

**T.C.**  
**ANTALYA BILIM UNIVERSITY**  
**INSTITUTE OF POST GRADUATE EDUCATION**  
**BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION**  
**THESIS PROGRAM**

**IMPACT OF PACKAGING ON CONSUMER BUYING BEHAVIOR OF  
FAST-MOVING CONSUMER GOODS IN RURAL AREAS OF PAKISTAN**

**DISSERTATION**

**PREPARED BY**  
**MUHAMMAD UZAIR**

**ANTALYA -2021**

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## **DEDICATION AND ACKNOWLEDGMENT**

I am honored to dedicate this work to my parents and family, who have supported me in my life to this day (may Allah bless them).

I am very grateful to my supervisor Prof. Dr. İbrahim Sani Mert, who guided and supported me throughout my studies and dissertation, motivated and encouraged me, and made me throw myself into my studies efficiently.

## **ACADEMIC DECLARATION**

I hereby declare that this Master's thesis entitled "Impact of Packaging on Consumer Buying Behavior of Fast-Moving Consumer Goods in Rural Areas of Pakistan" has been written by me following the academic rules and ethical principles of Antalya Bilim University.

Also I declare that the thesis attached to this declaration meets the requirements of the University and has all the essential components of a Master's thesis.

All the materials used in this thesis consist of the sources shown in the reference list. I certify all the above on my honor.

\_\_\_/\_\_\_/2021

Muhammad Uzair

## ÖZET

### PAKİSTAN'IN KIRSAL BÖLGELERİNDE AMBALAJ TÜKETİCİ SATIN ALMA DAVRANIŞLARINA ETKİSİ

Son on yılda, Pakistan'daki paketlenmiş tüketim malları sektörü hızla büyümüştür. Tüketim malları sektörü müşterinin zihninde marka imajı yaratacak çekici özelliklere daha fazla odaklanmaktadır. Bu süreçte pazarlamacılar, ürün hakkında sürekli geri bildirim almak için tüketicilerle eskisinden daha fazla sürekli iletişim içinde olmalıdırlar. Çalışmanın temel amacı, kırsal kesimde özellikle diş macunu, deterjan ve banyo sabunu gibi temizlik ürünleri satın alan tüketicilerin satın alma davranışı üzerindeki ambalajın etkisini ve ürünü kırsal kesimde daha fazla tanıtmak için pazarlamacılar tarafından benimsenen stratejileri daha derinlemesine araştırmaktır. Çalışma paketlenmiş tüketim ürünlerini etkileyen faktörleri keşfedebilmek için nitel olarak tasarlanmıştır. Veriler, yarı yapılandırılmış açık uçlu sorulara verilen yanıtlarla toplanmıştır. Araştırma evreninden kolayda örnekleme yöntemi ile katılımcılar seçilmiştir. Analizler fenomenolojik yaklaşım kullanılarak yapılmıştır. Sonuçlar, ürün ambalajının tüketicide marka farkındalığı yaratmada, satın almaya ikna etmede ve duygusal olarak etkilemede önemli bir unsur olduğunu göstermektedir. Bu çalışma, paketlenmiş tüketim malları pazarındaki gelecekteki yönetsel uygulamalara ve işletme stratejilerine yön vermektedir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Ambalajlama; Tüketici Satın Alma Davranışı; Temizlik Ürünleri; Marka İmajı.

## **ABSTRACT**

### **IMPACT OF PACKAGING ON CONSUMER BUYING BEHAVIOR OF FAST-MOVING CONSUMER GOODS IN RURAL AREAS OF PAKISTAN**

In the last decade, the consumer packaged goods sector in Pakistan has proliferated. The fast-moving consumer goods sector focuses more on attractive features that create a brand image in customers' minds. In this process, marketers must constantly communicate with consumers more than before to get continuous feedback about the product. The study's primary purpose is to investigate further the effect of packaging on the purchasing behavior of rural consumers, especially those who buy toiletries products and the strategies adopted by marketers to promote the product more in rural areas. The study was designed as qualitative to explore the factors affecting packaged consumer products. The convenience sampling method was used to gather data from the marketers working in the market. Data were collected through responses to semi-structured open-ended questions. The phenomenological approach was used to analyze the data. The results show that product packaging is essential in creating brand awareness, persuading and emotionally influencing consumers. This study guides future managerial practices and business strategies in the consumer packaged goods market.

**Keywords:** Packaging; Consumer Buying Behavior; Toiletries; Brand Image.

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# 1 INTRODUCTION

Fast-Moving Consumer Goods are products sold quickly and at relatively low-cost examples including non-durable goods such as soft drinks, toiletries, and grocery items (Moolla, 2012). Pakistani market has many products which it offers in the FMCG category. FMCG products (especially toiletries) are proliferating in manufacturing and consumption compared to others. It was observed to increase household expenditure due to miscellaneous items like toiletries in the contemporary context and worldwide. The leader of the current context's market is Unilever, and its close competitor is P&G. Since 1970, different packet sizes of FMCG products have been offered in Pakistan. Recent studies prove that more than 50,000 wholesalers have been working for more than 10 to 20 years in Pakistan, in which around 30,000 wholesalers belong to FMCG products. By reducing size, the product is sold quickly as a large pack, increasing the turnover rate of wholesalers and retailers. It was noted that more than 90 percent of retailers buy stocks from wholesalers, while others buy from various sources of personal selling. Two variables are involved in research: packet size (sachet, quarter pack, half pack, and full pack), and inventory turnover. So, it can be used further to find the relation between the same variables in terms of sales revenue, profit and growth.

One of the essential features of human nature is buying behavior, which is not quickly competed and eliminated. So far, researchers have found that consumer buying behavior mainly depends on two factors; "judgment approach" and "trigger moment," which are expressed by consumers when buying products in the market. Gopinath (2019) found that the trigger moment is when one thinks about what to buy, while the release moment is known as the buying moment. The emotions expressed when consumers buy a product in the market and the entire process that depends on a single factor is known as decision making.

Mitchell and Walsh (2004) stated that consumer decision-making style is also the supporting factor that improves consumers' purchase intentions to understand their buying behavior. To find out the decision-making style of consumers, the age and gender of the consumers have become the essential factor. Researchers have found that the decision-making style of male and female consumers are not similar in the first place. Mokhlis and Salleh (2009) also concluded that male

shoppers are not more attracted to creativity, fashion sense, or variety. Female consumers mainly focus on attraction, creativity, and fashion customization where the environment changes seek variety. Mokhlis and Salleh (2009) showed that consumer buying behavior is somewhat dependent on the gender of the consumer, while the age of the consumer does not have a more significant impact on the search for variety.

Tellis, Yin and Bell (2009) showed that the analytical flexibility of consumer buying behavior in terms of variety is exaggerated by modern buying. The demographic and other variables such as wage, literacy, flexibility, civilization, femininity, and period can also be the significant factors that praise the consumers for seeking variety. Martinez-Caraballo and Burt (2011) disagreed and stated that occupation and age in the FMCG market are essential factors that encourage the buyer to move towards diversification and described how the above variables influence consumer buying behavior.

Sijtsema et al. (2002) also studied consumer-oriented products stating that packaging alone has nothing to do with the product's success; consumer attraction to the product through quality and packaging style is vital to the product's success. Solomon et al. (2012) also concluded that packaging has a significant impact on consumer buying behavior in making the product successful. They also expressed that a product's success is only possible if a marketer knows what the design and approach are. Ahmed et al. (2005) added that the influence of packaging on consumer behavior is more effective when a manufacturer understands what characteristics consumers have in today's world, and how the future recommendations in the product's packaging influence consumers' emotions to buy the same packaged product. According to Prinsloo, Van der Merwe, Bosman and Erasmus (2012), this market trend and theory are suitable in South Africa because it is full of cultures. Such trends are quickly adopted in the culture there. Somehow these trends can be more effective if the marketers are from the food packaging sector. The only thing that marketers need to focus on is more consumer orientation in the product packaging design.

## **1.1 Background of the Study**

In the study of packaging communication, Underwood et al. (2001) explained that variables such as color, shape, information on the package, the structure of the package, visualization on the package, and preservatives used in food products to extend the shelf life of the products influence consumer behavior. Kotler and Keller (2006) found that there are still the dilemma statements; knowledge about the product, evaluation of the varieties available in the market after all these elements purchase judgment and the post-purchase decision that influence the consumer's choice in the purchase and that marketers need to focus on when designing the packaging of a product. Gelici-Zeko et al. (2013) and Méndez et al. (2011) believed that consumers, intentionally or unintentionally, are paying more attention to packaging when making a purchase decision, and the marketer's advertising has attracted consumers. On the other hand, packaging leads to competition among producers operating in the market. Abdullah and Anagreh (2011) showed that consumers face many different offers; however, marketers also face the same situation to compete with the competitors. Therefore, the packaging is a selling point that directly or indirectly attracts new consumers and makes old consumers unreceptive to diversification.

Similarly, Sayulu and Reddy (1998), to understand the buying behavior of rural society compared to the urban community, found that some significant factors such as a lower level of education make the consumers buy the product available in the market in low quantity. They also found that especially rural consumers do not understand which product quality is better in such a diverse market. Therefore, packaging, to some extent, contributes to the dependence of rural consumers on the marketer.

## **1.2 Problem of Statement**

Madden, Hewett and Roth (2000) found that packaging in one way or another attracts consumers based on their associations with brand loyalty. They say that "people in different cultures are exposed to different color associations and develop color preferences based on their own culture." Therefore, to attract these types of consumers, the marketer needs to focus on and

understand the culture of the region, the trends people follow, and people's associations with color and culture.

Pakistan is a large market with a population of 216.6 million, and most of the areas are rural. From the last update, the Pakistan market has approximately 152 billion dollars business of fast-moving consumer goods. Therefore, the focus of this study is to understand the influence of packaging on consumer buying behavior in rural areas of Pakistan, which may lead the marketer to explore how to attract rural consumers. Packaging is considered an integral part of products that marketers need to focus on by marketers in terms of product availability, cost of the product, efficiency of the product, and consumers buying behavior in rural areas of Pakistan.

### **1.3 Scope and Structure of Study**

This study is structured as an exploratory study that provides knowledge about rural and urban consumers' perceptions while purchasing the packaged product. The main point focused on this study is to find out the consumer attraction towards the packaged product regarding the demographic area. In this study, the variables mainly focused on consumer buying behavior were the impact of packaging, elements of packaging, and the effect of both variables on consumer buying behavior of people situated in a rural area in contrast with the urban consumer of Pakistan.

On the other hand, the packaging is the independent variable, which forms all the variables affecting consumer buying behavior regarding specific toiletries like toothpaste, washing powder of cloths, and the bath soap used by everyone. Rural consumers are not much literate to understand the product's labeling and specification, therefore rural areas of Pakistan have been chosen to understand rural consumers buying behavior concerning the packaging of toiletries. This study was held with the focused group of marketers working on toothpaste, washing powder, and bath soaps that were directly or indirectly interlinked with the consumers of rural and urban areas. In-depth semi-structured open-ended questionnaires have been conducted by the marketers and the company's employees working in the market.

## 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Consumer Buying Behavior Towards FMCGs

At present, FMCGs hold more market share than other products available in the market. While FMCG manufacturers are trying to build the customer-brand relationship, which is more important than any other factor to improve and make their market independent for daily use products like dairy products, toiletries, etc. Underwood (2003) observed that this is essential for the FMCG market but more critical because competitors can change consumers' preferences. In their studies, Nancarrow, Wright and Brace (1998) found that consumers are highly distracted by the variety of offerings in the market, leading them to switch to another product when buying locally. Consequently, Gautier (1996) believed that information on the product packaging instead of an on-site advertising manager increases consumer attraction and leads them to purchase a product.

Overall, FMCG products are products that everyone primarily uses. However, consumers' behavior when buying a product can lead to much variety due to competition between brands and the search for variety. Helm and Landschulze (2013) stated that the search for variety is one such factor that decreases with age and slowly turns into brand loyalty among older consumers. As they become consumers who only buy the products that are accessible to them and that they have already used, aging is also one of the factors in consumer buying behavior in the FMCG market. While the search for variety is the factor that mainly influences young consumers, marketers should focus on which packaging for older consumers and which package is for young consumers?

Bonnell and Thota (2012) found that the quality of fish meat is adulterated when stored and frozen, leading to lipid hydrolysis and deterioration of fish meat quality. Packaging plays a significant role in avoiding adulteration and other factors that reduce meat quality because it holds preservatives that protect the meat from adulteration. Lipid Oxidation and Cholesterol Oxidation in Mutton During Cooking and Storage, the researchers also observed that storing fish meat without packaging can destroy the lipid profile of the meat.



