

The Effect of Product Packaging on Consumer Purchase Decision: The Case of Packaged Milk Products, Addis Ababa

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Abstract

When used as a marketing strategy, packaging may be an efficient way to meet marketing goals while also satisfying consumer desire, thanks to its visual components. In Addis Ababa, this study aims to investigate how product packaging affects consumer purchasing decisions for packaged milk products. Explanatory research design was employed, together with a quantitative method, in consideration of the study objectives and questions. Using straightforward convenience sampling, 384 consumers from five supermarkets in Addis Ababa were chosen as the sample. Based on judgmental sampling, which took into account the population's various socio-economic features as well as location, the supermarkets were chosen. The questionnaires we collected had an overall response rate of 87.76%. Both descriptive and inferential statistics were applied to the data analysis. Only four of the predictor variables – packaging material, packaging design, packaging size, and printed information – had a positive and substantial impact on consumers' purchasing decisions; however, packaging colour and graphic did not. This was revealed by the empirical results of the multiple regressions. The result and managerial ramifications are then communicated to the various practitioners and planners, along with suggestions for further research.

Keywords: Packaging, Packaging Elements, Consumer Buying Behaviour

most crucial marketing mix component employed in product strategy and is regarded as the fifth 'P' of the marketing mix elements (Kotler & Keller, 2008). Packaging is a key component of the marketing mix since it gives a product shape and serves a secondary purpose of product promotion and advertising. Traditionally, it protects and enhances a product. Additionally, it makes products simple to identify and advertises the brand at the time of purchase and even later (Perreault & McCarthy, 2005). When used as a marketing tool, packaging has the potential to be an efficient way to meet marketing goals while also satisfying consumer desires through its aesthetic components, which include the package's graphics, material, colour, size, shape, text, and its useful elements in a cutthroat marketing environment (Rundh, 2013). When there is minute difference among different brands, innovative packaging may be used as a tool for competitive advantage (Keller, 2009). Packaging is now regarded as a crucial component of modern life. Regardless of whether a country is more industrialised and modernised or less developed, so too is the importance and scale of product packaging (Rezaei, 2014). Executive officers and owners of industry production and commercial firms use packaging in their current businesses as a key weapon of marketing and competition in the worldwide community, and the necessity to research it is stressed (Sahaf Zadeh, Mansoori, Khodadad Hosseini & Kord Naij, 2016). Due to market saturation, greater competition, and changes in consumer tastes, packaging also plays a significant role in marketing communications and has a strategic value for the business, particularly at the point of sale. Therefore, packaging elements have a significant part in decision making and are more vital to marketers in the creation of lucrative business companies (Saghacian, 2013).

Introduction

Product packaging has grown to be a crucial component of the sales process (Rettie & Brewer, 2000). It is the

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Statement of the Problem

The design of the packaging draws customers' attention to a certain brand, and shapes their opinions about that particular product (Rundh, 2005). The components of a product's packaging provide it a special value, serve as a tool for distinction, and hence influence consumer purchasing behaviour (Underwood, Klein & Burke, 2001). Many studies have been conducted in the area of packaging across the globe, for instance, Mazhar, Daud, Arz Bhutto and Mubeen (2015), Rita, Aiste and Laura (2009), Silayoi & Speece (2004), and Butkeviciene, Stravinskienė and Rūtelionienė (2008). However, there are no common conclusions in relation to the effect of product packaging on consumer purchase decisions (Silayoi & Speece, 2004; Vila & Ampuero, 2007; Kuvykaite, Dovaliene & Navickiene, 2009). This suggests that results are varying due to different contexts, product categories, perceptual differences, and so on. In connection with this, Kotler and Armstrong (2001) contend that consumer behaviour is not constant and that a variety of elements, such as psychological, cultural, personal, and social aspects, influence the consumer's purchasing decisions. From all these reviews we concluded that the effect of packaging on consumer purchase decision is still a subject of debate among researchers. Thus, by addressing these gaps in the literature, this study aimed to inform practitioners about product category packaging.

