

# INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF RESEARCH IN COMMERCE, ECONOMICS & MANAGEMENT

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**EFFECTIVE FOOD PACKAGE DESIGN AND CONSUMER ATTRACTION**

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**ABSTRACT**

*Marketers nowadays face the complex task of making their product identifiable among the other competitive ones. The only product exposure a consumer contacts prior to purchase of a product is the package. So marketers utilise this package as a face of the product to attract consumers' attention and also use it as a tool to establish their brand. Package is essential for any product however its essentiality is very high for food products. A food product becomes presentable and saleable only with the package. So designing a package for a product is thus a challenging job for a manufacturer. A package design does more than just making the package appealing. It reflects the creativity and personality of the company. The impact of an effective package design in attracting a consumer is to be identified by a marketer to aid them in designing their packages.*

**KEYWORDS**

food package design, marketing.

**INTRODUCTION**

A package design has become a part of the product design because it is package that preserves and protects the product until it reaches the end consumer. Package also helps in product identification by ensuring uniqueness to the appearance of the product. Marketers nowadays face the complex task of making their product identifiable among the other competitive ones. They try to exhibit their products in the best manner by designing the packages most elegantly. The only product exposure a consumer contacts prior to purchase of a product is the package. So marketers utilise this package as a face of the product to attract consumers' attention and also use it as a tool to establish their brand.

Food markets have become more competitive and wide with the advancement and growth of technology. To survive in the competitive market, firms try to improve the quality of the food products and also strive to project that product quality in all possible ways. A product however good it may be, should be presented in such a way that it appeals to the consumer in a positive way. When it does not communicate positively to the consumer there are chances for the product to lose in the market. At the point of purchase product package is the communication life blood of a firm.

Package is essential for any product however its essentiality is very high for food products. A food product becomes presentable and saleable only with the package. Food package should protect the contents, preserve its quality and should maintain the taste of the food. Food marketers use packages as a medium to convince consumers about the quality and the nutritive value of their products. So package design for a processed food product gains more attention and concentration among food manufacturers.

**PACKAGE DESIGN**

Marketers try to grab consumer's attention with the help of package design. A visually appealing and a striking design has a greater impact on a prospective buyer. A well designed and interesting package attracts customer's attention more than a poorly designed bland one. Package design also plays a key part in associating a brand to a product and establishing it, thus making it identifiable to the consumer. A package design does more than just making the package appealing. It reflects the creativity and personality of the company. There is lot of science behind a package design including the shape, materials used and the functionality of the package. Most of all a package design should intend to protect the contents well.

**STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

Consumer Behaviour is one of the stimulating and challenging areas in marketing studies. It is a human activity focused on the purchasing, consuming and using of products and services. Understanding the behaviour of consumers towards packed food products has become an essential and most demanding activity because food industry has become one of the largest sector in terms of production, consumption and growth. Package plays a vital role in food retailing because without package, saleability of the processed food is not possible. Package is the first introduction of the product to the consumer. Sometimes failure of a product may not be due to lack of product qualities but due to lack of presentations. Packages give unique identity and recognition to the product. The more effectively a product is packed the more effective is its identity and individuality. So manufacturers strive to make their products more appealing by enhancing their attractiveness and convenience. Thus, it becomes prominent to identify the impact of the food packages on the behaviour of the consumers.

**LITERATURE REVIEW**

Gordon and Watts et al (1994) had stated that colours are used to communicate the features on packages of the product like taste, flavour etc. Their study also found that colours have an impact on the behaviour of consumers, their brand evaluations and brand choices. Eva Pongracz (1998) opined that the packaging appearance have become increasingly important as it attracts the customers attention from supermarket shelves by its range of colours and shapes. She concluded that companies will have to worry not just about how their product tastes but also about how it looks. According to Louw et al., (2005) packaging has the positive impact on consumer buying behaviour. Packaging among the 4 p's of marketing is a very powerful tool, its impact reaches deep in consumers mind as compared to advertising. Their study affirmed that even at the point of purchase it is packaging that influences the buying decision and dominates a product selection over its competitors. The study concluded that right packaging can help a brand carve a unique position in the market place and in the minds of consumers. According to Richardo (2008) consumers are not certain about the quality and product performance to choose among competing products. Hence they rely on cues as extrinsic attributes like brand, price, package and warranty as signals of perceived quality. He had articulated that colours and shapes are important elements of marketing strategies. Mitul and Bhavesh (2012) had narrated that the consumer buying behaviour is dependent on the packaging and its features. Packaging elements like packaging colour, background image, packaging material, font style, design of wrapper, printed information and innovation are taken as predictors by consumers.

**OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

With the help of the literature about packages the following objectives were chosen for the study.

1. To identify the consumers attraction for food package and analysing how food package attraction varied with differing demographic profiles.
2. To elucidate the benefits of the effectively designed food packages and consumers expectations about such benefits.

**LIMITATIONS**

1. Packaging is essential for any kind of product. But the present study is limited towards processed pre packed, branded food products only.
2. The primary data was collected from Salem district of Tamilnadu. The inferences and results obtained may or may not fit to the other parts of the country.
3. Consumer's bias may influence the data collected and thus affect the interpretations and results.

**METHODOLOGY**

The research was conducted during October, November and December 2013 in Salem district. 665 respondents were selected from the four revenue divisions Attur, Mettur, Salem, Sankari on convenience sample selection method based on population of the region. A well structured pre-tested questionnaire was used to collect information from the respondents. Descriptive statistical analysis, Chi-Square test, Factor analysis, T-test, F-test were used for the analysis of data using SPSS.

**ANALYSIS AND RESULTS**

Table-1 depicts the percentage analysis of the age group and food package attraction. Of the total 665 respondents 77.7% have stated that they are attracted towards the food package. The respondents in the age group of 35-44 have greater attraction towards food package (80.7%). In the age group of 25-34, out of 201 respondents 155 have attraction for food package. In the age group of 18-24, 78.9% respondents are attracted towards food package. The elder category of respondents above the age of 45 have lower attraction of 73.2%. It indicates that middle aged people might have greater interest in appearance followed by the youngest group of people who might have an attraction towards bright colours.

**TABLE-1: AGE GROUPS AND FOOD PACKAGE ATTRACTION**

		Age of the Respondents									
		18-24		25-34		35-44		45+		Total	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Do food packages attract your attention?	Yes	131	78.9	155	77.1	138	80.7	93	73.2	517	77.7
	No	35	21.1	46	22.9	33	19.3	34	26.8	148	22.3
	Total	166	100.0	201	100.0	171	100.0	127	100.0	665	100.0

Source: Primary Data

**TABLE-2: GENDER AND FOOD PACKAGE ATTRACTION**

		Gender					
		Male		Female		Total	
		N	%	N	%	N	%
Do food packages attract your attention?	Yes	223	82.3	294	74.6	517	77.7
	No	48	17.7	100	25.4	148	22.3
	Total	271	100.0	394	100.0	665	100.0

Source: Primary Data

Table-2 reveals that greater number of male respondents are attracted towards food package-223 out of 271 (82.3%). 74.6% of female respondents have an attraction for food package with a difference of 7.7% between the two groups. It shows that men are more attracted towards package elements like colour, shape, design etc.

**TABLE-3: OCCUPATION AND FOOD PACKAGE ATTRACTION**

		Occupation of the Respondent									
		Business		Salaried		Professional		House Wives		Total	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Do food packages attract your attention?	Yes	71	77.2	170	82.1	101	82.1	175	72.0	517	77.7
	No	21	22.8	37	17.9	22	17.9	68	28.0	148	22.3
	Total	92	100.0	207	100.0	123	100.0	243	100.0	665	100.0

Source: Primary Data

Table-3 reveals the occupation wise opinion of respondents towards food package attraction. 82.1% of the respondents in both salaried and professional group are attracted towards food package. 71 out of 92 respondents under the business category are attracted towards food packages. House wives have lesser attraction towards food package among respondents (72.0%).

