

How Product Packaging Influences Buying Decisions: A Case Study of Tissue Paper in Bandar Abbas City

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Abstract - Consumer Buying Behavior is the area of interest for all the companies. Not for their upcoming offerings but for their current offerings too. Its continuous analysis is required in order to fulfill the requirement of customers as well as to compete effectively with the increased degree of competition from direct competitors and indirect competition. There are several factors which can affect the consumer buying behavior but when companies want to analyze it expensive and Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG), the role of packaging found to have the significant role in affecting consumer buying behavior. Packaging is one of the tools that can severely affect consumer satisfaction because it is a powerful marketing tool to communicate directly, conveying the message of the product and creating added value to the consumer. Nowadays, consumers desire products that match their own attitude toward design and function. It's all about functionality and visual aesthetics which can be seen as the characteristics that create the product's appearance and define the product's totality and also consumers buying decision and finally consumers' satisfaction. That's why major purpose of this paper is to analyze the impact of elements of packaging on consumer buying behavior related with the purchase of tissue papers which are treated as Fast Moving Consumer Goods as well as expensive products in Bandar Abbas city (Iran) and for the analysis of packaging elements on consumer buying behavior a structured close ended questionnaire was developed through the help of important variables and methodologies used in the prior research work. Though questionnaire was distributed among four hundred respondents and among these we have got back two hundred and sixty six questionnaires. Moreover analysis of reliability of questionnaire and implementation of statistical tools has been done through SPSS.

Index Terms— Packaging, Packaging Elements & Consumer Buying Behavior, Buying Decision, Consumer Satisfaction.

I. INTRODUCTION

We are living in the age of communication. Any one of us living anywhere in the world use different terms, symbols, signs, use different tools for advertising and prefer different packaging for products in order to satisfy miscellaneous needs more appropriately [19]. Packaging as a powerful communication tool is an element of the buying experience

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[37]. Moreover, in today's competitive market packaging design is a tool that enables consumers to identify some of the iconic landmarks that differentiate the product from competitors [12]. As a result, it's the key component of successful sales [52]. Consumers often make snap judgments when making purchases. How a product is packaged may be the deciding factor of whether they make the purchase or not. According to business insider, first impressions generally take about making subsequent judgements based on quick information.

The role of packaging is almost a change phenomenon because of the competition, change in consumer's life styles and increase in the rate of self service. On the other hands producers are also taking interest in packaging not only as tool of sales promotion but also because of its impact of impulsive buying and increase in the market share of the company [30]. Thus, packaging designers must have complete knowledge of the interests and tastes of consumers. They need to know how the various design elements of packaging can affect consumer preferences and influence their buying decision [13].

II. STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

It has been observed that marketers are always trying to influence consumer buying behavior by use of different marketing mix elements; each and every marketing mix element has its own impact on consumer buying behavior. Similarly packaging has its own impact on consumer buying behavior, especially on the last stage of consumer buying behavior i.e. purchase decision there is a significant impact of packaging and this impact is more significant in the purchase of fast moving consumer goods [29] This study attempts to demonstrate the influence of tissue paper packaging on purchasing decisions, especially in impulse buying. For this purpose, Bandar Abbas city in Iran is considered in the period of May 2017.

III. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

Some objectives and major objectives of this research are listed below:

1. To check the impact of packaging of tissue paper on consumer purchase decision;
2. To determine the effect of visual elements of packaging on consumer buying behavior associated with tissue paper;
3. To check the result of verbal elements of packaging on consumer buying behavior associated with tissue paper;
4. To check the upshot of demographic variables on the selection of tissue paper brand.

IV. THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS OF RESEARCH

A. Packaging

As a market sale factor, tissue paper package is not only concerned with practical durability, but also with the appearance in terms of structural and graphical designs that normally contribute to the state-of-the-art for attractiveness to the human sense of sight. In this sense, art becomes an integral part of a product such as prints on food packages. Sometimes, art is even created for the sole purpose of marketing a product [23]. Packaging is an element of the buying experience that most consumers probably don't spend a whole lot of time thinking about. It is the brand concept, product features, a comprehensive reflection of consumer psychology that has a direct impact on consumer purchases, consumer products and establishes a powerful means of affinity [37]. Thus, its role as a means of communication with the consumer in choosing is growing constantly.