Purpose of the Study

The study's main goal was to ascertain how product packaging affected consumer purchasing decisions for packaged milk products in Addis Ababa. More specifically, to analyse the effect of packaging colour (PC), packaging material (PM), packaging graphics (PG), packaging design (PD), packaging size (PS), and product package information (PPI) on consumers' purchase decision in Addis Ababa.

Significance of the Study

The findings of the study might be significant in many ways. For the academia, it may contribute to the existing body of knowledge as a reference material for further development in the specific product category within the same context. The finding of the study will also help new

and existing milk manufacturers and business agents in the development of product packaging, and invariably will also assist their businesses to have a competitive advantage.

Scope of the Study

The study's target population included those who shop for packaged milk products at supermarkets in Addis Ababa. The survey comprises shoppers over the age of 18 who frequently and infrequently purchase packaged milk from supermarkets. However, the survey did not include people who purchase packaged milk products to resell. Additionally, the variables under the study were limited to PC, PM, PG, PD, PS, and PI on the packaging of milk products, despite the fact that there are numerous additional variables that could have been included under the category of packaging elements.

Literature Review

Marketing Functions of Packaging Elements

Packaging is crucial in today's cutthroat marketplace and has evolved into a crucial component of the final product. Packaging has many functions in different department units. The purpose of the package is to draw consumers' attention to how a product is used, protected, and confined (Silayoi & Speece, 2004). According to Silayoi and Speece (2007), packaging has multi-dimensional roles. It preserves and safeguards a product's quality, and for a business, it serves as a channel for communicating with clients. According to Kotler and Armstrong (2008), product packaging includes all design and manufacturing processes for a container or wrapper for a product. This container or wrapper serves three main purposes: first, it protects the product's contents; second, it provides information about the product; and third, it distinguishes the product from competing brands by drawing attention from consumers. Due to the fierce rivalry in today's business contexts, organisations are now forced to use good and appealing packaging to demonstrate their distinct competitiveness in nearly every area of their products and sales (Lifu, 2003). Vani, Babu and Panchanatham (2010) contend that whereas early packaging was only thought of as a container for a product, in today's commercial context, packaging serves a variety of functions.

According to Rundh (2013), the primary purpose of packaging is to preserve the integrity of the product. The second most important function of packaging is basically a marketing function. This is so that businesses may design appealing ways to advertise the features of their products to consumers directly through packaging. Packaging is regarded as a crucial marketing technique for informing customers about the products (Hellstrom & Nilsson, 2011). From a marketing standpoint, the product's packaging is an extrinsic cue that consumers notice before they even utilise the actual product (Orth & Marchi, 2007). As a result, it is viewed as a strategy for selling the product to the final customer, where the packaging helps with brand differentiation, product evaluation, and consumer impact (Thalhammer, 2007). Packaging ought to draw the customer's attention and behave as a quiet marketer. It is becoming an increasing aspect of marketing strategy (Lamb et al., 2004). Finally, it has a convenience function by defining how customers use the package and it also helps in identification and provision of information to customers about a product (Hogan, 2007; Abdalkrim & Al-Hrezal, 2013; Lee & Lye, 2002).

Packing Elements and Consumer Purchase Decision

Understanding consumer behaviour involves seeing how individuals use various products in the market, such as commodities, services, ideas, and the physical environment of businesses, and whether they do so in the future or not (Berkman & Gilson, 1981). Hawkins (1992) claimed that consumers are people who actively seek out and analyse information in the present, whether consciously or unconsciously, and who do so for their own enjoyment and lifestyle betterment. Thus, crucial information that customers may need to know must be included on decent packaging. The information may be about how to use, recycle, transport, and dispose of a product or package (Shah, Ahmed, & Ahmad, 2013).