### **2.1.1 FMCG's Advertisement and Consumer Buying Behavior**

Marketing strategies and their resonance are the most crucial points that are still difficult to figure out and understand. Until now, marketers still rely on advertising, which is not enough. However, people have now come to believe that the consumer's decision to buy is the most crucial area in marketing. Kesavan and Thamarine et al. (2020), who studied the on-the-spot consumer response to the products available in the market, concluded that the marketer should focus on the product's packaging to ensure that it is communicative to the consumer and induce him to purchase the product.

Sponsorship advertising also has a significant impact on marketing. However, many kinds of research have found that instead of direct sponsorship advertising of a product by celebrities, the sponsor's image and the visual impact on the packaging have a more efficient and positive response on consumer buying behavior. Creusen and Jan (1998) said that, to improve their marketing strategy and attract more consumers through the visualization of the sponsor on the product packaging, the manufacturer should keep in mind the consumer market they are targeting and the influence of the celebrity on consumer buying behavior. Because consumers' imagination, emotions, and needs are much more important than packaging with their favorite celebrity's image. Underwood et al. (2001) also believed that packaging with a celebrity's image is powerful and effective product promotion. One of the most influential factors is increasing sales, which provides more opportunities for the marketer to gain a substantial advantage in sponsorship advertising. Daneshvary and Schwer (2000) found that sponsor advertising is a factor that can lead to high sales to understand and explain the advertising by celebrities. Nevertheless, the sponsor's advertisement is not very effective compared to the product information on the package. Therefore, if both the product information and the celebrity visualization are present on the packaging, it can lead to a symbiotic relationship that can help the product succeed.

According to the observations of Goldsmith and Lafferty (2002), the marketing of products through advertising is only to arouse consumers' emotions to buy the product, and found that the attitude towards advertising theory is the same as defined. Goldsmith and Lafferty (2002) believed that consumer buying behavior and consumer brand loyalty were based on the advertisement provided by the marketer. On the other hand, Adelaar, Chang, and Lancendorfer et al. (2003) stated

that consumers base their purchase decisions on the results of products they have already purchased from the same store or brand. Cavill and Bauman (2004) also studied packaging in terms of consumer behavior in rural areas and found that consumers' purchase intentions depend on the product's advertising. Rehman, Nawaz and Hyder (2014) found some elements that influence both packaging and consumer purchase behavior and said that classifying the elements of advertising, awareness, interest, desire, and action into a hierarchy model can help understand consumers purchase behavior related to packaging. Researchers have also mentioned other factors, such as Ali, Thumiki and Khan (2012), who found that brand name influences consumer buying behavior more, while Narang (2001) mentioned product quality and price. Sarangapani and Mamatha (2008) found that product advertisement is the same variable. Bhatt and Jaiswal (1986) also found that product advertisement attracts consumers in rural areas more towards the packaged product.

Venter, Van der Merwe and Beer et al. (2011), in their study on packaging specification, found that packaging is not only the package or wrapper that contains the product but also explains the quality of the product. Tetra pack packaging is the best example in the FMCG industry, focusing on liquid products like juices and milk packaging. The outstanding advantage of tetra packaging is the product's shelf life without the need to freeze it. Similarly, Peters-Teixeira and Badrie (2005) explained that tetra packaging also helps the marketer advertise by putting the product on the shelves instead of freezing it. Considering the study of Kotler and Keller (2006) thank for the packaging technique, also the way of communication between marketer and consumer and Silayoi and Speece (2007) found factors such as color, logo, shape, design, and information on the product for the consumer increase the buyer's attraction to the product. Louchran and Kangis (1994) also stated the same result.

### **2.1.2 Variety seeking and Consumer Buying Behavior**

Indexing and remembering are also the specific elements of human psychology that marketers target through packaging to remember the package's color, size, and design. Dickson (1990) said the same thing that consumer behavior helps determine the product's reaction and helps the marketer understand what factors influence consumers to buy a new product. It is also constructive for manufacturers when marketing a new product or testing a product with different packaging. A

conference, where the impact of packaging on consumer buying behavior was studied, showed that about 30 to 45 percent of the market budget is directly or indirectly related to packaging. Piñero (2010) concluded that packaging is more efficient and helpful to consumers in purchasing a product than investing in advertising. For this, marketers just need to know how to design the product packaging to suit their product to choose the product more easily.

According to Simonson (1990), behaviorism and diversification are related to consumer perception expressed by different researchers with different aspects. Fox, Ratner and Lieb (2005) stated that the human psyche is based on the theory of fact-finding, which enables them to buy these types of products or buy from the brands that have more diversification and make the products out of the ordinary. Levav and Zhu (2009) reasoned that this modification opens an excellent choice for the consumer to be potentially strong in decision making. In terms of behaviorism and its implications, Kahneman and Lovallo (1993) found that consumers choose their product based on the future utility and ramifications in their mindset for future decisions. Kirby and Herrnstein (1995) explained that a myopic mindset may cause a delayed reaction that consumers usually display when making a purchase.

Diversification and the pursuit of variety are the main components that may hinder brand loyalty and be responsible for consumers focusing on choice. Barrett and Salovey (2002) found that buyer's decision-making is the essential curiosity discussed in many kinds of research, which is the factor that leads consumers to variety. The reason for buying a product on the spot is simply the physical appearance expressed by the product's packaging or the information on it, and the future importance of the product to the customer's purchase intentions. Simonson (1990) also looked at the persistent wear and tear scenario that depends on doubtfulness. It concluded that decision-making is the critical factor that simultaneously changes the consumer's attitude towards buying behavior. People still perceive their choices and desires that tempt them to seek variety by any means necessary.

It has been observed that most customers make their buying decisions after learning about the products available in the market and the brands that sell these products. Nevertheless, many

consumers are still guided by brand satisfaction and loyalty to the brands they already buy. Assael (1995) found that customers only choose another brand if they are satisfied with the other brand or have already shopped with the same brand. However, brand loyalty decreases due to the variety of options available. It causes the customer to switch to another brand, expressing no brand loyalty when focusing on consumer buying behavior. Assael (1995) also explained that the first purchase is part of the consumer's habit, but the second purchase at the same brand is only because of the satisfaction after the purchase.

Sijtsema et al. (2002) also found that packaging alone has nothing to do with the success of a product. Consumers are attracted to a product by the quality and type of packaging, so marketers need to focus on making the product successful. Continuing the same study, Solomon et al. (2012) also compiled the same answer from the findings that packaging significantly impacts product success. Only possible if the marketer knows design and with what approach that design will remain in the minds of consumers so that the buyer will buy the same product repeatedly. Ahmed, Ahmed and Salman (2005) added that it is more effective if a manufacturer understands the consumer's attraction in today's time and how the future changes in product packaging. According to Prinsloo, Van der Merwe and Bosman et al. (2012), the market trend and theory is suitable in South Africa because they are full of cultures and cultures. Adopting the type of trends can quickly enhance the marketer's growth. Furthermore, it will be more effective if the marketers are from the food packaging arena. The only thing which marketers must focus on is consumer-oriented.

### **2.1.3 Fast -Moving Consumer Goods' Marketing and Buying Behavior**

Marketers should find out whether a product is successful in the market or not. The purchase of a product shows how consumers interact with the product, how they use it, and what services they use. All these factors work together as a symbiotic relationship and rationalize consumer

behavior that leads to consumers buying alternative products in the market because they decide when they buy. According to studies, Vibhuti (2014) observed that buying behavior starts with the brainstorming phase of consumer perception before purchase, known as pre-purchase decision. After going through many variations in the market and finally deciding on a particular product after learning about the suppliers' benefits and services, consumer behavior depends on various factors that influence the consumer to either buy the product or not.

Similarly, Van Ooijen (2016) has stated that unique packaging persuades the customer to buy the product and creates a special bond between the customer and the product, leading to brand loyalty. Furthermore, it has been observed that product packaging is the key for the marketer to attract customers. If the packaging is unique, it works as a promotional seller. It is found in the research that packaging is an essential factor influencing customers' buying behavior. They accept a product, whether market delivery, they believe the concept they received the product, experience receiving the product. Therefore, to address the market through packaging, every marketer must be competitive and progressive by keeping the consumer's reaction when purchasing their product (Deliya, 2012).

Prendergast and Marr (1997) found that the shape and size of the packaging is the most critical factor that affects consumer buying behavior and the marketer can only take advantage of it by focusing on the packaging. It was observed that packaging is the essential point that makes the customer buy the product when it is difficult for the consumer to predict its quality. Therefore, an essential point that the marketer should focus on is to increase sales. So, the old research proved that the packaging is the main element that stimulates the consumer to buy. It became the primary marketing strategy of many food manufacturers that stimulated the consumer to buy through the packaging and the information provided on the packaged product. Silayoi and Speece (2007) say that researchers have observed and proved large or low-cost packaging due to packaging size and shape. As generic products usually attract only large households as generic products mainly focus on packaging with high, low cost.

However, people are still thinking about what are the same components? What leads customers to diversify, and how does this affect consumer purchasing behavior? To explore this,

Hoyer (1984) examined factors such as tuning tactics, attributes associated with the product, standardization, and physical visualization of the product and packaging that may cause diversity seeking. He also found that the main factor that stimulates consumers to seek variety is the initial procurement expression.

## **2.2 Consumer Buying Behavior and Packaging**

Consumer buying behavior largely depends on the products that are marketed very well in all aspects. In today's marketing world, marketers believe that "perception" is one of the essential elements influencing consumer buying behavior. When we talk about perception in terms of consumer buying behavior, we can say that it is a process of observing, experiencing, understanding, analyzing, and then arriving at a decision point (Saha and Singh, 2012). One of the most important factors that attracts the consumer's attention and helps make a decision is how the marketer packages his product. The consumer's eye can provide valuable information about how they decide, or in other words, it is a process of becoming aware of something in a certain way. Saha and Singh (2012) say that excellent packaging helps consumers to recognize the product. Packaging is used for ease of delivery and safety. The manufacturer uses the packaging to show the consumer that it is an original product, i.e., new. It is also used for advertising purposes and to distinguish the product from other brands.

Packaging is the end product of a process that involves cutting, assembling, and resulting in the final product in any shape with a product inside. It is also labeled with the name, picture, and specification to explain the detailed information about the product, also known as speechless marketing of the product and brand. It is a new way of marketing (Louw, 2006). Rushton (2006) stated that some essential variables influence consumers concerning the packaging. These include the time pressure to buy the product and the cluttered environment that make the customer focus on the product's origin and demand.

Similarly, Jugger (1999) said that consumers are surrounded by various products that make them very choosy in purchasing, and marketers are creating new and more packaging designs day

by day. Still, the marketers consider factors like color and shape of the packaging as the product's attractiveness. To summarize all these situations, Gaillard et al. (2005) stated that visual impact, brand propositions, the origin of the product, product quality, stigma, physical appearance, auditory feelings while looking at the product, broadcasting method, and superstar endorsement in advertising are the decisive factors used by every marketer for their product and achieve successful results.

The totality of components like color, logo, shape, product information, and labeling help the consumer connect with the product through the packaging and explains that there is still a lot to be explored on how these elements are perceived by the consumer while purchasing the product. Moreover, a supplier can leave a good impression on the consumer through its packaging (Silayoi, Pinya and Speece, 2004). Thus, the consumer can get information about which product in the packaging contains what kind of quality. Consequently, the seller's product features and quality display on the packaging help consumers decide for or against the product. Underwood et al. (2001) stated that all these elements could only be found through consumer purchase intentions when buying. Many researchers believe that all the above elements have a symbiotic relationship to increase consumers' awareness of the product.

Therefore, it is still not easy to determine the exact factors that drive the buyer to purchase a product. However, consumers mainly purchase a product based on their expectations and satisfaction before or after purchase (Kupiec and Revell, 2001). Similarly, Connolly (1996) using old studies and current literature, found that about 70 to 75 percent of consumers make their purchase decision mainly in the market while shopping. This shows that the consumer's decision while buying is crucial for the manufacturer to design the packaging to buy the product on the spot. De Carneiro et al. (2005) also found that buying in today's world is not as easy as described in the studies. Based on their needs or requirements, consumers' purchase intention is an essential aspect that influences the sale of products on the spot.

The many alternative brands available in the market pose a challenge to the consumer in making a purchase. At some point in time, the consumer looks around at various products and makes his decision based on his ideas associated with his preliminary decision. The consumer

desires a product that meets his needs and believes that the information on the packaging, the branding of the product, and the marketer's advertisements will encourage him to set his preferences and buy (Verlegh, 1999).

