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Analysis of post-retail cardboard chain from the perspective of Green Supply Chain Management

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Abstract

To remain competitive, organizations establish integrations with their partners, customers and suppliers through a supply chain. This integration occurs through the sharing of resources and information, in a cohesive and high performance business model, in order to meet the needs of consumers. One of the competitive strategies adopted in the supply chain management (SCM) context is the green supply chain management (GSCM) approach. This approach, like SCM, helps organizations and their partners achieve corporate profit and market share goals, but incorporates environmental aspects related to operational activities that occur along the chain, since environmental concerns have been a frequent theme in the business world. One of the practices supported by GSCM is reverse logistics, which allows the return of products and packaging to the production cycle, thus promoting the mitigation of possible environmental impacts, if these products / packaging were incorrectly discarded. Regarding the packaging, the return activities correspond to the reverse logistics of post-consumption, and refer to those products that have reached the end of their useful life. However, when it comes to cardboard packs, these are commonly reused, since they have favorable characteristics for such accomplishment, such as: high strength, easy handling and low cost. Thus, it is considered that the shelf life of the cardboard is not limited to the final consumer and therefore the chain to which this product belongs is not restricted to this agent either, as SCM scope analyzes are generally conducted. In this sense, starting from the retail perspective, as the corporate agent closest to the consumer, this study aims to analyze the structure of the cardboard chain, given from the discarding of retail, from the perspective of the GSCM. Therefore, the methodology adopted is a qualitative approach, of a descriptive and exploratory nature. The data were collected through bibliographic research and the conduction of semi-structured interviews with the organizations belonging to the cardboard chain. The information obtained allowed the elaboration of a mapping, in which it was possible to identify that, after being discarded by the retail sector, the cardboard is directed to three different paths, being two chains of consumption and one of discarding. In addition, after this identification, we conducted analyzes of each destination of the cardboard by the environmental perspective given by the approach of the GSCM. As a result of this analysis, it was identified that the most appropriate way that cardboard can take after its disposal is to follow a recycling chain, which will allow the reduction of environmental impacts regarding the extraction of natural raw materials, as well as the economy of resources such as water and energy.

Keywords: *Cardboard. Retail. GSCM. Disposal of packaging.*