Packaging Colour and Consumer Purchase Decision

Due to consumer expectations for specific types of colours for a given product, colour is a crucial component of product packaging (Keller, 2009). Depending on the culture and perception of the consumer, certain colours

have varied meanings. The perceptions of colour differ across culture and religion; and most of the religions are believed to have sacred colours (Singh, 2006; Martindale & Moore, 1998; Grossman & Wisenblit, 1999). Furthermore, Shah et al. (2013) claim that different colours are seen differently by consumers and that competitors employ different colours for their products, such as blue for trust, red for energy, and green for balance. According to Hollywood (2013), when generic colours like green or blue are used on milk packaging, consumers are more likely to distinguish between whole, skimmed, and semi-skimmed milk. Products with the same colours are often acceptable if they are popular in a given product category (Hannele & Kauppinen-Raisanen, 2010). Randi Priluck Grossman (1999) also suggests that marketers should use colour associations during packaging design for products rather than using common choice of consumers about colours. However, according to Sioutis (2011), colour does not seem to have much of an impact on consumers' decisions to buy any kind of convenience item. Furthermore, Kuvykaite, Dovaliene and Navickiene (2009) discovered that in milk and washing powder, colour, form, and graphic were viewed as inconsequential components of the product package. These allow us to conclude that:

H1: Packaging colour significantly influences consumer purchasing decision in a favourable way.

Packaging Material and Consumer Purchase Decision

According to Kuvykaite, Dovaliene and Navickiene (2009), the product's substance had the greatest aesthetic impact on consumers' decisions to buy milk and washing powder. Hollywood (2013) conducted a study on milk packaging to see how the three packaging types – plastic, glass, and cardboard – affect consumer purchasing behaviour. According to the study's findings, using plastic containers was preferable to using the other two types of containers. Depending on the functions of the product and the needs of the user, some packaging materials must be made in a way that allows them to withstand temperatures below zero or high temperatures in a microwave (Smith & Taylor, 2004). From these the researchers suggest the following hypothesis:

H2: Packaging material significantly influences consumer purchase decision in a favourable way.

Packaging Graphics (PG) and Consumer Purchase Decision

Graphics can help consumers in selecting a product by eliminating confusions and also provide an opportunity in considering purchase of a given product when they are not loyal to a specific brand (Silayoi, 2004). Otterbing, Shams, Wastlund and Gustafsson (2013) argued that not only is attractiveness of graphics important, but the placement of textual and pictorial element is important as well. Layout, typography, colour schemes, and product photography used by PG help to distinguish and maintain the distinctiveness of the product (Grossman & Wisenblit, 1999; Smith & Taylor, 2004). Graphics could increase a brand's value and improve its aesthetic appeal. Additionally, in many circumstances, illustrations or designs on packaging could foster a happy mood and fulfil a customer's long-hidden need (Smith & Taylor, 2004). The fact that they draw a consumer's attention to the packaging is a crucial function of the illustrations (Silayoi & Speece, 2004). Consumers are influenced by visual cues when choosing a particular product type, and in this case visuals were thought to have a significant influence (Silayoi & Speece, 2004). The customers' curiosity is piqued and interest in a particular product is created by the illustrations on milk packages (Hollywood et al., 2013). Lee (2010) shows, however, that there is no discernible correlation between convenience product packaging graphics and purchasing decisions. Additionally, Sioutis (2011) notes that some visual information can be deceptive, therefore buyers rarely pay attention to visuals on product packaging.

H3: Packaging graphics significantly influence consumer purchasing decision in a favourable way.

Packaging Design and Consumer Purchase Decision

The beautiful packaging design increases the appetite of the consumers and influences the consumers to buy the product and to eat the food (Ahmadi, Bahrami & Ahani, 2013). According to Silayoi and Speece (2004), a majority of consumers believe that a product's packaging design conveys its ease of use and portability. Packaging design first appears to be just cosmetic, but after a buyer purchases it, it may either satisfy or dissatisfy their desires (Metcalf et al., 2012). Finally, it was stated by Deliya and Parmar (2012) and Adam and Ali (2014) that the size

and font type of the packaging design affects consumers' purchasing decisions. This leads us to the following hypothesis:

H4: Packaging design significantly influences consumer purchasing decision in a favourable way.