### **2.2.1 Consumer Buying Behavior and Components of Packaging**

Consumers who buy food pay more attention to color in food packaging, according to Pieters, Warlop, and Hartog (1997), while Ampuero and Vila (2006) found that not only color, but also architecture, visualization, information, labeling, consumption, and labeling are factors that shopper considers when buying food. Silayoi et al. (2007) investigated consumer behavior based on packaging and discovered that if a product's packaging is not appealing to the consumer, the marketer must focus on it; otherwise, the consumer's interest in the product wanes. Furthermore, this type of discussion was also observed and adopted (Underwood et al., 2002). Belch (2004) dealt with advertising and promotion of a product and its impact on consumer buying behavior and concluded that the marketer needs to focus more on food packaging design and labeling to survive in such a competitive market.

Packaging is an important marketing variable. Rundh (2009) stated that it is difficult for marketers to succeed in today's competitive market. Product design and the appearance of the name should consider consumer preferences. The way consumers perceive the subjective entity through the communication elements conveyed by the packaging also influences the choice, and is the critical factor for successful marketing strategies (Silayoi and Speece, 2007).

Ksenia's thesis from 2013 demonstrated different ways to communicate with clients in marketing, such as advertising and demonstration. However, if traditional tools and approaches occasionally fail to reach the target audience, packaging and package design play a critical part in attracting and influencing the customer. Ksenia's work demonstrates that the packaging design, which has a high value for the consumer, shapes the entire perception of the product (Ksenia, 2013). Deliya (2012) in his research (descriptive) concluded that packaging can be considered one of the most valuable tools in marketing communication today. Packaging directly triggers brand memories and automatically brings thoughts, knowledge, and feelings about the brand into



consumers' minds (Qing, Kai, Zhang and Chen, 2012). While it is essential that packaging reflects the brand's values and positioning, the critical role of packaging is not necessary to communicate but to trigger the communication that had already taken place around the brand before the shopper entered the store.

Cheung, Leong, and Vichare (2017) investigated plastic packaging and discovered that conventional and traditional packaging is no longer practical in today's world due to consumer expectations, requirements, and understanding of innovative technology and its health benefits. Unlike conventional packaging, sophisticated, nimble, and imaginative packaging captures the market today because the information behind the packaging persuades the buyer to purchase based on factors such as the preservation method that marketers inform consumers. Yam (2005) suggested that the marketer puts a stamp of approval on the packaging to enhance its appeal and encourage customers to buy it.

### **2.2.2 Consumer Buying Behavior and Packaging Advancement Response**

A package consists essentially of a parcel or box holding any object. The function of the packaging is to explain the information about the product contained in the box. The packaging also serves to protect the product from damage during delivery. The packaging concept has the ultimate effect on the marketer: it plays a specific role for the customer buying a product by deciding on the spot. As a result, the packaging is also a promotional tool in advertising (Kesavan, Thamarine and Vivek et al., 2020).

To learn more about refined and agile packaging, researchers discovered that agile packaging plays an integral part in the silent interaction between the consumer and the product, which aids the buyer in making a purchasing decision. Furthermore, Ghaani et al. (2016) showed how food preservation improves food quality and product longevity helps the consumer. Realini and Marcos (2014), on the other hand, found that identifying the origin of the product and educating consumers about the quality of the product are the essential points in agile packaging that encourage consumers to purchase. Prasad et al. (2014) and Kerry et al. (2006) discussed refined packaging and concluded that the packaging enhances several elements such as radio

frequency identification, the storage temperature of the products in the box, and the ripeness of the product and that it is only now that the packaging has become nimbly sophisticated.

Thanks to technological advancements, people themselves are also evolving. Arvanitoyannis (2012) studied the impact of technological advancement on consumers' perception of packaging. Because of the composition contents indicated on the packaging, the product purchased by the consumer can be tracked. Product information is available on the Internet. The new technological packaging increases consumer perceptions of purchase, making consumers more likely to switch to agile or smartly packaged products. Pacquit et al. (2007) added that these factors help marketers improve their supply chain and consumer feedback helps them improve their product to gain more market share. The adoption of agile packaging helps manufacturers in both ways to earn more and provides more convenience to consumers.

The main reason consumers switch from traditional packaging to agile and intelligent packaging is the time factor. Because of the traditional packaging, the consumer has to wait until the product is ready, whereas in intelligent packaging, the time is saved, the fact that all the nutrients without any microbial activity make the consumer buy a smartly packaged product. Furthermore, it was discovered that the products were shipped before creative packaging. The storage system was insufficient to prevent the product from deterioration caused by critical elements such as pH, light, water, and product oxidation. Therefore, Li et al. (1996) concluded in their study on meat and oil packaging that intelligent packaging is the future for marketers to attract consumers.

### **2.2.3 Consumer Buying Behavior and Cue Utilization Theory**

Richardson (1994) used Easterbrook's cue utilization theory to explain the relationship between emotions and performance by considering product packaging as a factor in success. According to Richardson (1994), when a customer is introduced to a brand for the first time, evaluating a product is difficult due to the market's numerous types, or the consumer is unable to analyze the reaction to the product after purchase. Olson and Jacoby (1972) disagreed with this

and explained that packaging is just an attribute related to the product but not physically identical. Besides, Purwar (1982) stated that food packaging helps demonstrate consumers' emotional behavior, but not the product's performance behavior.

Moreover, Bolen et al. (1984) based on the results, stated that visual effects such as graphics on the packaging are more effective than written information on the packaging because they create more illusions in mind than verbal ones. Similarly, Underwood et al. (2001) found that graphics on packaging are more helpful to buyers who are unaware of the brand's existence. Hussain et al. (2008) found that a company can only be successful if it invests adequately in every business area. However, the most crucial area is advertising, also known as informing consumers about themselves and the product. Similarly, Ayanwale (2005) stated that the product directly or indirectly influences the buying behavior of consumers and all because of the marketer's advertising. It is also stated that advertising has a vital part in influencing consumers to purchase the product. Niazi, Siddiqui and Alishah et al. (2012) believed that advertisements help customers understand the product and make up their minds while buying.

Similarly, the advertising campaigns also promote brand loyalty among consumers. Niazi et al. (2012) showed that the hierarchy model of packaging and consumer buying behavior can lead consumers to understand the factors that make them buy the product. It helps them become loyal to the brand. Escalas and Bettman (2003) showed that brands are mainly used by consumers who believe that brands help them emphasize and affirm their status in society. Similarly, following research by Bristow, Schneider and Schuler (2002) argued that consumer belief is most effective in finding brands and brand loyalty. Therefore, it would be understandable that only the information about the brand that the buyer believes in persuades him to buy before and after the purchase. Finally, consumers can focus on new and better brands that silently proclaim their awareness. Consumers' perceptions of buying a brand, which converted into brand loyalty, are still subject to consideration for the exact emotional components that drive consumers to buy brands repeatedly. Aaker (1997) concluded that the manufacturer's brand name is an essential key to brand loyalty to solve this problem. Ataman and Uelengin (2003) investigated how brand name promotes

consumer brand loyalty and found that loyalty and the company's economic success depends on the brand name. They find that brand name influences consumer willingness, purchase intention, and status, affecting brand loyalty.

### **2.3 Packaging and Demographic Culture**

To be successful in the market, the marketer must carefully design the packaging since manufacturers must understand what elements people look for when purchasing a product. A corporation must also grasp the characteristics that help its packaging compete in a diverse market. Furthermore, these aspects are only considered by companies who aim to become brands. In the study on consumer evaluation of sales promotion, Alvarez and Casielles (2005) stated that companies that want to become a brand must keep their customers loyal to their products. The researchers found that loyal customers regularly buy products from the same supplier even though many competitors are in the market. To support the customers' loyalty, a company must focus on the needs of the consumers and the trend prevailing in the market. Aaker and McLoughlin (2010) found that elements such as the product's shape, the color of the package, the size of the package, and the product's labeling can make the consumer react positively to demonstrate this type of market and keep the customer loyal. Furthermore, all this is possible if the consumer is satisfied with the product he already bought from the same supplier.

In another study of Essentials of Marketing, Charles, Joe and Carl (2011) found four primary functions of packaging related to the market. The researcher stated that protecting the product, promoting the product, consumer use, and facilitating recycling of the packaging are the main elements directly or indirectly related to the market. As a result, it is possible to deduce that including all these functions in the product's packaging aids the marketer's penetration; otherwise, the product may not reach the consumer. Packaging can be termed any material used for storage, protection, complicated delivery, and presentation of goods (Kotler, 1973). To promote the product, the manufacturer puts printed information on the package. Packaging is also used to identify a product and is vital in garnering consumer interest. It is one of the most critical factors that significantly influence consumer buying behavior (Shah, 2006). A better box, packaging, can,

or bottle can enable even a relatively small, unknown company to compete successfully with its established competitors. New packaging often creates a (new) product by offering either the regular customers or new target markets the existing product in a new form with more satisfaction. Another aspect of adequate packaging is that it sometimes gives a company more promotional impact than it could afford with traditional advertising methods (Osun, 2013). The shape of the packaging is itself an essential attribute for communicating about the packaging, and an innovative packaging design can help differentiate a brand from its competitors (Bix and Rifon, 2013).

According to Shah (2006), packaging draws consumers' attention to the brand, improves its image, and influences consumers' perception of the product. Moreover, packaging adds unique value to the products. According to Shah (2006), packaging serves as a tool for differentiation, i.e., it helps consumers choose the product from a wide range of similar products and stimulates customers' buying behavior (Deliya, 2012). Appropriate packaging can assist a brand in occupying a particular place in the market and being perceived in the thoughts of consumers (Agariya, Johari and Harma et al., 2012). Packaging is the brand concept, product attributes, a comprehensive reflection of consumer psychology; it directly impacts consumer purchases (Qing et al., 2012). In 1957, Pildich first defined packaging as a "silent salesman," but 20 years later, in 1991, Lewis expanded Pilditch's views by stating that "good packaging is much more than a salesman; it is a flag of recognition and a symbol of values."

The form of packaging also enhances consumer acceptance of products. Sauvage (1996), in his study on packaging and communication, found that the shape of the packaging helps the consumer remember the product. He says that shape also plays a unique role in the buyer's mindset as every product packaging has a different shape. On the other hand, in their study on consumer perception, Raheem, Vishnu and Ahmed (2014) found that the shape of the packaging only helps to make the product easier to handle and increases the buyer's attention to buy the product. While other factors such as the image, color combination, and the exact content of the product written on the packaging are more effective in attracting the consumers, the product's shape and appearance influence the consumers' buying behavior.

In a study conducted by Underwood et al. (2001) on packaging communication, variables such as the image on the product packaging, the color of the graphics on the packaging, and the images of celebrities on the packaging positively influence consumer buying behavior. In addition, these elements are more effective with younger customers, while older consumers rely mainly on the color and shape of the packaging. Underwood et al. (2003) found that the shape and appearance of the product also encourage shoppers to buy the products on the spot. Thus, the researchers found that these elements are prominent in private brands compared to national brands. Hill (1996) also looked at the packaging and found that human nature has three buying behavior levels. The first level is the product's physical appearance, the second level is the region's culture and the attractiveness of the packaging according to its culture, and the third level is the association of the product with the consumer.

Underwood and Ozanne (1998) found that the reality of the product, product's quality, the transparency of the product, and the sincerity of the product are only the elements that make the consumer buy the product if the marketer offers these things in the packaging. Furthermore, this may induce the consumer to brand loyalty without thinking of diversification. On the other hand, Bone and France (2001) found five elements that the marketer must focus on to attract more consumers to their product in their study on packaging graphics. The aspects of the brand were service offered by the marketer to the buyer, the shape of the product that makes it easy to use, a suitable product that looks nice, the information provided to the customer at the point of sale, and the rest of the brand. Bone et al. (2001) founded and believed that these elements attract the consumer to the same brand repeatedly, leading the consumer to purchase the product.

### **2.3.1 Packaging and In-store Purchasing**

Karbasivar and Yarahmadi (2011) in their study on impulsive buying behavior of consumers, stated that the discount of the product and the samples provided by the companies on the showroom shelves are also among the most attractive components to attract consumers to the product. The gift packaging on the purchase of the product also attracts the consumers to buy the product. Alice (2006) also looked at the power of packaging and found that the window display of the product and the promotional items in the store have a good relationship and entice consumers

to buy the product. Veres (2007) looked at baby care products and found that different elements depend on the product. In baby care products, consumers focus more on the reliability and performance of the product rather than the packaging.

Moreover, Saeed, Lodhi and Mukhtar et al. (2011) studied consumer buying behavior in the apparel industry and found that brand image is not related to purchase decisions. Also, brand loyalty positively impacts consumer buying behavior based on the above elements. In their study, Ahmed, Sattar, Khoso and Parmar (2014) concluded that brand loyalty is more effective than the brand image in consumer purchase decisions.