Nowadays, consumers desire products that match their own attitude towards design and function [54]. It's all about functionality and visual aesthetics [54] which can be seen as the characteristics that create the product's appearance and define the product's totality [32] and also influences consumer buying decision [54]. While advertising tells on behalf of the product, packaging makes remarks on product presentation. Product packaging gives body, soul and reason for being [20]. This is why it has become one of the necessities of human life [1; 11].

Moreover packaging is also an important tool for Brand recognition and for the development of Brand associations [58] and at last it is the toll through which marketers became able to achieve marketing objectives by fulfilling the desires of consumers through packaging aesthetics in the form of packaging size, packaging shape, packaging color, text used on packaging, graphics used on packaging and by other functional elements of packaging [41]. Furthermore, it is proved by the research that Packaging is evaluated positively by the consumers if it became able to communicate meaning of the product comprehensively and consistently [21]. When it comes to communication then packaging is also an effective tool which helps marketers in gaining the attention of their target market. Through this marketers are not only able to communicate their value properly but also became able to grab consumer attention at the point of purchase [40] not only this packaging is the only tool which is help organizations as well as consumers in fulfilling their requirements regarding product storage & product transportation [57].

B. Packaging Graphical Elements

1. Color

Color is important as a key part of products, services, packaging, logos, displays and collateral. Also, colors are important image cues [55]. That's the first thing consumers' see is the color of the packaging [54]. In fact, colors are important element of marketing strategies, and are essential features of the packages [50]. Hence today the importance of color is recognized, especially in packaging design and advertising [50]. Cheskin (1957) stated that the selection of the colors and color combinations are a necessary process for

creating a good design package [51] and inappropriate choice of product or package colors may also lead to strategic failure [6].

Some researchers argued that the color is the strongest element in the design of packaging [31; 35]. Moreover, color has been recognized as an important element in product choice [20]. It is important to note that, in products packaging, the package colors, usually take the colors of the actual product [30].

Garber et al. (2000), implying that altering the products color package could affect consumer preferences and finally their buying decision [6]. In packaging, color is seen because the first objective of the use of color is to command the eye. It has to be seen, to jump of the shelf, to survive the intense competition in the self-service environment [55; 56].

2. Images

Image, picture, and imaging in packing are the effective elements in graphic design of packing [5]. Packaging imagery is one source of information on markets that helps consumers differentiate between alternative product attributes and qualities [14]. Companies use packaging attributes such as graphics that include layout and the use of powerful product photography, to create an image to help in attracting and sustaining attention [5; 56]. Specifically, in packaging, the product image performs an informational function that directly affects consumer beliefs about the product [28]. Basic understanding and definition of brand image contains four elements: [53]

1. Brand image is a concept created by the consumer;
2. Consumers interpret the concept of brand image through both a logical and emotional perception that is purely subjective;
3. The brand image is not created by some physical aspect of the product, but instead as an idea crafted through marketing activities which are brought to life by the individual characteristics of the consumer; and
4. When dealing with "brand image" one must realize that the perception of reality is more important than the actual reality itself.

The product image can create positive beliefs about the intrinsic attributes of the product, especially in categories for highly experiential products such as food [53]. Researchers believed that image of product increases the attention and familiarity with the particular product [44].

3. Symbol

The packaging design is the human's work taking into account the market's aesthetics through symbols related to product and target audience. Symbol is a sign inherent to a work. Packaging medium is a visual communication design work replete with symbols [36]. The presence of good design through symbols generates the interaction and communication between producer and audience (consumer) providing aesthetic dialect [36].

