time to fill out a series of questions relating to how you shop at the supermarket. All of the information given within this questionnaire will be kept completely confidential. Thank you.

Please tick or circle where necessary.

1. What is your gender?

Male

Female

2. What age category do you fall into?

18-30

31-40

41-50

51-60

60+

3. Which supermarket are you most likely to do your food shopping at?

Tesco

Asda

Sainsbury's

Morrisons

Co-Operative

Marks and Spencer

Waitrose

Other

4. On average how much money do you spend on your food shopping?

<£30

£30-£50

£50-£70

£70-90

£90+

5. What is your reason for selecting this particular supermarket? (You may tick more than one box)

Convenience

Cheaper Products

Better Variety of Products

Customer Service

More offers on Products

Values towards the Environment

6. Has the recession of 2008, affected the way you shop at the supermarket?

Yes

No

7. On a scale of 1 to 5, (1 being least important, 5 being most important) how important is it to you that your supermarket is acting responsibly towards the environment, i.e. would you boycott your supermarket if they were acting irresponsibly towards the environment?

1

2

3

4

5

8. If for example you were to buy a bunch of bananas, what qualities would attract you to those bananas? (You may tick more than one box)

Variety of bananas

Shape of bananas

Packaging around the bananas

Price of bananas

Number of bananas in the pack

9. On a scale of 1 to 5, (1 being least important, 5 being most important) when you are shopping for food, is the packaging of a product important to your decision in buying that particular product?

1

2

3

4

5

10. Would you be prepared to pay more for a product which has used more sustainable packaging? (e.g. the packaging contained recycled materials)

Yes

No

11. Do you take your own bags with you when you go to the supermarket?

Yes

No

12. Have you purchased a 'Bag for Life' or the equivalent offered by the supermarket?

Yes

No

13. In your opinion how can supermarkets encourage and help their customers to become more environmentally conscious? (You may tick more than one box)

Provide information on the best way to store perishable foods

Charge money for using 'normal' plastic bags

Reward customers who are being environmentally friendly (e.g. bringing their own bags)

Other (Please Specify)

14. Scenario: 'There is a buy one get one free offer on a pack of yoghurts (a perishable item) available at your supermarket, knowing that you only consume one pack of yoghurts a week, would you pick up the second pack and take advantage of the offer available, even if it meant throwing some of the yoghurts away?'

Yes

No

15. In your opinion what do you think should happen to food not sold at the supermarket? (You may tick more than one box)

Thrown away and sent to the landfill

Given free to the homeless and those in need

Given free to staff

Used to provide energy

Other (Please Specify)

16. Do you think your food shopping behaviour would change if you knew more about the impacts of excess packaging, the use of plastic bags and the level of food waste has on the environment?

Yes

No

THANK YOU FOR COMPLETING THIS QUESTIONNAIRE

Appendix 4: Structured Interview

1. Which supermarket you are most likely to shop at?

Tesco

Asda

Sainsbury's

Morrisons

Co-Operative

Marks and Spencer

Waitrose

Other

2. Would you say that the environmental practices of this supermarket are particularly important to the reasons why you shop there?

Yes

No

3. Do you recycle at home?

Yes

No

4. What ways do you think supermarkets can encourage people to recycle products?

Provide more recycle bins at their stores

Less packaging on their products so it is easier for customers to recycle

Should by law provide information as to which types of packaging are recyclable

Other (please specify)

.....

5. 'It annoys me when there is excess packaging on food products, and it is a chore to recycle them?'

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neither Agree/Disagree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

6. Do you follow food guidelines on your products? E.g. would you throw away food after it had reached the use-by date?

Yes

No

7. Out of the following suggestions which would encourage you to throw away less food?
Please rate them from 1-3 (1 least encourage you, 2 neither, 3 most encourage you)

If supermarkets...

Provided information on how food is best kept

Provided recipes on leftover food

Provide guidelines for portion sizes for shoppers

Other (please specify)

.....

8. If supermarkets made it clear to you that 'best-before' dates refer to the quality and not the food safety of the product, would you still throw food products away?

Yes

No

9. When buying fruit or vegetables, would the shape of the product be one of the qualities which you look for when buying the product?

Yes

No

Why?

.....

10. In some countries plastic bags have been completely banned. If you were to shop at a supermarket in Germany for instance, you would have to buy a cotton/linen reusable bag. Do you think this should be implemented in UK supermarkets?

Yes

No

Why?

.....

11. Do you think it is supermarkets responsibility to educate consumers on ways to be more environmentally friendly?

Yes

No

Why?

.....

12. What is your gender?

Male

Female

13. Which age category do you fall into?

18-30

31-40

41-50

51-60

60+

Appendix 5: Codified Questionnaire

Q1. Gender	Number of People
Male	21
Female	29
	50

Q2. Age Category	Number of People
18-30	13
31-40	10
41-50	15
51-60	7
60+	5
	50

Q3. Preferred Supermarket	Number of People
Tesco	12

Asda	8
Sainsburys	14
Morrisons	7
Co-Operative	1
Marks and Spencer	5
Waitrose	3
Other	0
	50

Q4. Amount of money spent on food shopping	Number of People
£30	5
£30-£50	12
£50-£70	15
£70-£90	11
£90+	7
	50

Q5. Reason for selecting supermarket	Number of People
Convenience	36
Cheaper Products	12
Better Variety of Products	18
Customer Service	8
More offers on Products	8
Values towards the Environment	6
	88

Q6. Recession of 2008	Number of People
Yes	18
No	32
	50

Q7. Importance of environmental actions	Number of People
1	4
2	6
3	16
4	17
5	7
	50

Q8. Qualities of Bananas	Number of People
Variety of Bananas	17
Shape of Bananas	10

Packaging around the bananas	8
Price of bananas	22
Number of bananas in the pack	18
	75

Q9. Importance of packaging	Number of People
1	6
2	9
3	14
4	16
5	5
	50

Q10. Sustainable Packaging	Number of People
Yes	20
No	30
	50

Q11. Take own bags	Number of People
Yes	35
No	15
	50

Q12. Bag for Life	Number of People
Yes	37
No	13
	50

Q13. More environmentally conscious consumers	Number of People
Provide information on the best way to store perishable foods	19
Charge money for using 'normal' plastic bags	15
Reward customers who are being environmentally friendly	45
Other	3
	82

Q14. Buy One Get One Free	Number of People
Yes	15
No	35
	50

Q15. Food not sold at Supermarket	Number of People
Thrown away and sent to the landfill	1
Given free to the homeless and those in need	40
Given free to staff	25
Used to provide energy	12
Other	2
	79

Q16. More knowledge on the environment	Number of People
Yes	40
No	10
	50