Butkeviiien et al. (2008) investigated the consumer decision-making process and consumer response to packaged items and discovered that market fluctuations, sales promotions, traditional offers, and visual advertising are ineffective in influencing customer buying behavior. Borin, Cerf and Krishnan (2011) studied the impact of packaging on consumer behavior and found that consumers believe that packaging has positive and negative effects on purchase behavior while the quality of the product and packaging style is identical to other brands available in the market. Environmental factors such as culture also have an impact on consumer buying behavior.

Hellstroem and Nilsson (2011) in a case study on IKEA, found that packaging as a marketing tool helps to attract customers. Similarly, Rundh (2005) and Boyce, Broz, and Binkley (2008) found that most consumers view packaging as ethical, allowing them to evaluate the brand based on how it packages the products. Vernuccio, Cozzolino and Micheline (2010) stated that ethics in packaging leads the manufacturer to design the packaging to meet consumers' ethical beliefs. Lee and Lye (2003) addressed packaging design and stated that the packaging process starts at the early product introduction stage. Ampuero et al. (2006) stated that marketers need to understand the ethics of buyers depending on the demographic area to meet consumer demands.

Many researchers have studied consumer perceptions regarding point-of-sale packaging. Nancarrow, Wright, and Brace (1998) found that graphic presentation is the element that influences consumers' point-of-purchase behavior. Piqueras-Fiszman , Ares and Varela (2011) studied the purchase of medicines and found that the product's color, the design of the packaging,

the quality of the product, and the demographic culture of the region are the factors that influence consumer purchase decisions. Kauppinen-Raeisaenen (2011) found the same thing. However, he found that age is also a factor that influences consumer perception. In his study, the researcher found that consumers rely more on age and the color of the product when buying painkillers. In another study conducted by Chavalkul, Saxon and Jerrard (2011), it was found that the influence of color on consumer perception varies from person to person. Therefore, it is complicated for elderly buyers to understand the requirements of the medicine they need in medicines and rely on the marketers' verbal information. Paddison and Olsen (2008) looked at cooking oil and found that for FMCG products, consumers tend to rely on the instructions provided by marketers. To compete with this type of population, the marketer must design the packaging to understand the product's value when purchasing it locally in the market.

On the other hand, Duizer, Robertson and Han (2009) found that older consumers have problems opening the product to use it and believe that instructions on the packaging would help the older consumers buy the product. In conclusion, according to Devendorf (2010), the point of sale is the only time the buyer is exposed to the goods. Thus, the marketer must be while packing the product. Duizer, Robertson and Han (2009), on the other hand, suggest focusing on providing information for use on the packaging to attract more consumers, including older consumers.

## **2.4 Packaging Endorsing Brand Image**

To understand the brand image, Runyon (1987) studied consumer behavior about packaging and brand image and found some elements that marketers need to know if they want to understand. The elements studied by the researchers are the product's physiological appeal, the product's physical appearance, and the quality of the product. Thus, to accommodate all these elements in a product, the marketer must know the product's packaging first and foremost. Runyon (1987) also showed that brand image essentially depends on the quality of the product and the appearance of the packaging, setting up the brand image in the minds of consumers; marketers need to focus on the post-purchase behavior of consumers and evolve their packaging with the progress of time.



To know more about the physiological appeal of a product and the brand image, Noble (1999) worked on the evolution of marketing. He found that the physical attributes are the components of the products that encourage the consumer to buy, and the components are the packaging of the product, which relies on the design, texture, mono, logo, labeling, and services of the product, e.g., soap with antiseptic helps to kill germs. These are the components that directly affect the emotions of the consumer and make them buy the product. It is essential to understand the product's packaging and then the services that the company offers to the consumer that attract the consumer the most and become a package of services that encourage the consumer to form an image of the brand in the buyer's mind. This kind of service provided by the brand makes the consumer loyal to the brand. So, it has been found that the emotional factor plays a more significant role in attracting consumers.

From old studies and research, the brand image is the consumer's reaction towards the same product. Thus, a person buys something from the brand, and after the purchase, the product's quality and the services provided by the marketer create an image of the brand in his mind that the services are good enough to buy again. In simple terms, it is the consumer's post-purchase behavior towards the same brand. The elements that attract the consumer the most are the store's environment, the communication of the staff with the consumer, the facilities provided by the marketer, and the confidential information provided by the advertising manager present in the store. As a result, consumers are mostly enticed to buy from the same business again by emotions and brand identification. To justify the relationship between brand image and emotional factors, Wijaya (2011) investigated brand development and concluded that brand image is the impact of services after purchasing a brand, making the buyer revisit it. Mowen and Minor (2002) studied consumer behavior and concluded that the brand image is the interaction of emotional and physical services provided by the brand that affect the buyer's behavior, making them feel special about it. Davis (2000), in his study on the management of brand equity, also argued that these elements constitute the value of the brand, which remains in the minds of consumers for a long time and continuously attracts them. Therefore, these kinds of services will develop the brand name and loyalty in the minds of consumers more.

### **2.4.1 Packaging Awareness Enhancing Brand Image**

In a study, Peters (2001) stated that packaging helps consumers understand the product and persuades them to buy it. The relationship between packaging and consumer is that the attraction of packaging is only when the consumer perceives the product, and the impression left by the product when the handle is the point at which the consumer becomes attracted. To further elaborate on the study, Peters (2001) stated that marketers need to be efficient in technology to provide consumers with advanced packaging that will attract consumers more and lead the company to success.

In their study on beer brand identification, Allison and Uhl (1964) stated that the main focus must be on adding value to the product after packaging. In this way, the marketer can easily understand what more needs to be added to the product and what elements can lead to the failure of the product. To gain a deeper understanding, the researchers conducted a test. They found that consumers use the same brand repeatedly because they are loyal to that brand and have developed a taste trust, while blindly consuming the same product of another brand may lead them to diversify. Puto and Wells (1984) also looked at packaging and brand image in their study and found that adding value to a product is best to promote a product.

Rejection and acceptance are like the consumer. Researchers have found that consumers prioritize their needs based on their requirements while also being attracted to different market elements. However, to understand consumers' needs, it is necessary to be aware of the emotional factors that make consumers reject a product. Researchers have found that everyone has a concept of buying something. Decision-making is the crucial point that marketers need to focus on to find out what elements of their product can help consumers decide whether to buy or not. Mowen et al. (2002) looked at consumer behavior and found that consumers rely primarily on their decision. To influence their decisions, marketers need to design the product so that consumers can quickly decide. Mehta (1999) looked at self-concept and advertising and found that consumers rely primarily on the expression of their status to make decisions. Thus, packaging plays a role in shaping brand image but not in consumer decision-making. Similarly, in their study, Grubb and Grathwohl (1967) concluded that packaging plays a role in creating a brand image and product

awareness becomes an integral part of consumer purchase decisions. Therefore, the combination of packaging and consumer person helps brands retain consumers and repurchase the product.

Since labeling is an integral part of the packaging, Morris (1997) in his study on green packaging found that the label helps consumers to recognize and remember the product quickly. Silayoi et al. (2004) also found that consumers under time pressure tend to buy products with understandable and straightforward labeling. Therefore, marketers need to ensure that the labeling is accurate and attractive to buy even under time pressure. Coulson (2000) found that consumers who pay attention to nutritional value focus more on labeling when purchasing a product to determine other factors related to labeling.

The researchers also examined the images on the package and discovered that the images moved customers closer to the product. They found that the image on the product packaging helps consumers identify the brand, as consumers believe that varied brands have different images or graphics on the packaging. To clarify this, Mowen et al. (2001) in their study on consumer behavior, stated that the image or graphic that the marketer puts on the packaging makes consumers associate a brand. Wijaya (2013) studied brand image and found that consumers have an image of the brand in their mind due to the marketer's promotion of the product in the market. Therefore, graphic visualization on the packaging helps consumers to understand and remember the brand name and image.

From most of the older studies, packaging has different types of effects on consumer buying behavior. According to Silayoi et al. (2004) in the study on packaging and consumer behavior, Butkevičienė et al. (2008) in the study on packaging communication, and Randi and Joseph (1999) in the study on color combinations in packaging, it was found that packaging types have different effects on consumer behavior. Moreover, packaging essentially depends on the consumer's decision, which can be either weak or highly receptive. To understand more, researchers have investigated packaging and found that the consumer's interest in the product, the consumer's level of understanding, the product's appeal to the consumer, and the time frame in which the consumer has to buy the products are the main elements that affect the packaging of the product. On the other hand, Grossman and Wisenblit (1999) found that fast-moving consumer

goods have little influence on packaging of food products in their study on color combinations. In contrast to Grossman et al. (1999), Silayoi et al. (2004) found that consumers still emphasize packaging when purchasing food and FMCGs. However, to understand that both packaging and consumer buying behavior plays a significant role in the FMCG sector, the researcher needs to understand the ecology of the area and the trends in this particular area to know what elements influence them.

To find out how electronic advertising affects consumer buying behavior, Walsh and Elsner (2012) studied word-of-mouth advertising, expressing that the consumer much more accepts this type of advertising in the context of service businesses such as logistics or digital marketing. The physical presence of a supplier at the point of sale is more attractive to consumers. Furthermore, people believe that face-to-face sharing of product information between marketer and the consumer helps others understand the product better and makes it easier to buy it. To understand word-of-mouth communication between consumers and marketers, Armelini and Villanueva (2010) found that personal communication between consumers and buyers increases consumer trust in the brand. However, to meet the needs of consumers, the marketer must understand trade marketing. Cespedes (1993) in his study on the coordination of sales and marketing, found that trade marketing is the key to understanding the retailer's needs by automatically providing the information about the consumer's expectations from the brand. Furthermore, all this is mainly the marketing strategy that the marketer must focus on.

Madhavi and Arul Kumar (2006) in their study on rural marketing with consumer durables like toothpaste, shampoo, and soaps, helped marketers understand what factors consumers look for while buying toiletries. Their study expresses that the gender of consumers differs when choosing toothpaste as male consumers reliably use any toothpaste while females tend to prefer health-conscious products. Accordingly, when choosing a shampoo, consumers are most willing to pay the cost and packaging but not compromise on the quality. However, most customers report that soaps are primarily used for handwashing; hence, any brand is appropriate. To understand more, Madhavi et al. (2006) compared urban consumers with rural consumers and found that rural and urban consumers are willing to compromise on price, packaging, and other factors. However, quality consumers cannot buy inferior products. Even rural consumers have low incomes, but

consumers mostly think whether the product is worth the cost, helps the marketers understand and focus on the quality of the product in a better way; this would help the consumers to increase their purchasing power in such a diverse market.

Montague (1999) stated that brand image concerning packaging is the point of a product where consumers pass through some stages, such as the self-image of the product and its relationship with the product's physical appearance. The researcher believes that this relationship between one's thinking and the product's physical appearance leads consumers to brand loyalty. The most important part of the process is the brand's image in the consumer's mind after buying the products, inspiring brand loyalty.

In their study on marketing management, Kotler et al. (2000) discovered that convenience in utilizing a product is the most important factor for everybody in this type of environment. It was also shown that consumers are prepared to spend more if the packaging is more user-friendly. Soap and shampoo packaging, for example, was designed to be user-friendly and movable on the bathroom shelf. The concept of water pump dispensers for bath soap also inspires consumers. So, it can be predicted that packaging is the crucial point where consumers feel inner satisfaction and buy the product the most. Therefore, packaging directly promotes brand image in the minds of consumers, which leads them to brand loyalty. Kotler et al. (2000) recommended that marketers evolve technologically to inspire consumers more to remain loyal to their products.

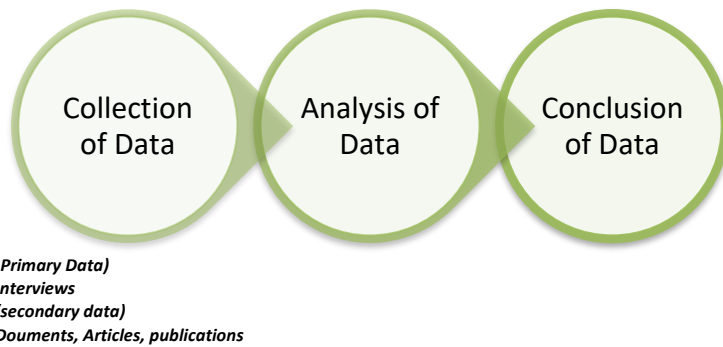
So far, much work on consumer behavior with packaging, to modify and add to the study, Srivastava (2013) studied consumer behavior with packaging and found that the specification of the product and the accuracy of the product in the packaging are the elements that influence the demographic consumers who depend on their income. Found that young people at this level of culture are more brand loyal while they use generic products and cannot afford brands due to their low income.