A group of researchers in their study argued that consumers' visual perception has an effect on the perception of the consumer's choice through external psychological factors. This can be achieved through symbols and other visual elements [37]. Also, another group of researchers

found that presence of symbols on product packaging as positively influencing consumers' choice as well as rating of the product [8].

4. Label

Labels are one of the informative elements and one of the most important features of product packaging that should be considered in the packaging design [2; 3]. In fact, product label provides the necessary information to consumers [30].

Communication of information is one of the core functions of the packaging. This helps consumers to make the right decisions in the purchasing process [43; 51]. Hence, the packaging design and informational elements should be determined by considering the requirements (needs and wants) of consumers and the cost implications they have on the brand [30].

Product label is defined as "any products over which a retailer [has] exercised total sourcing and market control" [46]. Dobson and Yadav argued that consumers have become increasingly reliant on packaging carrying a variety of forms of information on labels [16].

A group of researchers posited that informational packaging elements are a critical factor in the consumer decision-making process solely because they communicate specific messages and relay certain information about the product, the manufacturer and or the place/country of origin to the consumers [18].

5. Typography

In the last decade, consumers have increased their demand for more detailed, accurate and accessible information on product labels [2; 3]. In designing the product package knowing typography-the art and technique of arranging type in order to make language visible, is important to ensure that the packaging look professional in order to compete particularly in the food business [30]. Words and text on packaging create the written message on packages. The choice of words and typography is an essential part of creating package communication.

The content of the text, languages used and ease of comprehension are part of package communication and affect how the written messages are interpreted [30]. Hence, words and typography are the most important factor to attract consumers and product selection after colors and shapes [31].

Typography encompasses several different variables, e.g. the font type and variety of font types, font size, color contrast, empty space around the text, location of the text, etc. Even a simple change of the font type of the package text can change the packaging communication substantially and affect product positioning [30].

C. Buyer's Personal Characteristics

1. Shape

Shape is one of the structural elements, which has always been a design element of much interest to scholars throughout history [54]. For example, the preferences for certain ratios of the sides of rectangles are one of the oldest controversies in aesthetics, extending back to the ancient Greeks [15].

Shapes are important visual stimulus elements of marketing strategies, and they are essential features of packages and marketing strategies [50]. Visual aesthetics of a product and its packaging are important because they are the first aspect of a product that comes in contact with the consumer [54]. Moreover, package shape is also regarded as one of the most important factors in package communication [42]. Noble and Kumar stated that the design should ensure that the product arrives in good shape, in a package that the consumer finds attractive [32].

Some researchers argued that package shape is one of the important criteria for consumer assessment and the effect on consumer decisions [39; 45; 54; 27].

2. Size

Size emerges as a crucial dimension in packaging design [55]. Nowadays, many companies regarded size as one of the most important variables in the packaging design [19; 55]. Economic stagnation, rising commodity costs, and increasing concerns about waste and over consumption have highlighted the importance of package size and shape for public health and marketing [18; 33].

Silayoi and Speece in their study found that size is much related to usability [45]. While consumers thought of product pictures and graphics as a means of communication, discussion about size, focused more on packages being convenient to use and carry [42; 45].

Jafari S. et al. in this regard stated that the size of a pack can remarkably help buyers to buy a product [26]. Size as a visual element, positively influenced choice more in the low involvement situation [34; 45; 55].

D. Buyer's Personal Characteristics

1. Age

Age plays a considerable role in consumer motivation [34]. It is obvious that consumers have different choices because of their age, and when their age changes their need, choices and preferences also change [9; 49]. Even though people in the same age group may differ in many ways, they still follow a shared culture and types of values [49]. For Kotler and Armstrong (1996), consumer purchases are formed throughout their life cycle stages which are the phases the families go through while they develop and mature over time [17]. Also age plays a considerable role in consumer motivation and for marketers to choose a target area. Age distribution demonstrates willingness in purchase payments [14].

2. Gender

Male and female have different nature, attitude and their behavior. That is why gender segmentation is also used for market segmentation [7].