Packaging Size and Consumer Purchase Decision

When creating a product's packaging, considerations including shape and size are taken into account in an effort to grab consumers' attention. Silayoi & Speece (2004) claim that although not necessarily in ways that are obvious, package form, size, and elongation have an impact on consumers' opinions and decisions regarding a product. When packages are changed or made available in larger sizes than small sizes, product consumption rises (Kotler & Keller, 2008). The size of a package is influenced by the features of the product and the target market (Smith & Taylor, 2004). This study supports previous research showing that small package size enhances customer readiness to purchase a product, and that people prefer small package sizes over large package sizes for commodities with shorter expiration dates (Ahmadi et al., 2013). According to Smith (2004) and Kotler (2008), greater packaging sizes give consumers the impression that the product is of higher quality and have an impact on their purchasing decisions. The size of the box is based on the target market and the product's qualities. When paired with competing brands, larger and taller products garner more attention, and when consumers have a choice between several brands, they are likely to prefer the packages that are taller than the competition (Hoyer & MacInnis, 2012; Agariya, 2012). According to Silayoi (2004) and Rundh (2013), customers regard small package sizes as appropriate for tiny families and large packages as a waste of material for such households. According to Alervall and Saied (2013), every visual aspect of packaging is significant, depending on the situation.

H5: Packaging size significantly influences consumer purchasing decision in a favourable way.

Printed Information and Consumer Purchase Decision

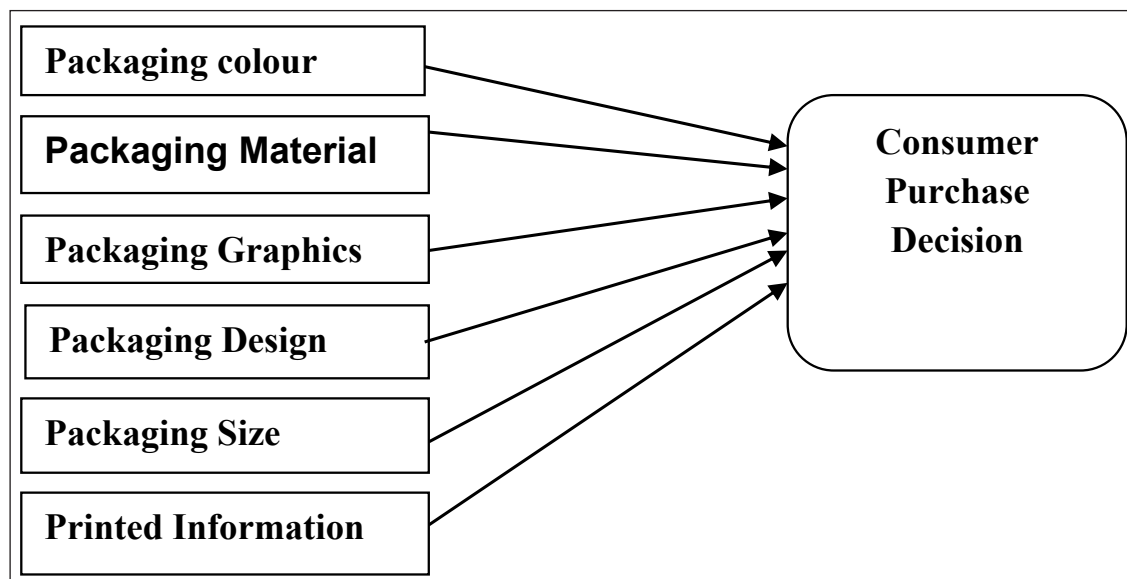
The printed information (PI) on packaging comprises a lot of information, such as the quality of the product, price,

and different detailed descriptions which can be used to identify the brand of the product (Shah et al., 2013). Additionally, PI provides information about a product's features, such as its brand name, its name, its ingredients, its place of origin, its expiration date, its usage guidelines, its nutrition data, its volume, and its usage instructions (Van der Merwe, Bosman et al., 2014; Kaynak & Jansson, 2012, Silayoi & Speece, 2007). Spink, Singh and Singh (2011) contend that PI does influence customer purchase behaviour and that incorrectly interpreting information on a package occasionally has an impact on actual sales. According to Silayoi & Speece (2007), as the consumption of healthy diets rises, products should provide information on their packaging to make it simple for customers, which raises the importance of labelling. With regard to packaged milk products, the consumers mostly give due attention to the nutrients in the product. This suggests that nutritional information provided on packaging needs to be carefully considered because it affects consumers' food choices

based on their diet and lifestyle (Chandon & Wansink, 2012; Prathiraja & Ariyawardana, 2003). Despite the fact that packaging is a key tool for communication, it is crucial to remember that too much information on a box might be deceptive or erroneous, which could cause customers to get disinterested (Silayoi & Speece, 2007). Additionally, it is important to keep in mind that not all customers possess the literacy skills necessary to read and comprehend the information on product packaging. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to determine whether or not product information consistently persuades Ethiopian consumers to purchase a product. From these, it may be inferred that:

H6: Packaging information significantly influences consumer purchasing decision in a favourable way.