Anandan et al. (2006) also studied the various brands of soap available in rural India, and found that consumers are more concerned about quality than other factors while buying laundry soap. However, shoppers tend to buy the available brand in case of unavailability. In a study on consumer buying behavior in rural areas, Nagaraja (2004) found that rural consumers are more cautious than urban consumers in buying products from the market. Nevertheless, since people in rural areas are socio-economically much better off and have lower incomes than urban consumers, rural consumers are more rational than urban consumers. Similarly, Kumar (2011) has looked at celebrity endorsements and stated that the rural population is not as educated as urban consumers. So, it is not easy to attract rural consumers through education. Instead, it is much easier and effective to capture the rural market in India by supporting them through sponsorship advertising.

To determine the extent to which celebrity endorsement is helpful to marketers in India, Rajput et al. (2012) studied consumer behavior and found that people are more conscious about the products they buy because of technological advances and knowledge. They choose products based on advertising, variety, quality, post-purchase behavior, and pre-purchase behavior, but still, they are more likely to buy branded products than generic products. Moreover, the study shows that most consumers rely on celebrity endorsement because they are influenced by the celebrities they love. Therefore, a marketer must focus on the culture of the consumer market and choose the celebrity carefully so that consumers are more likely to buy the product.

### 3 METHODOLOGY

By all means, we should understand consumer buying behavior explicitly in terms of packaging. Qualitative research is a slightly better method for understanding consumer purchasing behavior of toiletries such as: washing powder, toothpaste, and bath soaps in terms of packaging. Because toiletries are such products that consumers are emotionally attached to when they purchase them. These products fall under health consciousness to some extent. Qualitative studies rely on explanations rather than facts and figures (Vasileiou, 2018). To learn more about the research, focus groups were used to conduct in-depth interviews, which demonstrated how to understand customer buying behavior in regards to packaging in a delicate way.



**Figure 1:** Structure of Methodology

The respondents were generally marketing managers who work extensively in the market for toiletries in rural and urban areas. In a study by Williams (2007) on research methods, it is explained that when we need a deeper understanding of a topic, the qualitative method is much better than any other. Because in such a situation where we need to understand the exact problem through interviews, we can get much better results than quantitative methods. Therefore, contrary to popular belief, we used the same method to gain a much deeper understanding. A convenient sampling method was used to answer the questions related to packaging and consumer buying behavior. The questionnaires did an excellent job of covering all the factors that influence consumer perception of the product.

Here are the questions used to interview the respondents, shown in Table 1:

**Table 1:** Structure of questionnaire

	<b>Questions</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>How do you define the role of packaging in consumer buying behavior?</b>	Discussed the company's products and how the product's packaging impacts consumer buying behavior in the presence of competitors.
<b>2</b>	<b>Packaging may impact differentially on consumer buying behavior of rural areas. How do you differentiate the role of packaging among rural and urban areas of Pakistan?</b>	Dialogue about the packaging types and their strategies encourages the consumer to buy that packaged product.
<b>3</b>	<b>What are the essential elements of packaging that influence most the consumer buying behavior of rural and urban areas?</b>	To investigate the chosen item's packaging types and the element of packaging that stimulates consumer's purchase intentions.
<b>4</b>	<b>What do you think about the role of packaging concerning the brand image?</b>	The current brand image of accessible items and measures to encourage people to become loyal is discussed.

To understand the respondents' situation and get better answers on our topic, Sobh (2006) explained that questions during the interview can generally be adapted to the way the respondent explains them. Thus, the respondents were able to explain their experiences and the marketing strategy they used in rural areas of Pakistan. All the data collected through phone calls during the in-depth interviews were uploaded in QSR NVIVO 10 and organized in a hierarchy showing the theme of the whole data. All data were queried mainly in the language of the respondent and then translated. In addition, respondents were primarily informed that their personal information such as contact number and name would not be shared for privacy reasons, which is very important.



**Table 2:** Classification of Enterprises [source: (European.Commission, 2016)]

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>No. of employees</b>	<b>No. of operating firms</b>
<b>Micro Size</b>	up to 9	18 to 22
<b>Small Size</b>	10 to 49	10 to 15
<b>Medium Size</b>	50 to 249	5 to 7
<b>large Size</b>	More than 250	6

The main objective is to collect data from the respondents we selected, based on toiletries companies operating in rural areas of Pakistan, i.e., detergents, bath soaps, and toothpaste. Contrary to popular belief, a convenient sampling technique was used to reach the people for interviews. For the most part, the conversations and interviews were conducted until the point of "saturation" was reached. Francis (2010) in his study on sampling and comprehension, explained that the saturation point is a kind of situation where the same information is repeated by the different respondents, which contradicts the popular belief. Moreover, no more new information and progress comes from the respondents (Malterud, 2015). To better understand when the saturation point is reached, Guest (2006) examined how many interviews would be exceptionally sufficient in a significant way. The research concluded that twelve interviews on the same topic would be sufficient for qualitative analysis to obtain a reasonably large amount of information. It also states that the first six interviews were explained, and contrary to popular belief, the following six will be mainly on the side of the first six interviews. Therefore, we usually selected twelve interviewees to collect data in the first instance. In a somewhat more extensive study by Zoya (2014), the sample size was mostly ten, contrary to popular belief. In our data collection process, the research sample was 12, while the saturation point was massive at the seventh respondent.

Most respondents worked for large, medium, and small or micro-businesses, which is vital in most situations. The level of companies was explicitly developed by the European Commission (2016) based on the number of employees in the company. To primarily reduce the level of bias in the data, the information collected from the respondents are generally basically from different



## 4 RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

Table 3 explains the different types of firms to understand the level of respondents. Therefore, the respondents focused on the fast-moving Consumer Goods sector to get more relevant results according to the population targeted. The interview respondents were from the toiletries sector working in Pakistan's market for the last five years. In Table 3, it would be easy to understand respondents' level concerning Pakistan's market.

To understand the ground reality and the rural consumer's purchase intentions towards toiletries. The interviewees could give information about the product on which they are working, the product's response from the market, the impact of their product's packaging on consumer buying behavior, and the strategies adopted to enhance the product's sale while concerning the packaging product. The overall motive was to collect the information through their experience in the field. Moreover, the respondents could explain their point of view on the impact of packaging on consumer buying behavior in rural areas using toiletries. The interviewees were allowed to explain every point that impacted consumer buying behavior according to their experience within the market and any strategies that helped them and their product towards brand loyalty.

The reference number tagged the respondents as R1, R2, R3...., R12. Table 3 is arranged by the respondent's number showing the designation and the years of experience in toiletries. The minimum experience level was five years, while the maximum was twenty years. The gender of all respondents was male. All the respondents have different designations that vary from the sales manager to the company's managing director. Furthermore, the number of employees expresses the level of company and the business doing in the market.

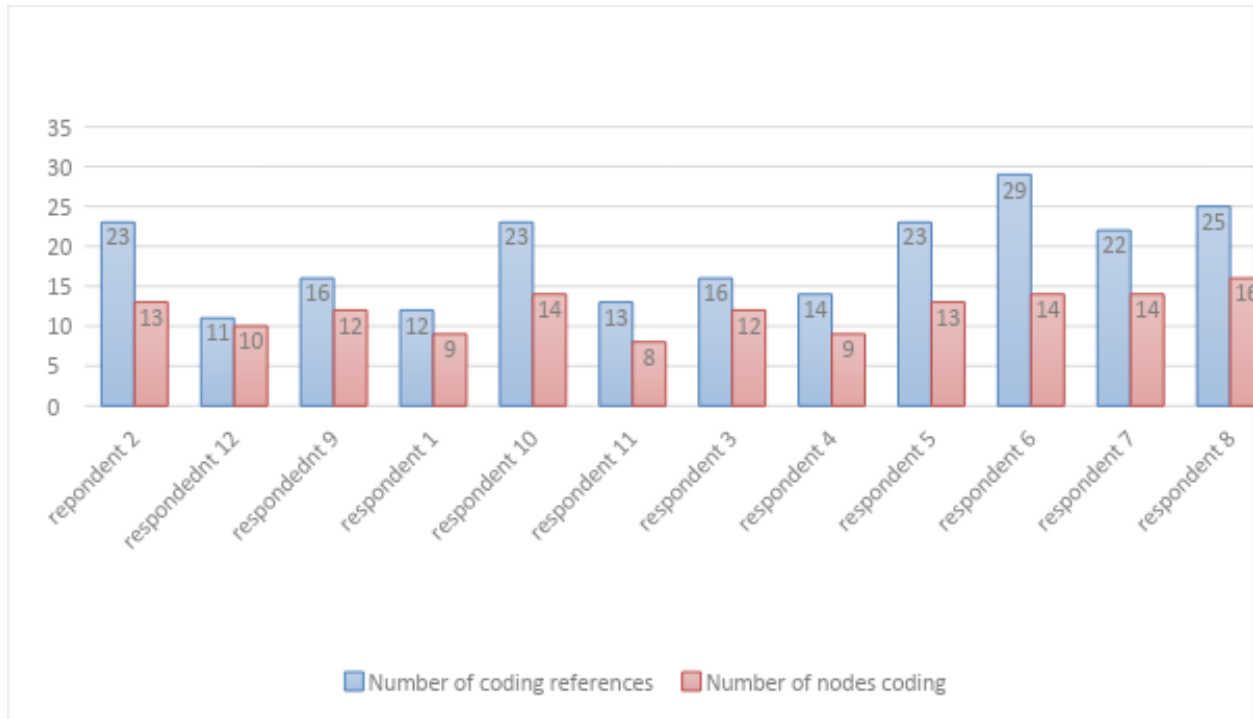
**Table 3:** Detailed profile of Interviewees

<b>Respondent</b>	<b>Designation</b>	<b>Employees</b>	<b>Firm Size</b>	<b>Yrs.</b>
<b>R1</b>	Brand Manager	2000	Large Enterprise	20
<b>R2</b>	Area Sales Manager	1000	Large Enterprise	10
<b>R3</b>	Production Manager	3000	Large Enterprise	7
<b>R4</b>	Managing Director	100	Medium Enterprise	10
<b>R5</b>	Chief Executive officer	4500	Large Enterprise	20
<b>R6</b>	Marketing Manager	50	Medium Enterprise	7
<b>R7</b>	Regional Sales Manager	45	Small and Micro Size	8
<b>R8</b>	Sales Manager	3500	Large Enterprise	5
<b>R9</b>	Regional Sales Manager	50	Medium Enterprise	5
<b>R10</b>	Sales Manager	7000	Large Enterprise	5
<b>R11</b>	Sales Manager	38	Small and Micro Size	7
<b>R12</b>	Sales Manager	44	Small and Micro Size	6

All the questions were divided into themes to understand more deeply, and then the themes were further divided into the sub-levels to demonstrate more conveniently. Seventeen initial codes formed from the data collected from respondents, and the further according to their types fall under the theme, which explains the core point of the questions asked to the respondents. The concordant respondents are the number of responses according to the initial codes and the information provided by the respondents.

The expression of the respondents makes all the themes based on the questions asked. After coding data into the nodes, the nodes were further divided into sub-levels to create themes. The nodes further arrange into themes based on redundant data from the different respondents. The

following figure expressing the number of codes coded with the number of references from the participant shows how much the data is saturated.



**Figure 3:** No. of Coded Reference with No. of Nodes Coded

The data collected from the interviewees were coded based on questions asked and then based on the nodes further divided into sublevels to make themes. All data transcribed and quoted in the report was compiled in a table with the respondent's number, the statement in Urdu and English language attached in the appendix.

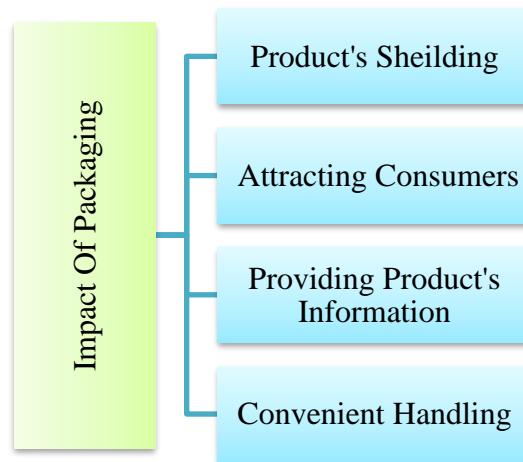
Table 4 shows the ratio of responses from the respondents, and all the variables are compared with the old research results. The minimum responses on the packaging acceptability were 2/12, while the maximum was 11/12 for graphic visualization concerning rural consumers' perception of packaging. During interviewees, one thing focused on was that the respondents are

working on promoting the products and knowing the consumer's perception based on the feedback of their product in the market.