**TABLE-4 RESIDENTIAL AREA AND FOOD PACKAGE ATTRACTION**

		Residential Area					
		Urban		Rural		Total	
		N	%	N	%	N	%
Do food packages attract your attention?	Yes	329	76.5	188	80.0	517	77.7
	No	101	23.5	47	20.0	148	22.3
	Total	430	100.0	235	100.0	665	100.0

Source: Primary Data

Table-4 shows the attraction for food package among rural and urban respondents. It could be seen that the rural respondents are more attracted towards food package(80%). However 329 respondents of the total 430 from urban area are attracted towards food package(76.5%). It was revealed in several studies that rural consumers are more attracted towards displays, hoardings and these are considered effective communication tools in rural areas. Moreover it was also found that rural consumers have more interest towards the value for money. This may lead them to give more attention to every detail of the product. So higher attraction towards packages among rural consumers can be seen from the study.



TABLE-5: CHI-SQUARE RESULTS FOR DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILES AND FOOD PACKAGE ATTRACTION

Demographic Profile	Value	df	p	Sig.
Age	2.539 <sup>a</sup>	3	.468	Not Significant
Gender	5.457 <sup>a</sup>	1	.019	Significant
Occupation	8.279 <sup>a</sup>	3	.041	Significant
Residential Area	1.069 <sup>a</sup>	1	.301	Significant

Source: Primary Data

Table-5 shows the chi-square results of the demographic profile and food package attraction. It is found that there is no significant association between age and attraction towards food package. However there is significant association between Gender, Occupation and Residential area and food package attraction.

**EFFECTIVE FOOD PACKAGE DESIGN AND EXPECTED BENEFITS**

In order to know the opinion of the respondents with regard to their expected benefits from an effective food package design a list of 13 statements were presented to them on a five point Likert's scale. The respondent's opinion is given in the table-6.

TABLE-6: EFFECTIVELY DESIGNED FOOD PACKAGE

Benefits of Food Package Design	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly Agree		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Attracts and grabs attention	65	9.8	57	8.6	187	28.1	251	37.7	105	15.8	665	100.0
Makes the product available in required size	15	2.3	61	9.2	149	22.4	312	46.9	128	19.2	665	100.0
Provides convenience of food storage	23	3.5	58	8.7	144	21.7	272	40.9	168	25.3	665	100.0
Gives safety of food maintenance	14	2.1	48	7.2	130	19.5	236	35.5	237	35.6	665	100.0
Provides easiness in opening/closing	19	2.9	73	11.0	146	22.0	235	35.3	192	28.9	665	100.0
Is made from good quality material	37	5.6	80	12.0	153	23.0	217	32.6	178	26.8	665	100.0
Facilitates for easy identification of brands	42	6.3	71	10.7	121	18.2	251	37.7	180	27.1	665	100.0
Avoids spilling of the contents	25	3.8	80	12.0	129	19.4	256	38.5	175	26.3	665	100.0
Supports easy handling and transport	25	3.8	61	9.2	97	14.6	284	42.7	198	29.8	665	100.0
Tempts us to take packages from shelves	69	10.4	85	12.8	142	21.4	220	33.1	149	22.4	665	100.0
Induce us to purchase the product	41	6.2	71	10.7	171	25.7	271	40.8	111	16.7	665	100.0
Makes us feel that the kitchen will look beautiful with that package	95	14.3	113	17.0	154	23.2	179	26.9	124	18.6	665	100.0
Adds value to the product	54	8.1	77	11.6	136	20.5	237	35.6	161	24.2	665	100.0

Source: Primary Data

TABLE-7: RESULTS OF KMO AND BARTLETT'S TEST

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		0.786
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	1505.647
	Df	78.000
	Sig.	0.000

Source: Primary Data

Table-6 shows the respondents opinion about their various expectations when a package is said to be effectively designed. Table-7 shows the results of the KMO and Bartlett's test of sphericity. It is seen that the data is sufficient to carry the factor analysis (Sig. Value = 0.000; Kaiser -Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy=0.786). Table-8 shows the rotated component matrix which clearly groups the items under four components or factors. The factors extracted are 1) Package Appeal; 2) Safety and Ease of Convenience; 3) Identification; 4) Package Design.