Based on the theoretical and empirical review and discussions, the researchers developed the following conceptual framework.



Source: Adopted from Hassen, Leng and Peng (2012).

Fig. 1

Research Methodology

To address the objectives of the study, the researchers used a quantitative approach with an explanatory research design. The primary sources of data are used for this research. The population of the study includes people above the age of 18 who are buying packaged milk products in supermarkets. From supermarkets located in Addis Ababa, 384 samples were selected using convince

sampling techniques. The unknown population sample formula was used to get the sample size: $n_0 = Z^2 pq/d^2$ or $1.962 * 0.5 * 0.5 / (.05)^2 = 384$, where, n_0 = sample size, z = the standard normal deviation at 95% confidence level = 1.96, and p = the proportion in the target population estimated to have a certain characteristic. Given that there is no estimate, the study uses 50% (0.50) as the maximum variability, as advised by Isreal (2013). $q = 1.0 - p$ and $d = 5\%$ error margin.

Validity and Reliability of the Instruments

The variables were measured using standardised tools. Due to this, just the face validity is examined. Cronbach's alpha is the most often used dependability metric. Cronbach's coefficient alpha values typically fall between 0 and 1, with higher values indicating greater internal consistency. To attain internal reliability, different authors accept different test scores; however, a satisfactory score must be greater than 0.7 for the scale to be considered reliable (Sekaran, 2003). As a result, the results showed that the value of the coefficients was above 0.894, demonstrating the reliability of the research instruments utilised in this study.

Model Specification

A variety of inferential statistics were used in this investigation. The Pearson correlation was initially employed to investigate the connection between product packaging and consumer purchasing decision. Then, the

researchers used multiple linear regression models using the following equation:

$$Y = \alpha + \beta_1X_1 + \beta_2X_2 + \beta_3X_3 + \beta_4X_4 + \beta_5X_5 + \beta_6X_6 + \varepsilon$$

Where, Y – the consumer purchase decision, X1 – packaging colour, X2 – packaging material, X3 – packaging graphics, X4 – packaging design, X5 – packaging size, X6 – printed information, and ε – the error term.

Result and Discussion

The study targeted a sample size of 384 respondents, out of which 337 (87.76%) were useable. The completed questionnaires were collected and used for analysis.

Results

As shown in Table 1, all variables fall in the category of the range between 3.5052 and 3.7435. This implies that the mean value is above the neutral value range.

Table 1: Descriptive Results

<i>Descriptive Statistics</i>					
	<i>N</i>	<i>Minimum</i>	<i>Maximum</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std. D</i>
Packaging Colour	337	2.14	5.00	3.5490	.68408
Packaging Material	337	2.33	5.00	3.6775	.44715
Packaging Graphics	337	2.00	5.00	3.5052	.62274
Packaging Design	337	2.00	5.00	3.6093	.54797
Packaging Size	337	2.67	5.00	3.7132	.55410
Printed Information	337	2.44	5.00	3.7435	.51420
Consumer Purchase Decision	337	2.17	5.00	3.6251	.45906
Valid N (list-wise)	337				

In this study, correlation analysis was utilised to evaluate the connections between packaged milk product packaging components, and consumer purchase decision.

Accordingly, the relationship between variables is indicated in Table 2.