**Table 4:** Coding of Qualitative data from QSR NVivo 10

<b>Initial coding</b>	<b>Concordant respondents</b>	<b>Focused themes</b>
Providing product's information	9/12	<b>Functions of packaging</b>
Product's shielding	10/12	
Attracting consumers	10/12	
Convenient handling	8/12	
Level of education	10/12	<b>Packaging impacts consumer buying behavior</b>
Product's awareness	10/12	
Retailer recommendation	10/12	
Packaging acceptability	2/12	
Packet style and size	9/12	<b>Elements of packaging.</b>
Color combination	10/12	
Graphic visualization	11/12	
Functional benefits	10/12	
Power of end promise	7/12	
		<b>Packaging and brand image</b>
Product's tagline	7/12	
Product's placement	8/12	
Emotion awakens packaging	10/12	
Product's quality	7/12	

#### 4.1 What Is the Role of Packaging on Consumer Buying Behavior?



**Figure 4:** Theme#1 from QSR NVivo 10

Understanding more deeply, the first theme explains the impact of packaging on consumer buying behavior in rural areas. Some divisions have been made to explore more and explain that product shielding is the essential part that every company has focused on regarding consumers. The interviewees explained that packaging should be in a way that would be more than enough to provide shielding to the product, i.e., saving the product from the external environment. For example, one of the respondents explained with one statement that *"Packaging is also important because good packaging protects the product and attracts the customer."* Therefore, it has been explained that the focus of every marketer is to make the packaging in such a way that packaging should provide more life to the product by saving it from the external environment. Many things have been modified over time. However, one respondent still expressed the central thinking behind the shielding: *"The objects enclosed in the package may require protection from, among other things, mechanical shock, vibration, electrostatic discharge, compression, and temperature, etc."*. Therefore, it has been observed from the references of the respondents that product shielding has a significant role in the impact of packaging concerning consumer purchase intentions. Similarly, other factors like "Attracting consumers, providing products information and convenient handling" are also the practical part of the packaging, endorsing consumers to buy such products with these types of specifications. Also, the respondents explained very clearly that *"The more effective the packaging is, the more effective the product will be."*



Lindh et al. (2016) in their study of the "*contribution of packaging in sustainable development*," discovered three key factors: packaging offers product information, packaging provides a cover for the product to protect it from the outside environment, and packaging provides product instructions. Therefore, our respondents have the same responses with the different statements as "*If you are looking for a particular product or particular ingredient in a product, then the product packaging has a clear image of that product or ingredient on it.*" From the interviewees' response, it has also been found that most consumers rely on the packaging convenience instead of the other factors. At the same time, most believe that more information of the product on the packaging and more accessible to handle product is the primary source endorsing consumers to buy such a product. Moreover, these factors rely entirely on the product's packaging because if the packaging is good automatically, consumers will be attracted to packaging and increase the product's sales.

According to one of the large-scale enterprise's responders, "*The packaging has the greatest impact on a customer's decision to buy. It provides product information and serves as an advertisement for the product.*" Therefore, based on the response from the interviewees, it can be understood that the packaging is the first point to attract consumers, which is quoted chiefly as "*the first expression is the last expression.*" From all the above discussion and the interviewees' responses, it has been observed that for the product's success, the packaging is crucial and influential in attracting consumers towards the product. Therefore, the marketer has to continuously focus on the product's packaging about consumer perception towards the product.

## 4.2 How Packaging Is Impacting on Consumer Buying Behavior of Rural Areas?



**Figure 5:** Theme 1 from QSR NVivo 10

The second theme explains how packaging impacts consumers' buying behavior of purchasing toiletries products like washing detergents, toothpaste, and bath soaps. Therefore, to explore more deeply, it has been observed that some levels have to be clarified to understand consumer behavior. The first one would be the demographic culture of the area where the product are launched. To understand the demographic culture, we have chosen the population's education level as our sub-level and found that the respondent explained according to their experience in the market.

We have found that approximately more than half of respondents say that literacy level impacts consumers' purchase intentions. To demonstrate that more clearly, one of the respondents from a large-scale enterprise state that *"Print ads in magazines such as Woman's Own, She, etc. and those read by the average but a literate housewife."* Therefore, it became easy to understand that most consumers in rural Pakistan rely on the female's perception of buying toiletries.

Furthermore, to attract them from the written information on the product, the education level of consumers has a vital role in enhancing the purchasing of the product. At the same time, most consumers in rural areas are influenced by the television commercials provided by the company to educate them and get the best response from the market. To justify the above statement, one of our respondents from a large-scale enterprise quote, *"educate parents through new attractive commercials."* Therefore, advertisement of the product became the best solution to educate the illiterate consumer, and that strategy was adopted to enhance the product's sales.

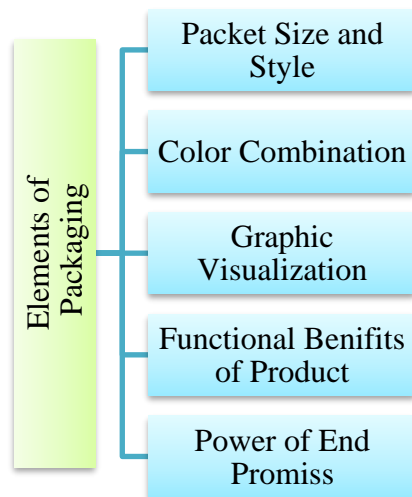
Similarly, marketers have adopted some other factors to improve the sales of a product regarding the packaging and consumer buying behavior. One of them is product awareness. The respondent's level of explaining product awareness was clear and compelling. One of the respondents explains that *"relating to rural consumers they believe that if any product did not have a commercial advertisement on television that product is not good enough to use."* Hence demonstrates that for enhancing consumer's attraction towards the product, there should be awareness for the consumers, which helps the consumers to understand the benefits of the product.

Accordingly, one of the respondents from the medium scale enterprises states that the strategy adopted by their company is *"Sales managers are working on the promotion of the product,"* which became very effective in increasing sales of the product. On the other hand, according to our respondent's numbers, the packaging acceptability has not been yet verified very clearly, but one of the respondents explained in a way that *"if one pack of detergent comes in a plastic bag while the other one comes in a box. The consumer will find the second one more convenient and easier to use because he does not have to buy a new box for the detergent storage"*. Therefore, marketers must work on packaging acceptability to enhance more sales.

The critical variable that impacts consumer buying behavior of the illiterate population more is the retailer's recommendation to the purchasers. Many respondents state differently with the same theme that in rural areas, the product's sales rely on the retailer recommending consumers to buy that new product of the new package. Moreover, retailers became the leading promotional

managers of the company who are endorsing consumers to buy those products. The best explanation by the respondents is in a way that *“Buntings, posters, trade flags (hung at the retailers) inducing consumers, and the values added by the retailer’s recommendation to try the latest smell of the soaps and washing powder, etc.”* Therefore, the impact of packaging on consumer buying behavior is formed by the collaboration of level of education, product awareness, packaging acceptability, and the retailer’s recommendation. Therefore, to be confident on the variables that have been chosen from the old study done, Kalpana (2016) also states in the findings of the influence of few variables on consumer buying behavior that *“the local retailer shop loyalty is highly significant for consumer buying behavior.”*

#### 4.3 Elements of Packaging Affecting Consumer Buying Behavior



**Figure 6:** Theme 2 from QSR NVivo 10

The most pivotal and necessary variable regarding packaging is the elements of packaging affecting consumer buying behavior. There have been many studies explaining the elements of packaging and the impact on consumer purchase intentions. The packaging elements regarding toiletries have been further divided into different elements and then discussed with the target samples. The primary purpose of the theme is to understand how these variables affect consumer

buying behavior. The respondents explain their point of view according to the experience they have from the market. The aggregate respondents explain that every element has its priority, but the difference came when the product changed means that the product's packaging is affected according to the product's market. To understand, one of the respondents demonstrates in a way that *“Packaging affects differently in both areas. As the rural population is low wage earners, they buy small packets of the product according to their needs”*. It explains that packet size affects both ways, like concerning low wage consumers and convenient handlers are affected by the package size and shape. As a result, to better understand, one respondent says the same thing in a different way than the other, *“The element which I think has to be the package should be in the shape that consumer feels itself iconic after owning that product.”* Hence explaining that the same situation that the packet size and shape of the product affects consumers' purchase intentions.

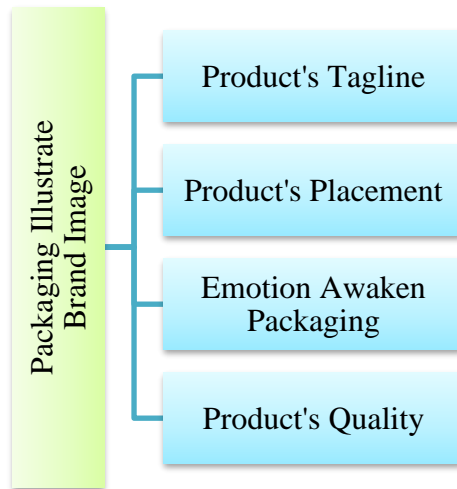
Similarly, focusing on the second sub-level, which is the color combination of the package, the respondents affirm that *“The package should be in a way the consumer becomes emotionally attracted towards the product at first sight.”* Therefore, the marketer has to be very justified about the packaging color combination because it has also been believing that cultural factors also affect consumer buying behavior regarding the color combination of the packaging. One of the respondents explains in a way that *“With the passage of time we are changing the color tone of the packet and found a better response.”* While the other respondent from the large-scale enterprise affirms that *“In my whole period of job since 2000 there have been 7 packing design changes in the washing powder and soap”*. Both the statements explain the same situation and explain that color combination and changing color combination are very effective strategies to retain the consumers towards the same product.

Similarly, the other elements affecting consumer buying behavior are graphic visualization, the product's functional benefits, and the product's end promise. The graphic visualization is the imagery effects provided as mono to attract consumers. The respondent answers differently: *“Besides, in rural areas, most people are attracted to the aesthetic look, pop-up colors, and any offer given on the product. Hence sales depend on the visual effects of packaging attracting*

*consumers". They explained the above statement that the graphical visualization and the color combination work together and give an aesthetic look to the package, helping to persuade consumers to purchase that product. Similarly, one more respondent says, "While focusing on the branded products, consumers mostly go towards packet's mono like the mono of an excel on the Ariel surf explains that it is from the brand. Similarly, in our region, the consumers mostly call the mono to the shopper while purchasing products".*

The functional benefits of the product and the end promise of the product are the elements that fall under the packaging elements. However, they can be recognized after the post-purchase behavior, which can only derive when the customer purchases the product consecutively. The knowledge about elements discussed with the respondents ended up with the statement *"Product's package has to explain all the attributes of the product which may lead the consumer to buy,"* explaining whenever the product's package is explaining the benefits of product consumers can understand more easily and purchase product quickly. While on the other hand, regarding the end promise, respondents affirm in a way that *"The main essential element for any product is the package should have all the information which helps the consumer find their need and buy that product."*

#### 4.4 How Packaging Is Enhancing Brand Image of Product?



**Figure 7:** Theme 4 from QSR NVivo 10

Finally, after exploring all variables explaining the importance of packaging for the consumer purchasing attribute, the last and essential element derived from the interviews was the product's brand image for the packaging. Understanding levels of brand image is affected through the packaging of the product. The old studies explained that brand image is the response of consumers towards the same product.

Consequently, a person purchases something from a brand and, after purchasing the quality of the product and the services provided by the marketer, creates an image of the brand in its mind that either the services are good enough to purchase again from them (Wijaya, 2011). Therefore, to explore more, we interviewed twelve respondents based on some sublevels explaining by the old research that the first level of the brand image should be the product's tagline. To determine the reliability and validity of the variable, the respondent from the different enterprises interprets in different ways to explain. One of the respondents' states, "*On one hand, the brand has a particular signature style and tag line which defines their standards,*" which explains that tagline matters in the sense of packaging.

Similarly, one of the respondents from the medium-size enterprises explains that *“Highlight on the packaging that removes 100% kills then automatically customers attract our product and trust on our product”*. The overall respondent’s responses to the product's tagline were seven out of twelve, which shows that more than half of respondents believe that tagline matters in packaging. Hence it is also proved to form the above reference that the saturation point helps to validate the variable used for the coding.

