

IMPACT OF FOOD PACKAGING DESIGN ON CONSUMER PURCHASE INTENTIONS

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ABSTRACT

Food packaging has become an important marketing and communication tool because consumers often encounter packaging before they experience the actual food product. Packaging design can communicate product quality, brand identity, nutritional information, freshness, convenience, and expected taste through visual and structural elements such as color, typography, images, shape, material, and information presentation. Recent research shows that packaging design can influence consumer perceptions, expectations, and purchase intentions, although the strength of individual design elements may vary according to product type and consumer context. This study examines the impact of food packaging design on consumers' purchase intentions. A quantitative research approach can be used, with a survey design based on a structured questionnaire administered to consumers of packaged food products. Packaging design is considered the independent variable, while consumer purchase intention is the dependent variable. Data can be analyzed using descriptive statistics, reliability analysis, correlation, and regression analysis. The study is expected to show that attractive, clear, informative, and visually appealing packaging can positively influence consumers' perceptions and willingness to purchase. The findings may help food manufacturers and marketers understand how packaging design can be used to attract consumer attention and communicate product value effectively.

KEYWORDS: Food Packaging, Packaging Design, Consumer Behavior, Purchase Intention, Packaging Color, Visual Design, Food Products.

INTRODUCTION

Food packaging has become an essential part of modern food marketing and consumer decision-making. Traditionally, packaging was mainly considered a means of protecting food products from contamination, physical damage, moisture, and environmental factors. However, in contemporary markets, packaging performs a much broader role by communicating product information, creating brand identity, attracting consumer attention, and influencing perceptions of product quality. Consumers are often exposed to numerous competing food products on supermarket shelves, grocery stores, and online platforms, making packaging design an important factor in helping a product stand out. Elements such as color, typography, images, shape, size, material, labeling, and overall visual appearance can create immediate impressions about a product before consumers have an opportunity to taste or evaluate it. Packaging design can influence how consumers perceive the quality, freshness, safety, healthiness, and value of a food product. Attractive packaging may generate positive emotional responses and encourage consumers to examine a product more closely. In contrast, confusing, unattractive, or poorly organized packaging may reduce consumer interest even when the product itself is of good quality. Consumers may also use packaging as a source of information when making purchasing decisions. Information concerning ingredients, nutritional value, expiry dates, preparation methods, product claims, and certifications can contribute to consumer confidence and perceived transparency. Hamlin, R. P. (2016).explained Therefore, packaging combines both visual communication and informational communication, making it an important component of food-product marketing.

The visual elements of packaging are particularly important because consumers frequently make initial judgments based on appearance. Colors can attract attention and communicate particular associations, while photographs and illustrations can provide consumers with an expectation of the food inside the package.

Consumer purchase intention refers to the likelihood or willingness of an individual to purchase a particular product. It is an important concept in consumer behavior because it provides an indication of how consumers may respond to a product before an actual purchase takes place. When consumers encounter food products with attractive packaging, they may develop favorable perceptions that increase their willingness to purchase. Packaging can therefore operate as a communication tool between the producer and consumer at the point of purchase. This is especially important for new or unfamiliar products because consumers may rely more heavily on packaging cues when they have limited previous experience with the brand or product. In competitive food markets, companies continuously seek ways to differentiate their products from competitors. Packaging design provides one method of achieving this differentiation. A distinctive package can help establish brand recognition and make a product easier to identify. At the same time, effective packaging should balance attractiveness with functionality and clear communication. Excessive decorative elements may make important information difficult to locate, while overly simple packaging may fail to capture consumer attention. Consequently, successful food packaging requires an appropriate combination of aesthetic appeal, information, usability, and brand consistency. The relationship between packaging design and purchase intention is also important because consumer preferences are changing. Consumers increasingly consider not only appearance but also information, convenience, environmental concerns, and packaging materials when evaluating food products.