Table 2: Pearson Correlation Matrix

<i>Correlations</i>							
	<i>CB</i>	<i>PC</i>	<i>PM</i>	<i>PG</i>	<i>PD</i>	<i>PS</i>	<i>PI</i>
CB	1						
PC	0.537**	1					
PM	0.502**	0.332**	1				
PG	0.315**	0.321**	0.223**	1			
PD	0.515**	0.470**	0.319**	0.219**	1		
PS	0.573**	0.440**	0.352**	0.257**	0.368**	1	
PI	0.609**	0.748**	0.368**	0.266**	0.412**	0.483**	1

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The results shown in Table 2 revealed that all independent variables were positively and strongly correlated with the consumer buying behaviour and significant at 5% level of significance.

Diagnostic Tests

Multi-Collinearity Test - Tolerance and the variance inflation factor (VIF) are two common methods for determining collinearity (Pallant, 2010). As a result, Table 3 presents the results of the multi-collinearity tests.

Table 3: Summary of Collinearity Statistics

Coefficients ^a			
Model		Collinearity Statistics	
		Tolerance	VIF
1	Packaging Colour	.397	2.520
	Packaging Material	.796	1.256
	Packaging Graphics	.870	1.150
	Packaging Design	.727	1.375
	Packaging Size	.697	1.434
	Printed Information	.403	2.479

a. Dependent Variable: Consumer Purchase Decision

Concern should be expressed if the variance inflation factor is more than ten, as this indicates the presence of multiple independent variables that are collinear (Sekaran & Bougie, 2009). All variance inflation factor (VIF) values obtained from the test ranged from 1.15 to 2.52. As a result, the data do not show any strong relationships between the independent variables.

Homoscedasticity

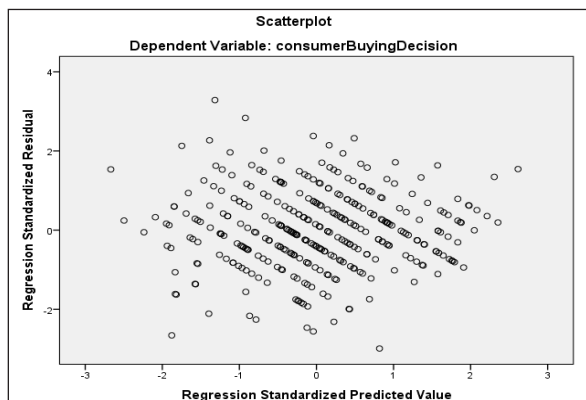


Fig. 2: Scattered Plot

According to Hair et al. (2010), the variability in scores for independent variables should be similar across the board. For this study, normalised residual scatter plots (Fig. 2) were created for each variable to display the results from the data. The assumption of homoscedasticity in this investigation seems reasonable.

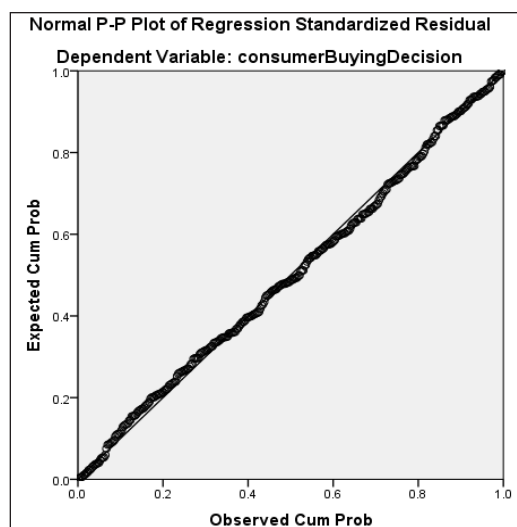
Normality Test

Normality of the variables was also examined using descriptive statistics variables. These are skewness and kurtosis.

Table 4: Tests of Normality

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Sta	Stat.	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
Packaging Colour	337	-.026	.133	-.948	.265
Packaging Material	337	.143	.133	-.277	.265
Packaging Graphics	337	.052	.133	-.522	.265
Packaging Design	337	.189	.133	-.204	.265
Packaging Size	337	-.032	.133	-.722	.265
Printed Information	337	-.287	.133	-.519	.265
Consumer Purchase Decision	337	-.086	.133	-.187	.265
Valid N (list-wise)	337				

Skewness and kurtosis statistics are used to determine if a distribution is normal; the acceptable range for normalcy for both statistics is between -2 and +2 (George & Mallery, 2010). A P-P plot is another helpful graph that academics can use to determine whether a distribution is normally distributed (probability-probability plot). The normal distribution creates a straight diagonal line in the probability plot, and the plotted residuals are compared to the diagonal line, as illustrated in Fig. 3. The residual line must closely follow the diagonal to be considered regularly distributed, as shown in Fig. 3.

