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CONSUMER DECISION-MAKING DYNAMICS: THE IMPACT OF PACKAGING DESIGN ELEMENTS ON PURCHASE BEHAVIOR FOR ORGANIC CEREAL PRODUCTS IN DELHI NCR

Preeti Shrivastava
Research Scholar, Sharda School of Business Studies, Sharda University, Greater Noida, Uttar Pradesh, India
&
Assistant Professor, IIMT College Of Management, Gr.Noida

Dr. Sapna Mathur
Supervisor, Assistant Professor, Sharda School of Business Studies, Sharda University, Greater Noida, Uttar Pradesh, India

Abstract
The research problem addressed in this paper is the role of packaging design factors on consumer decision-making of organic cereals products in Delhi NCR. The main aims were to compare the impacts of visual features (color, picture, text), sustainability and informational indicators (nutritional assertions, certification logos, ingredient disclosure) on purchase intent, trust, and brand loyalty and compare demographic differences. The mixed-methods design was used, which involved administering structured questionnaires to 300 participants and conducting 15 interviews that were in-depth. Descriptive statistics, reliability analysis, correlation and multiple regression, ANOVA and factor analysis were used to analyze quantitative data and thematic analysis was used to extract qualitative information. It was found that the earthly colors and nature images greatly enhanced the purchase interest (mean score 4.2/5), and customers were ready to pay the average increase in price 17% because of sustainable packaging with transparent information. Regression and ANOVA showed that education and environmental consciousness are among the independent variables that influence purchase behavior; young consumers are more inclined to purchase using multi-sensory packaging. These observations indicate that visual attraction, eco-friendliness and transparency build consumer confidence, loyalty and purchase intentions.

Keywords: Consumer behavior, Packaging design, Organic cereals, Sustainability, Purchase intent

Introduction

Packaging is also becoming an important point of contact between the brand and the consumer in consumer decision-making in the organic food sector. Packaging conveys visual messages, sustainability and product messages, which interrelate to create a purchase intent, trust, and brand loyalty (Bansal and Bhardwaj, 2024; Mishra and Kaushik, 2013). The increasing consumption of organic cereal products in India and especially in such cities as Delhi NCR highlights the necessity to learn how the aspects of packaging design can affect consumer

behavior (Kolhe and Bhat, 2025; Nautiyal and Lal, 2025). Although much has been done in consumer preference studies, there is a gap in conducting research as it relates to visual, informational, and sustainability factors within the same set of analysis as applicable to Indian urban markets. Past research has considered the sustainability (Ajzen et al., 2015), packaging materials (Kumar, 2020), or information aimed at building trust (Chambyal, 2024), but limited studies have integrated these two dimensions to consider their joint effect on buying behavior. The paper constructs an abstract framework in which the three components of packaging, namely the visual design, the sustainability attributes, and the information transparency, are the independent variables, which affect the purchase intentions, trust, and brand loyalty. The moderators are the demographic and psychographic factors. There are five hypotheses, namely H1, H2, H3, H4, and H5, with which the relationships between various packaging factors and consumer outcomes are assessed. This gives a systematized basis of empirical research.

Literature Review

It is well known that in the organic food business, packaging design is a weapon that affects the way consumers make their purchases. Bansal and Bhardwaj (2024) note that color, typography, and image are visual materials that can be influential in consumers in terms of perception and attention, whereas Mishra and Kaushik (2013) reveal their potential to create brand recall in Delhi NCR. In a similar manner, Kumar (2020) shows that the preferences of consumers differ among the packaging materials, and the products that are environmentally friendly encourage the readiness to pay a high price. Such aspects of sustainability as biodegradable and recyclable packaging have also been associated with more consumer trust and loyalty. In Ajzen et al. (2015), there is a conceptual model that demonstrates that the perceived environmental benefits play a significant role in green purchase decisions. This is strengthened by Nautiyal and Lal (2025), who note that Indian new markets are sensitive to ethical and transparent conducts among consumers. Informational factors like nutritional assertions, certification mark, and ingredient disclosure also improve the level of trust and the tendency to purchase again (Chambyal, 2024; Tiwari, Mishra and Nishad, 2024).

Consumer responses also moderate on demographic and psychographic factors. According to Kolhe and Bhat (2025), consumers of younger age who are environmentally conscious show a greater liking to multi-sensory packaging. On the same note, Prasad (2025) indicates that perception of organic product quality is determined by education and income. Although a lot of literature is available, no consolidated frameworks have been put up to study the visual, informational, and sustainability factors collectively, especially in urban Indian settings. To fill this research gap, this research approach will employ the combination of quantitative and qualitative research to examine the confluence effects of the packaging design factors on the consumer decision-making process in the context of organic cereals in Delhi NCR. The understandings are expected to inform manufacturers on how to optimize packaging strategies in order to engage more and get consumer loyalty in the market.