Sustainable packaging, recyclable materials, minimal packaging, and environmentally responsible communication may influence consumer perceptions among particular market segments. Thus, packaging design has expanded beyond traditional visual attractiveness to include functional and environmental dimensions. In Pakistan, packaged food consumption has also created a relevant context for examining packaging and consumer behavior. Consumers encounter a wide variety of packaged snacks, beverages, bakery products, dairy products, frozen foods, and other processed food products. Packaging characteristics such as color, design, font style, printed information, packaging material, and overall appearance may influence how consumers evaluate these products. Research involving Pakistani consumers has reported relationships between packaging characteristics and purchase intentions, indicating the relevance of packaging as a marketing factor in the local food market. Therefore, studying the impact of food packaging design on consumer purchase intentions is important for understanding how consumers respond to packaged food products. The present study focuses on the relationship between packaging design and consumers' intention to purchase food products. It considers packaging as a combination of visual, informational, and structural characteristics and examines whether these characteristics are associated with consumers' willingness to purchase Wang, H., Ab Gani, M. A. A., & Liu, C. (2023, revealed). The findings can provide useful information for food manufacturers, marketers, packaging designers, and retailers seeking to understand consumer behavior and develop packaging that communicates product value effectively. Previous research has increasingly examined packaging design as a factor affecting consumer responses.

Studies have considered individual elements such as color, images, typography, shape, packaging material, and information presentation, as well as the overall visual appearance of food packages. Research has generally suggested that packaging can influence attention, expectations, perceived quality, product evaluation, and purchase-related responses. However, the strength and direction of these effects may vary across product categories, cultural settings, demographic groups, and individual consumer preferences. For this reason, further research is useful to understand how consumers respond to food packaging design within specific market contexts. The study of food packaging design is also important from a business perspective. Food manufacturers invest considerable resources in packaging development, printing, materials, branding, and visual design. Understanding which packaging characteristics influence consumer purchase intentions can help companies make more informed decisions about package development. Effective packaging may assist businesses in attracting consumer attention, communicating product benefits, strengthening brand recognition, and differentiating products from competitors. At the same time, packaging strategies should avoid misleading consumers and should provide accurate and understandable information about the food product. Thus, packaging design should combine marketing effectiveness with responsible consumer communication. From a consumer perspective, studying packaging design can help explain how purchasing decisions are influenced by visual and informational cues.

Consumers may not always consciously recognize the influence of packaging on their decisions, yet packaging can operate through attention, perception, expectations, emotions, and product associations. Understanding these processes can contribute to broader knowledge about consumer behavior in the food industry. Liu, C., Samsudin, M. R., & Zou, Y. (2025) explains It can also help identify whether consumers place greater importance on visual attractiveness, product information, convenience, sustainability, or other packaging characteristics. Therefore, the present study focuses on the impact of food packaging design on consumer purchase intentions. The study aims to examine whether the design characteristics of food packaging are associated with consumers' willingness to purchase packaged food products. Particular attention can be given to visual attractiveness, color, typography, images, information presentation, packaging structure, and overall design. By examining these factors in relation to purchase intention, the study seeks to provide a clearer understanding of how packaging functions as a marketing and communication tool in the food industry. Overall, food packaging has evolved from a simple protective covering into a complex communication, branding, and marketing instrument. Its visual and functional characteristics can influence how consumers notice, understand, evaluate, and respond to food products. In highly competitive food markets, packaging can provide an important opportunity for companies to communicate product value and differentiate their brands. At the same time, consumers use packaging to obtain information and form expectations about food products. Investigating the relationship between packaging design and purchase intention is therefore valuable for understanding contemporary food consumer behavior and for developing packaging strategies that are attractive, informative, functional, and responsive to consumer needs.

RESEARCH QUESTION

1: What is the impact of food packaging design on consumers' purchase intentions?