**Fig. 3: Normal P-P Plot**

Auto Correlation

The Durbin-Watson test, which evaluates residual correlation between variables, is used to test this supposition for each regression technique. Field (2009) states that the test statistic has a range of 0 to 4, with a value of two indicating that the residuals are uncorrelated. In contrast, a score below two implies a positive correlation between the neighbouring residuals. A value greater than two shows a negative correlation between adjacent residuals. The residuals are typically independent if the Durbin-Watson statistic is close to two. The premise of independent error has most likely been met in this investigation, because the Durbin-Watson value was 1.948, which is quite near to two.

Table 5: Model Summary

Model Summary ^b										
Model	R	R Sq.	Adj. R Sq.	S.E.	Change Statistics					Durbin-Watson
					R Sq. Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change	
1	.755 ^a	.570	.562	.30382	.570	72.850	6	330	.000	1.948

a. Predictors: (Constant), Packaging Colour, Graphics, Material, Design, Packaging Size, and Printed Information.

b. Dependent Variable: Consumer Purchase Decision.

Analysis of variance was also carried out and the findings are presented in Table 6.

Table 6: Analysis of Variance

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	40.347	6	6.724	72.850	.000 ^b
	Residual	30.461	330	.092		
	Total	70.807	336			

a. Dependent Variable: Consumer Purchase Decision.

b. Predictors: (Constant), PC, PM, PG, PD, PS, PP, and PPI.

The ANOVA table shows the overall significance of the model from a statistical perspective. As indicated in Table

6, the p-value is < 0.05 . So, the above ANOVA table shows the acceptability of the model.

Table 7: Regression Coefficients

Coefficients ^a						
Model B		Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients	t	Sig.
		Std. Error	Beta			
1	(Constant)	.196	.176		1.113	.267
	Packaging Colour	.009	.038	.014	.240	.810
	Packaging Material	.223	.042	.217	5.371	.000
	Packaging Graphics	.054	.029	.074	1.906	.058
	Packaging Design	.176	.035	.210	4.965	.000
	Packaging Size	.211	.036	.254	5.884	.000
	Printed Information	.258	.051	.289	5.088	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Consumer Purchase Decision.

The p-value of all the independent variables is below 0.05, except for packaging graphics and packaging colour. This demonstrates that while packaging colour and graphics have no bearing on the dependent variable, the independent variables printed information, packaging size, packaging material, and design have a considerable positive influence on consumer purchasing decisions.

The regression equation is as follows:

$$Y = 1.96 + 0.014 X_1 + 0.217 X_2 + 0.074 X_3 + 0.210 X_4 + 0.254 X_5 + 0.289 X_6$$

Y = consumer's purchase decision, X₁ = packaging colour, X₂ = packaging material, X₃ = packaging graphics, X₄ = packaging design, X₅ = packing size, and X₆ = printed information

Table 8: Summary of Hypothesis Testing

Hypotheses	Findings	Result	Hypothesis
H1	$\beta = 0.014$; $p < .05$	Positive but insignificant	Not supported
H2	$\beta = 0.217$; $p < .05$	Positive and significant	Supported
H3	$\beta = 0.074$; $p > .05$	Positive but insignificant	Not supported
H4	$\beta = 0.210$; $p < .05$	Positive and significant	Supported
H5	$\beta = 0.254$; $p < .05$	Positive and significant	Supported
H6	$\beta = 0.289$; $p < .05$	Positive and significant	Supported

Discussion of the Result

As indicated in the result, all of the regression coefficients between the packaging elements and consumer buying behaviour have positive values. Printed message is the best indicator of customer purchasing decision. The result is consistent with the empirical findings of Silayoi and Speece (2004), Chandon and Wansink (2012), Adam and Ali (2014), Spink, Singh and Singh (2011), and Silayoi and Speece (2007), which states that package information gives the consumer the opportunity to consider alternative products and to make a purchase decision. The information on the packaging provides detailed information about the product at the point of sales. Thus, it is plausible to

conclude that printed information on product packaging is essential for conveying information to consumers about a product's features. Packing size (PS) has a significant influence on consumer's buying behaviour and it is consistent with the findings of Agatiya (2012) and Rundh, (2013), Hoyer and MacInnis (2012), and Silayoi and Speece (2004). It is feasible to draw the conclusion that size has a big influence on customer purchasing decisions.