TABLE-8: FACTOR ANALYSIS TO FIND THE MAJOR FACTORS THAT CONSTITUTE EFFECTIVE DESIGN

Rotated Component Matrix	Component			
	1	2	3	4
Induce us to purchase the product	.753			
Adds value to the product	.745			
Makes us feel that the kitchen will look beautiful with that package	.741			
Tempts us to take packages from shelves	.585			
Gives safety of food maintenance		.720		
Is made from good quality material	.323	.662		
Provides easiness in opening/closing		.613	.346	
Provides convenience of food storage		.573	.365	
Avoids spilling of the contents			.741	
Supports easy handling and transport			.709	
Facilitates for easy identification of brands			.600	
Attracts and grabs attention				.800
Makes the product available in required size				.800
Total Variance Explained %	25.563	13.332	9.136	7.836
Component Name	Package Appeal	Safety and Ease of Convenience	Identification	Package Design

Source: Primary Data

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis  
 Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalisation  
 a. Rotation converged in 5 iterations

**GENDER AND EFFECTIVELY DESIGNED FOOD PACKAGE**

An independent sample t test was conducted to compare the opinion about the benefits of the effective package design among the two gender groups. The factors grouped by conducting the Principal Component Analysis was used for t-test.

**TABLE-9 GENDER AND EFFECTIVELY DESIGNED FOOD PACKAGE**

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means			
	F	Sig.	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Remarks
Package Appeal	5.719	.017	-.211	540	.833	Not Significant
Safety & Ease of Convenience	.548	.460	.224	663	.823	Not Significant
Identification	.888	.346	-1.262	663	.207	Not Significant
Design	.535	.465	-.882	663	.378	Not Significant

Source: Primary Data

There was no significant difference in package appeal between male (M=-.01, SD=1.06) and female (M=.01, SD=.96); t(540) = -0.211, p=0.833 respondents. Thus there is no differences in opinion between male and female with respect to Package Appeal. i.e., they consider it same.

There was no significant difference in the view of safety and ease of convenience between male (M=.01, SD=.98) and female (M=-.01, SD=1.01); t(663) = .224, p=0.823 respondents. These results shows that the factor safety and ease of convenience is of same importance between both the groups.

The difference between the male (M=-.06, SD=1.03) and female respondents (M=.04, SD=.98) regarding the factor identification was not significant, t(663) = -1.262, p=.207. Both male and female have the same opinion with respect to identification.

Gender has no significant difference in the opinion about the package design. The male respondents (M=-.04, SD=.98) and female respondents(M=.03,SD=1.01) view the design of the package in the same manner t(663)=-.882,p=.378.

**RESIDENTIAL AREA AND EFFECTIVELY DESIGNED FOOD PACKAGE**

To identify the relationship between the opinion of the respondents in the rural and urban area with regard to the effective food package design independent samples t test was conducted.

**TABLE-10 RESIDENTIAL AREA AND EFFECTIVELY DESIGNED FOOD PACKAGE**

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		T-test for Equality of Means			
	F	Sig.	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Remarks
Package Appeal	0.234	0.629	2.071	663	0.039	Significant
Safety & Ease of Convenience	8.29	0.004	1.922	419.73	0.055	Not Significant
Identification	0.044	0.835	2.2	663	0.028	Significant
Effective Design	17.027	0	5.43	391.93	0	Significant

Source: Primary Data

There was significant difference in package appeal with regard to residential area. The respondents in the urban area(M= .06, SD= .99) have different opinion against the respondents in the rural area(M= -.11, SD=1.02), t(663)=2.071, p=.039 with regard to package appeal.

There was no significant difference in the component of safety and ease of convenience between urban(M=.06, SD=.94) and rural(M=-.11, SD=1.10); t(419.73) = 1.922, p=.055 respondents. This results shows that the factor safety and ease of convenience is of equal importance for both the groups.

The difference between the urban (M=.06, SD=.98) and rural(M=-.12, SD=1.02) respondents regarding the factor identification was significant t(663) = 2.200, p=.028. Both view the identification factor in different manner.