The roles that gender plays in consumer behavior research are certainly worthy of researchers' attention. Indeed, marketers have been particularly interested in the roles that gender plays as it can have a significant impact upon consumer behavior [22]. Hence, marketers carefully introduce the product on the basis of their gender and metro sexuality [48].

It is determined that different reactions are given by men

and women especially to consumption-oriented stimulants [10]. For example, according to Gilligan (1982) women compared to men, visual interpretations and detailed explanations evoke more from the point of stimulating [10].

3. Household (Family) Size

Household size represents the number of members in a house [24] and family unit as a whole is the most important consumer buying organization in the society [34]. The family unit can be classified by two orientations, the family orientation and the family of procreation. The former refers to the consumer's parents and siblings and the latter, if applicable, to the consumers spouse and children [34].

The roles and family size based on modern definitions of what the family is constantly changing. One of the marketer's greatest challenges is to adapt to demographic and traditional trends in family consumerism [34]. For example, Family size is a determinant of the level of prosperity, quality of life and consumption volume [4]. Or according to another researcher, the consequences of demographic factors are an ageing population and an increasing number of people who are moving and living in smaller households [41].

4. Household Income Levels

Many purchasing habits depend on the economic situation of an individual [17]. Income implies the purchasing power of a consumer [47]. Income represents the money, which household gets from all sources; it is the most important demographic factor that significantly affects the consumption of consumers, selection of the retail store and their sales volume as well [24].

Some researchers believed that various economic situations of different people can influence their purchasing behavior [25]. In other words, income and consumption are positively related. In fact, the Income level of a person or a household has a direct impact on purchasing a product [47].

5. Education

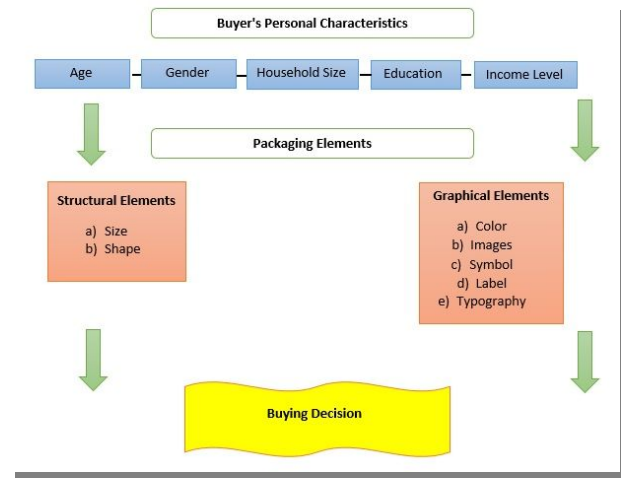
Another important buyer's personal characteristics that influences consumer behavior is education. Based on the education level of a person buying behavior could be different [47]. Some people believe that attractive packaging has an important role in purchasing decisions for educated people. But some researchers believed that consumer with a lesser education level may decide to buy the product due to the attractiveness of the package [47].

Hence analysis of the relationship of education level and the brand is very important. Some researchers believed that education level has a positive effect on the importance of various components of package in purchase behavior of buyers [26].

V. RESEARCH MODEL & METHODOLOGY

A. Research Model

Research Model is an important tool which elaborates the relationship between various variables and the research model for this research is as shows in Figure1:



"Fig1. Research Model"

B. Research Methodology

The research is completed according to the above-mentioned variables on the topic of packaging and its impact on consumer purchase decision. The research is descriptive in nature and the type of investigation we have performed was causal as the research was based upon cause and effect relationship. As in this research we only strive to check the impact of elements of packaging by asking our respondents to fill out questionnaires. Moreover we have compiled our results through snapshot analysis that's why the time horizon for the research was cross sectional and for obtaining the result we have considered the all the respondents separately, that's why the unit of analysis was individual. Research population includes all the customers of tissue paper lives in Bandar-e-Abbas, while frame of sampling includes all the tissue paper customers from "Tara" and "Refah" hypermarket.