Packaging material (PM) influences customer purchasing decisions favourably. This demonstrates that a majority of the buyers associate the product's value with the packaging's quality. The findings are in line with research from Hollywood (2013) and Kuvykaite, Dovaliene and Navickiene (2009). In light of the expectation that a

product will be of high quality and preserve its freshness, it is reasonable to draw the conclusion that better packing materials have an impact on customer purchasing decisions. Last but not least, packaging design (PD) is an important indicator of customer purchasing patterns. This suggests that when consumers buy packaged milk products, they pay attention to the package's design. Packaging design makes it easier for consumers to recognise the goods. The result is consistent with a study conducted by Svanes et al. (2010) and Adam and Ali (2014). This leads one to the conclusion that the packaging's design significantly influences consumers' decisions to buy packaged milk products.

Though it makes little difference to the consumer's purchasing decision, packaging colour (PC) does have a beneficial impact on that decision. This is congruent with a study by Hollywood (2013) that found that customers could tell whether the milk was whole, skimmed, or semi-skimmed if the package utilised general hues like green or blue. Nonetheless, using standardised colours did not influence purchase behaviour of consumers, because there was nothing new. It also agrees with Sioutis' (2011) findings, according to which colour is the least important packaging component for all convenience products; it seems to have little influence on consumer choice. The preferences for the colour appeared to be slightly product oriented. Additionally, the study discovered that packaging graphics (PG) have a slight but favourable impact on customer purchasing decisions. Finally, it is in line with Lee's (2010) findings, which indicate that the visuals on the packaging of convenience products have no discernible influence on consumer choice. The findings of Sioutis (2011), which imply that pictorial information is typically deceptive and that consumers do not take into account images on a package when making a purchase, further corroborate the conclusion.

Conclusions and Managerial Implications

The empirical results show that packaging attributes have a direct effect on consumer buying behaviour. One of the most crucial tools in marketing communications that affects consumers' purchasing decisions is packaging. Consumers can be informed about a product's usage, advantages, hazards, contents, and so on through verbal

and visual package aspects. The result has managerial implications for milk manufacturers. Companies must develop the appropriate packaging for a product that may be crucial to consumers and businesses with the intention of building brands, to keep their current customers and draw in new ones. Packaging is a crucial component of branding, since it serves to both communicate the image that was once used to identify a corporation as well as to contain, preserve, and present the contents. Packaging is receiving more attention as a communication tool as a result of changing customer habits and rising self-service. Distinct cultures have different influences on consumer behaviour, so businesses should exercise caution when examining various groups and national cultures to make organisational decisions. Manufacturers have developed creative and more appealing packaging as a result of industry competition in an effort to attract customers. The growth of the market economy has increased the significance of packaging in the current context of Ethiopian milk producers and processors. When there are similar products on the market, the packaging is crucial in helping newly packaged products stand out from the competition. Managers should therefore view packaging as a crucial component of the marketing mix and carefully construct it in accordance with the package's perceptual components. Therefore, the quality of printed information on packaging should be improved, since customers place a greater emphasis on knowing the product's contents and overall information that will help them choose milk products. Additionally, it is advised that businesses think about packaging to get a competitive edge over rivals in the market, because packaging quality has a positive and significant impact on consumer purchasing decisions. Good packaging should be a priority for the company's marketing departments as a whole, because it is one of the leading factors in product failure in the market.

Further Research Directions

Future researchers are suggested to consider more packaging variables that would affect the buying behaviour. In addition, the perceptual result could vary across gender so that packaging effect considering the gender as a comparative study can be carried out. Finally, there are organisations and individual consumers; so researchers are suggested to consider a different category of buyers.

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