The urban respondents (M=.16, SD=.88) and rural respondents(M=-.03,SD=1.13) have difference of opinion with regard to package design with t(391.93)=5.430, p=.000.

**AGE AND EFFECTIVELY DESIGNED FOOD PACKAGE**

To compare the opinion of the respondents regarding the effect and benefits of package design between all the age group of respondent's one-way ANOVA test was conducted. The results of the grouped factors were considered for the test.

**TABLE-11: AGE AND EFFECTIVELY DESIGNED FOOD PACKAGE**

	18-24	25-34	35-44	45+	F	Sig.	Remarks
Package Appeal	0.01	-0.11	0.01	0.14	1.613	.185	Not significant
Safety & Ease of Convenience	-0.10	0.10	-0.04	0.02	1.410	.239	Not significant
Identification	-0.07	0.00	0.07	0.00	.494	.686	Not Significant
Design	-0.20	-0.01	0.21	0.00	4.813	.003	Significant

Source: Primary Data

The results of one-way ANOVA for 'package appeal' and age groups shows that there was no significant difference in age group with respect to package appeal at p>0.05 [F(3,661) = 1.163, p = 0.185]. This results shows that all four age categories are equal in opinion about package appeal.

The F test between 'safety and ease of convenience' and age groups shows that there was no significant difference in age group with respect to safety and ease of convenience at p>0.05 [F(3,661) = 1.410, p = 0.239]. All age categories view the factor safety and ease of convenience similarly.

The Age groups for the factor 'Identification' shows no significant difference at p>0.05 [F(3,661) = .494, p = 0.686]. Identification factors are viewed equally among all age categories.

There is difference in opinion with regard to design of the package among the different age groups of the respondents at p>0.05 [F(3,661) = 4.813, p = 0.003]. Design is viewed differently by different age groups.

**OCCUPATION AND EFFECTIVELY DESIGNED FOOD PACKAGE**

To compare the opinion of the respondents regarding the effect and benefits of package design between the respondents belonging to different occupational group one-way ANOVA test was conducted.

**TABLE-12 OCCUPATION AND EFFECTIVELY DESIGNED FOOD PACKAGE**

	Business	Salaried	Professional	House Wives	F	Sig.	Remarks
Package Appeal	0.05	0.08	-0.06	-0.05	.871	.456	Not Significant
Safety & Ease of Convenience	0.09	0.00	0.21	-0.14	3.883	.009	Significant
Identification	-0.16	0.01	0.06	0.02	.996	.394	Not Significant
Package Design	0.01	0.04	-0.28	0.10	4.216	.006	Significant

Source: Primary Data

Table-12 depicts the results of one-way ANOVA for 'package appeal' and occupation. It is seen that there was no significant difference in occupation with respect to package appeal at p>0.05 [F(3,661) = .871, p = 0.456]. This results shows all respondents with different occupation have similar opinion about package appeal.

The F test between 'safety and ease of convenience' and occupation shows that there was significant difference in opinion among different occupational groups with respect to safety and ease of convenience at p>0.05 [F(3,661) = 3.883, p = 0.009]. Each category view the factor safety and ease of convenience differently.

The occupational groups for the factor 'Identification' shows no significant difference at p>0.05 [F(3,661) = .996, p = 0.394]. Identification factors are viewed equally among all occupational categories.

There is significant difference in opinion with regard to design of the package among the respondents of the different occupational category at p>0.05 [F(3,661) = 4.216, p = 0.006].

**CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Package has become the primary vehicle to convey manufacturer's information to the consumers. Package projects the initial impression that consumers form about a product, its quality or its value. Thus manufacturers pay more attention to the package design especially in case of food products as package has a direct contact with food that is packed. So factors like quality of material, convenience of usage, protection are given more attention. It is seen from the study that majority of consumers are attracted towards food package. However when package design is considered attraction should not be the only benefit expected of an effective design. Safety of food maintenance, providing easiness in opening and closing, supporting easy handling and transport are the important benefits expected by consumers from a food package when it is said to be effectively designed. So it could be stated that though consumers have general attraction towards food package they also expect other features to be considered in designing a food package besides giving it a good appearance.

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