The second code was also made from the interviewees' responses to become more precise about the brand image concerning the packaging. There are many diversifications, but the more collected data is only preferred to make codes. Therefore, the following code integrated with the brand image was *“product’s placement.”* The respondents explain their concepts according to their experiences within the market. The respondents state in different ways, like *“Add some models because the ruler consumers mostly believe in our role models or actors. So, if we add some pictures of a Model or Actress on our packaging, it plays a most significant role in Rural Consumer buying behavior”*. This statement from the contestant explains that the placement of the product is critical to creating a brand image in the mind of the consumers using the products. Therefore, to understand more, one of the respondents explains that the strategy adopted by their company was to rent out the shelves in the superstores from the owner every month and then use all the brochures and the promotional products on the shelves to attract them more. The main statement was as to quotation like *“The company's motto to advertise the product as hip to eye on superstores that one consumer can saw product easily in selves and is also the point of attraction.”* This statement is strongly affecting consumer buying behavior also stated by the respondent. To identify more, we have found that eight out of twelve respondent’s responses were positive in the case of product placement. Therefore, the variable has a validity of more than fifty percent from the respondents’ ratio.

Emotion awakened packaging is under the types of packaging, but concerning the responses, we have found that it also impacts the product's brand image. Therefore, to deeply understand the respondents' answers were too much correlating with the color combination of the



package. However, some other factors make it different from the other variables, like one of the respondents quoted as *"So when packaging serves a sense of comfort, its sale increases."* Therefore, one can easily understand that the packaging style matters in the case of washing soda. To elaborate more in the study, the answer from one of the respondents is, *"A good packaging is far more than a salesman; it is a flag of recognition and a symbol of values." The focus of marketers in our region with regards to packaging is visual (color, picture, font, shape, and size), informational factor (packaging material and product information), and package ease of use and ease of handling"*. This statement of respondent clearly explains the whole story behind the scenes even helps us understand how much emotionally attracted packaging helps to grab the market.

The last and final code explained an essential factor that helps understand consumer buying behavior and the post-purchase behavior that leads the consumer towards brand loyalty named *"Product's Quality."* Many respondents responded positively about the quality of the product. One of the respondents from large-scale enterprises quotes, *"And on the other hand, packaging defines the quality of products."* The simple and concise statement explains all the factors to gather how strong and good the packaging is that much the product's quality will be. Therefore, to avoid bias in results, many respondents, one of them also states that *"What I think is if your packing is good and your product has good quality within 1-year consumers are going to get your product by calling the name of the brand"*. This statement also endorsed the first statement, and even the experience was from the managing director of the small and micro-size company. A total of seven responses were on the side of product quality, while the other five believe that the product's quality is much more effective in urban areas. At the same time, rural consumers are more attracted to the package of the product. To capture more markets, manufacturers have to focus on both quality of the product and the quality of the package. The statement of respondent *"I can say that brand image depends upon many factors like the physical appearance of the product and the quality of product and the response after using the product."* Hence, expressing that the quality of the product is also vital for the consumers to become brand loyal.

## 5 DISCUSSIONS

Packaging is affecting consumer buying behavior directly and indirectly. The package is the container having the product in it. From the old studies, packaging has been considered the sales manager and the promotional factor for marketers to enhance consumer attraction towards the product. This study leads us to understand how consumers in rural areas respond to the product based on the packaging of toiletries like detergents (washing powders), bath soaps, and shampoo. To explore more in this study, many authors worked on the different situations to find out the effect of packaging on consumer buying behavior, Sulekha and Mor (2013), in the study of consumer buying behavior related to packaging, found that the social culture in the sense of demographics matters while marketers are packaging the product. The study results found that the demographic culture has a loading factor equivalent to 0.968 in AMOS. To understand more in our study, we proposed demographic variables such as education and literacy levels.

Similarly, we have found from the interviewee that 10-12 respondents firmly stated the variable education level to understand the packaging demonstration and rural consumers must be educated. Hence, it fell under the demographic culture. The respondents' statements explained how education level is vital for rural consumers to understand packaging's quality. There are strategies help the marketers, e.g., one of the respondents explained in a way that "*the consumers in Pakistan especially do not know that what they are naming 'Pampers' is called diapers.*" Hence, we can perceive that the consumers are not too literate to understand the product's specifications. However, the marketers can grab them in a way called a color combination of the packaging because the color combination of the packaging also falls under consumer buying behavior with regards to the packaging.

From the old studies and the present responses of our respondents, we have been able to say that everyone believes that packaging is the factor enhancing the consumer perception towards the products. Because of the consumer's attitude towards the product, they receive the product and what type of benefits they are getting from it. Therefore, to understand more, some researchers

have also found that consumers have the human nature to find out the best thing. Kalpana et al. (2016) studied the influence of few variables on consumer buying behavior and found that there are variables attracting consumers towards the brand, the quality and the price, the shopkeeper's recommendation of the product, the promotional values of the product, and the sales promotions. Also, all the variables have loading factors, which are significant in their research. Therefore, the variable retailer's recommendation was also responding the same as in our study. However, the difference was that the research held by Kalpana et al. (2016) was quantitative.

Moreover, according to the theme that we discussed already; the retailer recommendation significantly impacts consumer buying behavior. Because the consumers in rural areas are not too literate to understand the product's value, therefore, it lies on the retailers' recommendation. One respondent, out of everything, also explains that "*they are giving the bonus to the retailers on high sales of their product.*" It also explains that home retailer recommendation is affecting consumer buying behavior of rural areas regarding the packaging of the washing soda, bath soap, and shampoo sales in the rural areas.

Every product has a different effect on consumer buying behavior; similarly, the package of the same product from the different competitors also has a different impact on consumer buying behavior. To understand it more deeply, we make a theme explaining consumer buying behavior concerning the product's packaging. The sublevels of the theme were the level of education, product awareness, retailer's recommendation, and packaging acceptability. The respondents from the different companies express their thoughts based on their experience. We observed that all these factors explain consumer buying behavior, which we have already explained in the themes. Much research has been studied and found that every research has the same factors. Just the explanation was the difference.

Therefore, to demonstrate the themes, we have found a study related to the FMCG, Pitta (2008) explaining variables attracting consumers are lying under the same hierarchy. The

difference is the population targeted and the nature of the study, Pitta (2008) explores that more the demonstration of the product on the package more will be the consumers purchasing. Hence, we have also found the same thing in our theme: consumers rely on some factors, and the marketer should fulfill that to endorse them towards their product regularly. Keeping the study continue, Sulekha and Mor (2013) worked on consumer buying behavior for the FMCG, and found that the marketers are only the main factor in the variety-seeking attribute of the consumer, which has to be a focus by the manufacturers to advance them more.

To elaborate more in the old study, Sisodiya and Sharma (2018) have explained the significance of the variables according to their study that the place and the consumer purchasing behavior has a positive correlation based on retailer's recommendations. The same study adopted the variable because the researcher studied the marketing mix model concerning consumer behavior. The population targeted was the rural consumers; therefore, the same situation helps us adopt the variable according to our target population. The results from the old study and our respondents explain the same results; therefore, we can say that the retailer recommendation has a significant role in endorsing consumers towards packaging. Moreover, the variable has a direct and positive response to the market.

Following the same way, the theme was explaining the situation of consumer buying behavior. The last variable was the packaging acceptability, on which more of the researchers have not worked on the same point. Nevertheless, I have some different points of explanation, e.g., *“sales manager working in the field to promote the new package design of the products helps the consumer to know about the new flavor or smell of the washing powder or bath soap.”* Therefore, same as from the old studies, we have found that the researchers say that promoting the product is only the way to introduce a new product in consumers' minds. Vibhuti and Pandey (2014) found that the promotion of the product is giving verbal information to the consumer. The researcher took the variable promotion with loading factor 0.0809 -0.0802 to prove the significance of the variable.

Similarly, the respondents in interviews also state that the product's promotion directly relates to the product's sales. Hence, we can also assume that the promotion is the main factor that endorses consumer purchase intentions and helps the marketer grab the consumer's population for increasing sales. Therefore, it is now easy to say that the promotion and the packaging acceptability are working parallel to enhance the product's market needs.

Continuing the further exploration in the study, one of the themes was the elements of the packaging affecting consumer buying behavior. We have adopted some variables based on old research and the basis of the respondents and found that the color combination, packet size and shape, graphic visualization, functional benefits of the product on the package, and the power of end promise. These factors may be different in the other scenario of the research. To elaborate more on these elements, we have already explained them in the theme description. According to the study, the main components justify that the elements used are valid and reliable. Therefore, we have researched and found some older studies explaining the elements more diversely. To explore the elements one by one, we have found that in a study by Macklin's (1996), the conclusion stated that the color combination of the package directly impacts consumer purchase intention. Therefore, to explore more, Zeghache (2014) also studied the impact of packaging color combinations on children's memorization and found that younger children are more attracted to the package's color combination instead of the older one. Because the younger children are attracted towards the color more instead of the brand name, same as with our study, we have found that the consumers in rural areas are illiterate and cannot read the nutritional factor or the values of the product. Therefore, they are used to remembering the color of the packet they used the product last time. One respondent quoted that *"On the other hand, rural people are mostly uneducated, so that is why we have mostly focused on the color of the product. They differentiate products, so people easily buy a product, especially an icon that easily identifies ingredients of the product."* Therefore, it is easy to understand and observe how the color combination affects consumer purchase intentions in rural areas. Hence it can be observed that consumer buying behavior and the rural area environment (demographic culture) directly affect the purchase of the product. In our results, 10/12 of respondents also state firmly with the 24 references that color combination is the most substantial element to attract consumers towards the product.

Graphic visualization also encourages consumers to buy the product because the imagery effect is one of the elements expressing the consumer's need. To elaborate more, Kobayashi and Benassi (2015) studied the impact of packaging on consumer purchase intentions. They found that there should be some criteria to explore the elements and the criteria depend on the population and the cultural effects. The researcher found that the packaging style and the imagery effects are endorsing consumers towards purchasing the product. Similarly, if we compare the study with our results, we also found a statement from the consumer that *“Like the bath soaps, washing powders and toothpaste brands are available in bottles and poly-bags. Thus, I believe that it is important for companies to consider cultural differences during packaging designing”*. Hence, the product-to-product packaging varies, but the effect is still the same because, in washing soda, consumers are also likely to purchase the packet in poly bags or the bottles that they can reuse again. Therefore, by comparing our results from the old studies, the respondents 9/12 were optimistic towards packaging shape, size, and convenience.

Similarly, Kobayashi et al. (2015) gives an example of the coffee packet and expresses that red is now associated with coffee purchasing, which explains that the graphic visualization explains the product's specification. Therefore, to compare our results with the old studies, 11/12 of the interviewees stated in a different way that the graphic visualization has a solid and positive relationship with the product's packaging. At the same time, Kobayashi et al. (2015) also express the same thing that graphic visualization helps attain the consumer's attention. To justify more in the study, we found that Dabbou (2011) explored the impact of packaging material and storage time on olive oil quantity and found that the consumer's precepts that the oil bottles help avoid oil oxidation. Therefore, to relate the study with our study, we have found that the consumers believe that the washing powder in the bottles or the jar helps avoid the crumbs production in the washing soda. Hence, we can demonstrate that the variable fits in the study according to the nature of the research.

Furthermore, exploring the packaging elements, we have observed that the old research has the same elements with the different coding according to the respondent's culture; therefore, to explore more in the study the functional benefits and end promise of the product were our elements. Functional benefits explain the product's labeling explaining the benefits of the product to the consumer. In contrast, the end promise of the product depends on the post-purchase behavior of the consumer. Hence, we can say that both elements explain the packaging's importance concerning the product. Kundu (2007) worked on the buying behavior of rural and urban areas consumers. Study explores that the urban consumers in India are used to finding out the labels with the product's benefits.

Similarly, in the results of our respondents, we have found that the functional benefits of washing soda should be on the packet to help the consumer fulfill their need to understand it more efficiently. One of our respondents explains that *"In case of the fabric washing powder, consumers in urban areas are too concerned with the product specification like for white color clothes and colored cloths, information is important for them."* Finally, it is now easy to understand how functional benefits of the product on the package have to be labeled to attract more consumers. The end promise of the product belongs to the post-purchase behavior of the consumer, which is only possible when the end promises of the product are satisfied by the consumer. Therefore, to elaborate more in the study, we have found that Newman et al. 2014 found that the amount of information provided on the package should be so that consumers can understand whether to buy the product or not. To explore more, we have found that one of the respondents quoted as *"presence of lemon and smell of jasmine enhances the cloth's shine and shelf life written on the package and expressed by the images on the packet encourage consumers to buy that packet of washing powder."* Therefore, it helps us to understand that the packaging is how much the power end of promise is essential. To explore the study, Riley, Silva, and Behr (2015) worked on the impact of packaging design on health and found that labeling is the only way to attract more consumers because the labeling is the point that explains the exact situation of the product. To understand whether the variable we chose is valid or not, we compared and found that 7/12 respondents state that the power end promise of products helps the consumer buy the product more. Therefore, we can imagine that this situation is higher than the saturation point.