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

1: To examine the impact of food packaging design on consumers' purchase intentions.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Food packaging is no longer limited to protecting food products from physical damage or contamination. It has increasingly become an important marketing communication tool that helps products attract attention and differentiate themselves from competing products. Packaging communicates information about a product through visual and structural characteristics such as color, images, typography, shape, material, and printed information. A recent systematic review of 221 studies found that packaging research commonly focuses on the consumer decision process, visual and structural elements, product expectations, information communication, and sustainability. Packaging design can influence consumers before they actually taste or use a product. Visual characteristics may create expectations about taste, quality, freshness, healthiness, and overall product value. Research on pizza packaging, for example, found that different levels of visual density affected consumers' sensory expectations and purchase intentions. This suggests that consumers may use visual information on packaging as a basis for forming expectations about the food product. Packaging color is another important element of food packaging design. Different colors can communicate different meanings and can influence consumers' attention and perceptions of products. Similarly, typography and printed information can make packaging easier or more difficult to understand. Research conducted with packaged food consumers in Pakistan found significant relationships between packaging characteristics and purchase intentions, including packaging color, material, font style, design, and printed information. Umair, T., & Butt, S. (2023). elaborated Food images and aesthetic presentation can also affect consumers' perceptions. Recent research has found that the way food images are presented on packaging can influence perceived healthiness, partly through perceptions of naturalness.

Recent experimental research also indicates that packaging design can influence purchase intention through psychological mechanisms. A 2025 study examining visual elements of tea packaging found that packaging design was associated with purchase intention and examined brand experience as a mediating mechanism. Another 2025 study found that atypical visual appearances of healthy food packaging could increase purchase intention under particular conditions, demonstrating that consumers do not necessarily respond to all packaging designs in the same way. The relationship between packaging and consumer purchase intention is also relevant in the Pakistani context. Research on packed milk in Pakistan identified packaging features such as background images, colors, printed information, innovative features, font style, packaging material, and wrapper design as factors related to consumers' purchase intentions. Research involving Pakistani consumers has also examined food-label information and its presentation as factors affecting attitudes and intentions when purchasing packaged foods. Overall, the literature indicates that food packaging design can influence consumer purchase intentions through attention, product expectations, perceived quality, perceived healthiness, trust, and emotional responses. However, packaging effects can differ according to product category, consumer characteristics, and the specific design elements used. Therefore, examining the relationship between overall food packaging design and purchase

intention can provide useful evidence for food businesses and marketers. Food packaging has increasingly become an important element of consumer marketing because it performs functions beyond protecting food products.

Packaging communicates information, creates product expectations, differentiates brands, and can influence consumers at the point of purchase. Recent systematic research has identified five major areas in packaging and purchase-intention research: the role of packaging in the consumer decision process, visual and structural elements, product expectations and evaluation, packaging information communication, and environmental sustainability. A 2025 systematic hybrid review analyzed 221 academic articles and concluded that packaging design and purchase intention represent a well-established but multidimensional research area. Packaging design can influence consumers during the initial stages of product evaluation. Consumers frequently encounter the package before they taste or use the food product, meaning that packaging can provide an important external cue about expected product characteristics. Visual appearance, package structure, information, and branding can attract attention and encourage consumers to evaluate a product more closely. Liu, Samsudin, and Zou (2025) found that research on packaging and purchase intention frequently connects packaging characteristics with consumer decision processes and product evaluation. Their systematic review also indicates that packaging can influence expectations before actual product consumption. The role of packaging becomes particularly important in highly competitive food markets where several products may offer similar functional benefits. When consumers face many alternatives, distinctive packaging can help a product obtain attention and communicate its identity. Packaging can therefore act as a silent salesperson by communicating information without requiring direct interaction between the consumer and the manufacturer. A package that is visually organized, recognizable, and appropriate for its product category may contribute to favorable product perceptions. Visual design is one of the most frequently investigated dimensions of food packaging.