Type of sampling used in this research is Non Probability sampling and the method selected to gather data is Convenience Sampling. The sampling size for the research is 266 respondents from 400 distributed questionnaires. The authors used the Kendall tau rank correlation coefficient in treating the data collected through the survey, to better assess the correlation of variables. This was done by using SPSS statistical software.

VI. RESEARCH FINDINGS

The Kendall's tau findings, describes the significant correlation between buyer's personal characteristics with graphical design elements for tissue paper packaging design as follows: (See Table 1)

1. *Age vs. graphical design elements.* None of the packaging graphical elements influence the buying decision for older consumers of a particular tissue paper brand. But, for younger consumers, brand image & symbol as well as typography can influence the buying decision of a particular tissue paper brand.
2. *Gender vs. graphical design elements.* Package color and image can influence the buying decision of both consumers' gender. However, images and symbols are the only elements which may influence the female

consumers' buying decision.

3. *Household size vs. graphical design elements.* Large families pay more attention to the brand symbol when they want to buy particular tissue paper. There is no correlation between household size and other graphical elements.
4. *Educational level vs. graphical design elements.* Consumers with higher education pay more attention to the package color and typography. Although customers are influenced by brand images in buying decisions, regardless of their education level. There is no correlation between educational level and other graphical elements.
5. *Household Income levels vs. graphical design elements.* Buying decisions of consumers at higher income levels are more influenced by brand images. Although this influence to all consumers seen by brand symbol, regardless of their income level. There is no correlation between household income level and other graphical elements.

"Table. 1 Kendall Tau's Correlation Coefficient between Buyer's Personal Characteristics and Graphical Design Elements"

Packaging Graphical Elements	Buyers' Personal Characteristics									
	A		G		H.S		H.I.L		E	
Color	-0.27	.058	.073*	-.063*	.080	.099	.032	-.101	.070*	-.005
Images	.062*	.140	.059*	-.079*	.063	.038	.114*	0.101	.083*	-.064*
Symbol	.070*	.042	.060	-.096*	.066*	-.047	.083*	-.079*	.020	.018
Label	.039	-.044	.039	-.056*	.025	-.045	.062	.042	.050	.075
Typography	.062*	.121	.086	-.061*	.020	.053	.048	.080	.066*	-.042

The Kendall's tau findings, describes the significant correlation between buyer's personal characteristics with structural design elements for tissue paper packaging design as follows: (See Table 2)

1. *Age vs. structural design elements.* For younger consumers, shape of tissue paper packaging influence their buying decision. However, for elderly consumers package size of tissue paper is more important influencing element on the buying decision of a particular tissue paper brand.
2. *Gender vs. structural design elements.* Package shape can influence the buying decision of female consumers'. However, package size of tissue paper is not an influencing element on the buying decision of both consumers' gender.
3. *Household size vs. structural design elements.* There is no correlation between household size and packaging structural elements.
4. *Educational level vs. structural design elements.* Consumers with higher education pay more attention to

the package shape. There is no correlation between consumers' education level and tissue paper packaging size.

5. *Household Income levels vs. structural design elements.* There is no correlation between household Income levels and tissue paper packaging size.

"Table. 2 Kendall Tau's Correlation Coefficient between Buyer's Personal Characteristics and Structural Design Elements"

Packaging Structural Elements	Buyer's Personal Characteristics									
	A		G		H.S		H.I.L		E	
Shape	.090*	-.025	.051	-.083*	.035	.047	.052	-.046	.069*	-.015
Size	.035	-.063*	.038	-.075	.076	-.052	.034	0.030	.039	-.084

VII. CONCLUSION

The results of this research represent the importance of packaging design on consumers' buying decisions. As a result, packaging elements are the key component of successful sales by huge influence on buyers' decision-making. Consequently, with the changes in buyers' personal characteristics, packaging designers must have update knowledge of consumer preferences to provide the product properly and influence consumer buying decisions.

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How Product Packaging Influences Buying Decisions: A Case Study of Tissue Paper in Bandar Abbas City

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