It is vital to understand the nature of the product and the sample size with the targeted area to find out the results. As the products chosen belonged to the toiletries used by everyone in such a vast culture. Therefore, the rural area consumers are the best population to target because most consumers rely on the product's value instead of the package's finishing. So, capturing rural consumers is not that much easier than in urban areas. Packaging is not the only thing to capture consumers to make them purchase the product continuously is the biggest target for marketers. Therefore, there have to be some strategies that would help support the product's brand image in the mind of consumers and make them brand loyal to their product. This research helps us understand which factors are essential to follow while working in rural areas of Pakistan. The study we have found that, Zekiri (2015) explored consumer buying behavior related to packaging and how packaging affects purchase intentions of consumer buying behavior ended up with the conclusion that packaging is the point of communication for the consumers because it helps to understand the product's specification. Also, the consumers mostly believe that specific brands have specific colors, which means that consumers associate the package's colors with the brands helps them to judge more quickly and suddenly after watching any product. Therefore, it is easy to say that the color combination and the eye-catching packaging are the package's specifications endorsing consumers with the brand.

Furthermore, to explore more, the respondent of our sample also states that the *“Emotion Awaken Packaging”* is the main point that has to be focused and already focused, which helps them attain more consumers' attention. To amplify more in the study, one of the references of the respondent expresses its feelings in a way that *“Effective packaging design understands consumers and allows them to satisfy themselves that they are making a rational decision, while still appealing to emotion, culture, and preferences.”* Therefore, this statement from the respondent also gives a direction to the study that the packaging should be in a way that attracts consumers continuously will lead to making a brand image of the product in the consumer's mind. Hence, 10/12 respondents express their statements towards emotion awaken packaging with the 24 references to support the study. This repetitive way of explaining the same subject expresses how much packaging is vital to attract consumers?



Furthermore, studies expressed by Azad and Masoumi (2012), promoting products with the competitors, concluded that some factors have to focus on when you are selling a product in a market full of competitors. Azad et al. (2012) found the factors of the product's packaging that packaging should be in a way that gives an excellent cover to the product, easy to carry, the product's specifications, the shape and size in a way that suits the product.

Many researchers have already worked under different conditions to ensure the packaging with the product's brand image. At the same time, this research will lead us to understand the exact situation of the rural consumer's attributes towards toiletries packaging. Because it has been believed that an emotionally attracting package is attracting consumers more, similarly Product's tagline and product's placement also endorse brand image of the product. Nordin and Selke (2010), in the study of social aspects of packaging, concluded that the packaging industry is growing with the increase of consumer's wants towards product packaging. Also, a package is only supported when it helps to avoid products from the external environment. Hence, this observation relates to the reference of one of our interviewees that *"Saving product from the external environment also helps to increase the shelf life of the product automatically endorsing consumers to buy that product."* Therefore, we can also conclude that sustainable packaging is essential for getting more information for consumer buying behavior.

*"Product Placement"* explains the product's image in the community, advertisement of the product, product availability, and the retailer's recommendation. Factors such as shelf placement for product sales can assist in deciding whether a factor promotes a brand's image. More time and more population with quantitative analysis is compulsory to support the study with such factors. Therefore, according to the nature of the study, we have discussed only the brand's managerial levels and found that they are earnest about the product's availability. Even one of the respondents expresses their company's strategy that *"Hip to Eye "* is the best way to attract consumers most in the supermarket. The strategy was to explain that the shelves in the store have to fully garnish with the promotion brochures and the stickers attracting consumers. Also, the hip to the eye is the placement from where a single person can easily watch the product and can also pick that product quickly. To understand more conveniently, 8/12 interviewees stated that the product placements expanded the brand image. However, statements fell more under the other factors like availability

of the product and the product's advertisement. Madzharov and Block (2010) found that purchasing the product on the spot helps more to attract consumers because consumers are blind to which product to buy. Therefore, if the packaging and the promotional brochures present on the selves explain all the consumer needs will help to make an image of the brand in the consumer's mind and lead the consumer towards repetitive purchasing.

Therefore, it is observed that the more repetitive the statement, the more will be the saturation point. One can quickly state that the factor supports the study—explaining that more redundant data from the respondents will be the saturation point. That variable will be the best initial code (Guest, 2006). Continuing the study, *“Product’s Tagline”* is also one of the factors endorsing consumer buying behavior and creating a brand image in the mind of the purchasers. Therefore, to compare it with the old research, we have found that Rundh (2009) concluded that the package design explains the product's specification and expresses that if the design has a tagline expressing the exact feeling of the needs, consumer wants will lead the consumer to purchase. All of this is only possible if the design and tagline work together. To learn more about this, we interviewed respondents from various FMCG companies and discovered that 7/12 respondents believe that the tagline is an essential factor that must be on the product package to endorse the consumer and create an image in the mind of the consumer. To clarify more in the study, one of the consensuses says, *“Highlight on the packaging that this removes 100% kills then automatically customer attract our product and trust on our product”*. To compare our study with the old studies, Räisänen and Luomala (2010) concluded the packaging design. Kreuzbauer and Malter (2005) express that the packaging aesthetic look helps create the product's brand image in the consumer's mind. While Bloch, Brunel, and Arnold (2003) worked on both actor's gat, both elements have a positive relationship with the product's brand image.

In comparison to this study, the variables have already been explored and have a positive relation. Therefore, they may be used in the future but for the product's specification and the population. Similarly, to elaborate more in the study, Grubb and Grathwohl (1967) observed that the packaging has a role in creating a brand image, and the product consciousness becomes an

integral part of the consumer's purchase decision. Therefore, the combination of packaging and the consumer's personality products helps make consumers loyal and leads them to purchase the product again.

## 6 CONCLUSION AND FUTURE RECOMMENDATION

The impact of packaging on consumer buying behavior of fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) in rural areas of Pakistan is the study that provides information about the buying perception of rural consumers towards toiletries like detergents, bath soaps, and toothpaste. Many researchers have already studied the current rural market scenario and consumer buying behavior under different conditions and products. To get the most relevant information, we have chosen toiletries as they are purchased products in households. Furthermore, it helps us get critical information about how rural consumers buy toiletries and the problems faced by the marketers in capturing such a diverse market. It also helps us understand the old studies and the current market situation.

This exploratory study helps us understand consumer buying behavior and the elements that support the purchase intentions of rural consumers in terms of packaging and the strategies adopted by the marketers that help them create a brand image in the minds of the rural community. This study was conducted in rural areas of Pakistan in the Gujranwala and Sargodha districts. The elements were identified based on in-depth interviews of selected samples. Due to technological advancement, consumer perception towards packaging increases, leading the marketers to make the packaging increasingly attractive to attract consumers' attention. The packaging elements observed by the product managers working in the rural areas are the size and shape of the packaging, color combination of packaging, graphic representation of packaging, slogan of the product on the packaging. Moreover, the retailer's recommendation overwhelms the consumers' buying behavior to buy this type of packaged product and promotes a brand image of the product in the minds of the rural consumers.

This study also explains all the factors of packaging in terms of consumer buying behavior limited to the two districts of Pakistan with the specific products, and may lead in future to explore more about the various products. The new situation available, such as the strategies to develop a strong relationship with the retailer to encourage the rural consumers to buy a product and become the brand's advertising manager or design a specific packaging of the product to reach the rural

consumers considering the level of education. Therefore, this study could be further extended depending upon the scenario of the population and the product.

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## 8 Appendix

Table 5: Quotations from Respondents used in Analysis as References

Resp	Designation	Quotation from the respondents	- سے اقتباس جواب دہندگان
R1	Brand Manager	"The local retailer shop loyalty is highly significant for consumer buying behavior."	مقامی ریٹیلر شاپ کی وفاداری صارفین کی خریداری کے رویے کے لیے انتہائی اہم ہے
R2	Area Sales Manager	"Buntings, posters, trade flags (hung at the retailers) inducing consumers to try the latest smell of the soaps and washing powder, etc"	بننگرز ، پوسٹرز ، تجارتی جھنڈے (خوردہ فروشوں پر لٹکے ہوئے) صارفین کو صابن اور واشنگ پاؤڈر وغیرہ کی تازہ خوشبو آزمانے پر اکساتے ہیں
R3	Production Manager	"A positive image about the brand & communicating that the products are safe, effective and makes the customer feel good about them."	برانڈ کے بارے میں ایک مثبت تصویر اور یہ بتانا کہ مصنوعات محفوظ، موثر ہیں اور گاہک کو ان کے بارے میں "اچھا محسوس کرتا ہے"
R4	Managing Director	"The objects enclosed in the package may require protection from, among other things, mechanical shock, vibration, electrostatic discharge, compression, and temperature, etc."	پیکج میں بند اشیاء دیگر چیزوں کے علاوہ، مکینیکل شک ، کمپن ، الیکٹرو سٹاتک ڈسچارج ، کمپریشن اور ٹمپریچر وغیرہ سے تحفظ میں مدد کر سکتی ہیں
R5	Chief Executive officer	"In my whole period of job since 2000 there became the 7 packing design changes in the washing powder and soap packaging."	کے بعد سے میری ملازمت کی پوری مدت میں ، واشنگ 2000 پاؤڈر اور صابن کی پیکجنگ میں 7 پیکجنگ ڈیزائن تبدیلیاں ہوئیں
R6	Marketing Manager	"Brands like Ariel and surf excel because of packaging design and the motto "dirt is good."	ڈیزائن کی جیسا برانڈ صرف پیکجنگ سرف ایکسل ایریل اور - وجہ سے ہے اور نعرہ "گندگی اچھی ہے"
R7	Regional Sales Manager	"Relating to rural consumers, they believe that if any product did not have a commercial advertisement on television that product is not good enough to use."  "The consumers in rural areas Pakistan are not too much literate to understand the product specification"	دیہی صارفین سے متعلق ان کا ماننا ہے کہ اگر کسی بھی پروڈکٹ کا ٹیلی ویژن پر تجارتی اشتہار نہ ہوتا تو وہ پروڈکٹ استعمال کرنے کے لیے کافی اچھی نہیں ہوتی  پاکستان کے دیہی علاقوں میں صارفین مصنوعات کی تفصیلات کو سمجھنے کے لیے زیادہ پڑھ لکھے نہیں ہیں
R8	Sales Manager	"I can say that brand image depends upon a lot of factors like physical appearance of the product and the quality of product and the response after using the product."	میں کہہ سکتا ہوں کہ برانڈ امیج بہت سارے عوامل پر منحصر ہوتا ہے جیسے پروڈکٹ کی جسمانی شکل اور پروڈکٹ کا معیار اور پروڈکٹ استعمال کرنے کے بعد ردعمل
R9	Regional Sales Manager	"If you are looking for a particular product or particular ingredient in a product then the product packaging has a clear image of that product or ingredient on it."  "Besides, in rural areas, most people are attracted to the aesthetic look, pop-up colors, and any offer given on the product. Hence sales depend on the visual effects of packaging attracting consumers"	اگر آپ کسی پروڈکٹ میں کوئی خاص پروڈکٹ یا خاص جزو ڈھونڈ رہے ہیں تو پروڈکٹ پیکجنگ میں اس پروڈکٹ یا جزو کی واضح تصویر موجود ہے  اس کے علاوہ ، دیہی علاقوں میں ، زیادہ تر لوگ جمالیاتی نظر رنگ ، اور مصنوعات پر دی گئی کسی بھی پیشکش ، پاپ اپ کی طرف راغب ہوتے ہیں۔ لہذا فروخت کا انحصار پیکجنگ کے بصری اثرات پر ہے جو صارفین کو راغب کرتا ہے
R10	Sales Manager	"The element which I think has to be the package should be in the shape that consumer feels itself iconic after owning that product."	جو عنصر میرے خیال میں ہونا چاہیے وہ یہ ہے کہ پیکج اس شکل میں ہونا چاہیے کہ صارف اس پروڈکٹ کے مالک ہونے کے بعد خود کو نمایاں محسوس کرے
R11	Sales Manager	"Packaging is also important because good packaging protects the product and attracts the customer."	پیکجنگ بھی اہم ہے کیونکہ اچھی پیکجنگ مصنوعات کی - کو اپنی طرف کھینچتی ہے گاہک حفاظت کرتی ہے اور
R12	Sales Manager	"Packaging affects differently in both areas. As the rural population is low wage earners, they buy small packets of the product according to their needs."	پیکجنگ دونوں علاقوں میں مختلف طریقے سے متاثر ہوتی اپنی وہ ہے۔ چونکہ دیہی آبادی کم اجرت کمانے والی ہے ، لہذا ضروریات کے مطابق مصنوعات کے چھوٹے پیکٹ خریدتے ہیں