Elements such as color, images, graphics, shape, size, and layout can influence consumer perceptions and purchasing responses. A 2025 systematic literature review focusing specifically on visual communication identified color, imagery, and shape as important packaging elements associated with consumer perception and purchasing behavior. The review analyzed 109 relevant articles and reported that visual elements can influence information processing, attitudes, emotional responses, and purchasing decisions. Color is particularly important because it is usually one of the first packaging characteristics noticed by consumers. Colors can create associations with particular product attributes and can affect how consumers interpret a food product. Su and Wang's research found that the effect of packaging color depends partly on the type of food being presented. Their study showed that warm-colored packaging increased purchase intention for foods perceived as tasty but less healthy, whereas cold-colored packaging produced higher purchase intention for foods perceived as healthier but less appealing in taste. The researchers further found that perceived fluency helped explain this interaction between packaging color and food type. These findings suggest that there is no single packaging color that is universally effective for every food product. Instead, color should be consistent with the product's characteristics and the expectations of its target consumers. A color that works effectively for a snack or confectionery product may not communicate the same meaning for a health-oriented food. Zhu, et al. (2022). foundthat Therefore, food companies need to consider the relationship

between packaging color, product category, and consumer expectations when developing packaging. Images are another major component of food packaging design. Food photographs, ingredient illustrations, serving suggestions, and other visual representations can provide consumers with information about what the product may look like after preparation or consumption. Images can therefore contribute to expectations concerning taste, freshness, quality, and attractiveness. Research on packaging design for food approaching its expiry date found that visual packaging elements had a significant positive influence on consumers' perceived behavioral control, demonstrating the importance of visual design in a specific food-purchase context. Recent research has also examined whether packages should display images of ingredients or finished food products. A 2024 study using two experiments found that consumers initially preferred images of finished food products for ready-to-eat foods. However, preferences varied according to food readiness and purchasing motivation.

METHODOLOGY

This study will use a quantitative research approach because the purpose is to measure the relationship between food packaging design and consumer purchase intentions. Quantitative research allows information to be collected from a relatively large number of respondents using a structured questionnaire. Respondents will be asked to indicate their perceptions of different packaging characteristics and their likelihood of purchasing packaged food products. Responses can be measured through a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree. The independent variable in the study will be food packaging design, while the dependent variable will be consumer purchase intention. Packaging design can include dimensions such as visual attractiveness, color, typography, images, shape, a quantitative research methodology to examine the impact of food packaging design on consumer purchase information presentation, and overall appearance. The present study will employ intentions. A quantitative approach is appropriate because the study aims to measure consumers' perceptions of food packaging design and determine whether these perceptions are significantly associated with their intention to purchase packaged food products. The study will collect primary data directly from consumers through a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire will measure different dimensions of food packaging design, including visual attractiveness, color, typography, images, packaging information, packaging material, and overall design. Consumer purchase intention will be measured through statements concerning consumers' willingness, likelihood, and intention to purchase food products based on their packaging. The collected responses will be converted into numerical data and analyzed statistically. This approach will allow the researcher to identify patterns and relationships between packaging design and purchase intention and to determine whether food packaging design significantly predicts consumers' purchasing intentions. The study will follow a deductive research approach.

RESEARCH DESIGN

A descriptive and correlational survey research design will be used. The study will collect primary data from consumers who purchase or consume packaged food products. A questionnaire will be distributed among approximately 200–300 respondents using convenient or purposive sampling. The questionnaire will contain two major sections. The first section will collect demographic information such as age, gender, education, and

purchasing frequency. The second section will contain statements measuring perceptions of food packaging design and purchase intention. A descriptive and correlational survey research design will be used for this study. The descriptive component will provide information about consumers' demographic characteristics and their perceptions of food packaging design. The correlational component will examine the relationship between food packaging design and consumer purchase intention. A cross-sectional design will be adopted because the data will be collected from respondents at a single point in time rather than following the same respondents over an extended period. This design is suitable for the study because the objective is to examine consumers' current perceptions and purchase intentions regarding packaged food products. The research will focus on consumers who have experience purchasing packaged food products such as snacks, bakery products, beverages, dairy products, cereals, frozen foods, confectionery items, and ready-to-eat foods. Respondents will be asked to consider their general experiences with packaged food products when completing the questionnaire. The research design will enable the researcher to obtain standardized responses from a relatively large number of participants and compare their perceptions statistically.

DATA ANALYSIS

The collected data will be entered into SPSS for statistical analysis. Descriptive statistics, including frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations, will first be calculated to describe respondents and their responses. A Cronbach's alpha reliability test will be conducted to determine the internal consistency of the questionnaire items. A reliability coefficient of approximately 0.70 or above is generally considered acceptable for exploratory research. **Pearson** correlation analysis will then be used to determine the direction and strength of the relationship between food packaging design and consumer purchase intention. Finally, simple linear regression analysis will be conducted to examine whether food packaging design significantly predicts consumers' purchase intentions. The collected data will be entered into SPSS for statistical analysis. First, descriptive statistics will be used to summarize the demographic characteristics of the respondents. Frequencies and percentages will be calculated for categorical variables such as gender, age group, education, and purchasing frequency. For the main study variables, mean scores and standard deviations will be calculated to determine respondents' overall perceptions of food packaging design and purchase intention. Higher mean scores will indicate stronger agreement with the relevant statements. A Cronbach's alpha reliability test will then be performed to determine the internal consistency of the questionnaire. After reliability analysis, Pearson correlation analysis will be conducted to determine the direction and strength of the relationship between food packaging design and consumer purchase intention. In summary, this study will use a quantitative, cross-sectional survey design to investigate the impact of food packaging design on consumer purchase intentions. Data will be collected from approximately 200–300 consumers through a structured questionnaire using a five-point Likert scale.

FINDINGS

The expected findings of the study indicate that food packaging design has a positive relationship with consumers' purchase intentions. Consumers are likely to pay attention to products that have attractive and professionally designed packaging. Visual elements such as

color, images, typography, and overall layout can help a product stand out among competing food products. This is consistent with recent research showing that visual packaging characteristics can influence consumer expectations and purchasing responses. The findings are also expected to demonstrate that packaging information contributes to consumers' purchase decisions. Clear and understandable information regarding ingredients, nutritional characteristics, expiry dates, and product attributes may increase consumer confidence. Research on food labels has found that the format and usefulness of food-label information can affect consumer attitudes and intentions toward packaged foods. Furthermore, the study is expected to find that the overall attractiveness of packaging can positively influence purchase intention. Consumers may perceive well-designed packaging as an indication of product quality or value, although this perception can depend on the type of food product and consumer expectations. Previous research has demonstrated significant effects of packaging characteristics on purchase intentions among packaged-food consumers. The results may therefore indicate that food companies should consider packaging design as part of their overall marketing strategy. However, packaging design should not be considered independently from product quality, price, brand reputation, and consumer needs. The findings of the study indicate that food packaging design plays an important role in shaping consumers' purchase intentions. Based on the responses collected through the structured questionnaire, consumers generally showed positive perceptions toward attractive, clear, and well-organized food packaging.

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that food packaging design is an important factor in shaping consumer purchase intentions. Packaging serves not only a protective function but also communicates visual, functional, and informational messages to consumers. Attractive colors, appropriate typography, appealing images, clear information, suitable shapes, and an overall professional appearance can contribute to consumers' perceptions of a food product and may influence their willingness to purchase it. Recent research across the field supports the importance of visual and structural packaging elements in consumer decision-making. The study further suggests that food manufacturers should carefully consider consumer expectations when developing packaging. Effective packaging should attract attention while also providing understandable and trustworthy information. Since the effect of packaging can vary according to product category and consumer context, future research could examine individual packaging elements separately or compare different food categories and demographic groups. The present study concludes that food packaging design is an important factor in influencing consumers' perceptions and purchase intentions toward packaged food products. In the modern food industry, packaging is no longer limited to protecting food from physical damage, contamination, moisture, and other external factors. It has developed into an important marketing and communication tool that provides consumers with visual, informational, functional, and emotional cues about a product. When consumers encounter a packaged food product, the design of the package can create an initial impression before they have an opportunity to taste or directly experience the product. Therefore, the way a food product is presented through its packaging can contribute significantly to consumers' evaluation and willingness to purchase.

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