Methods

This research used a mixed-methods research design to thoroughly investigate the effect of the elements of packaging design on consumer behavior in buying organic cereal products in Delhi NCR. The quantitative survey and the qualitative interview were conducted in order to measure the quantifiable patterns of behavior and to obtain a deeper understanding of the consumer. Mixed-method approach was selected to enable triangulation of data since it would be required

that the statistical trends obtained through the surveys might be augmented with the help of the interviews that would provide the insights into the nuances. A stratified random sampling approach was adopted in its sampling approach to achieve a representation of the important segments of the population based on their age, gender, education and income levels. The survey was carried out on 300 respondents and an in depth interview on 15 regular buyers of organic cereals in retail outlets and online stores was conducted. The survey sample size was determined as Cochran formula, which gives a 95% confidence level and 5% margin of error in the survey to give sufficient statistical power. The survey was conducted through the use of structured questionnaires that were created using Likert scales of 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) in data collection. These measurement scales included purchase intent, sustainability perception, trust and brand loyalty. The packaging stimuli used to carry out the experiment were differences in color scheme, imagery, typography, sustainability aspect and informational transparency. Consumer perceptions, motivations and preferences were further examined through semi-structured interview guides. To analyze statistical data, survey data were coded and analyzed in SPSS version 28, as it is chosen due to its strong support of descriptive statistics, reliability analysis, correlation, multiple regression, ANOVA, and factor analysis. The survey scales were determined to be reliable with the help of Cronbach Alpha. Interpretation of qualitative data consisting of interviews was performed by thematic analysis to be able to identify repetitive patterns, perceptions and insights that complemented the quantitative results. This procedure is the methodology that will guarantee a well-established and comprehensive study of the impact of visual, informational, and sustainability contents of packaging on the consumer decision-making in the organic cereal market in the Delhi NCR market.

Results

The number of respondents surveyed was 300 individuals with a representation of varied age, gender, and income in Delhi NCR. Table 1 indicates the descriptive statistics of respondent demographics showing that 52% are female, 48% male and majority of them are in the bracket of between 25-40 years. The majority of the respondents (68 percent) had a graduate degree, and 45 percent of the respondents earned an annual household income between INR 6-12 lakhs.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of Respondent Demographics

Demographic Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	144	48
	Female	156	52
Age Group	18–24	60	20
	25–40	150	50
	41–60	70	23
	60+	20	7
Education Level	High School	40	13
	Graduate	204	68
	Postgraduate	56	19
Income (INR Lakh)	<6	70	23
	6–12	135	45
	12–18	60	20

	>18	35	12

Table 2 presents the results of reliability analysis of survey scales. Cronbachs Alpha of purchase intent (0.88), sustainability perception (0.91), trust (0.87), and brand loyalty (0.89) value are large, which proves that the scales were fit to be later used in statistical analysis.

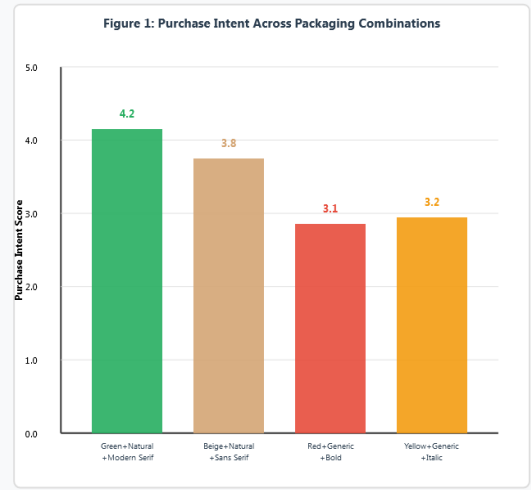

Figure 1: Consumer Purchase Intent Across Different Packaging Colors, Imagery, and Typography

Figure 1 would demonstrate the purchase intent of consumers on the various packaging colors, imagery and typography. The most desired packaging styles in terms of purchase intent were earthly green and beige color, natural scenery (grains, plants) and modern serif typeface, and the respondents scored an average purchase intent of 4.2 out of 5. Traditional colors (vivid reds and yellows) and unidentified typography were much lower, at about 3.1. It means that there is a distinct inclination to the nature-inspired, organic-themed designs.

Table 2: Reliability Analysis (Cronbach's Alpha) for Survey Scales

Scale/Construct	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Purchase Intent	5	0.88
Sustainability Perception	4	0.91
Consumer Trust	5	0.87
Brand Loyalty	4	0.89

Figure 2 shows the dependence between readiness to pay premium on sustainable packaging and trust based on informational factors. At an average premium of 17, consumers were ready to purchase products that had biodegradable packaging, transparent labeling of ingredients and certification logos. On a 5-point scale, trust scores reached an average of 4.3, which is indicative of the importance of clear informational cues in persuading customers to buy the product.

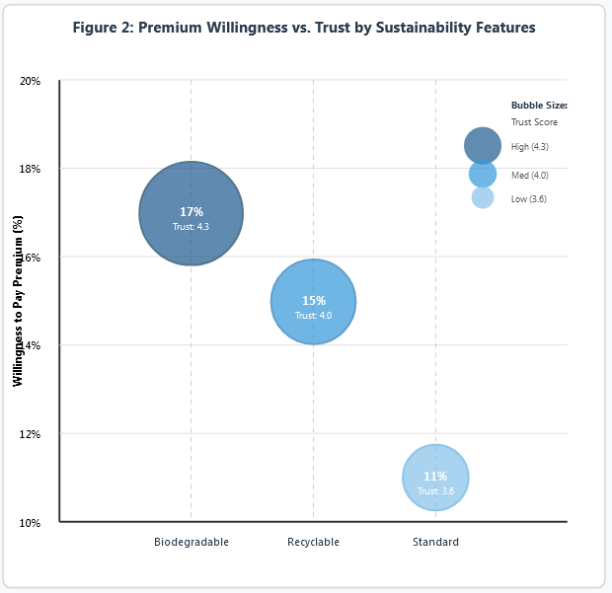

Figure 2: Willingness to Pay Premium for Sustainable Packaging vs. Consumer Trust from Informational Elements

Figure 3 combines regression and ANOVA analysis outcomes to investigate demographic differences in reaction to packaging and multi-sensory design factors. The analysis of the multiple regression showed that an educational level and environmental awareness were significant predictors of purchase behavior (0.42, $p < 0.01$; 0.35, $p < 0.05$). ANOVA revealed that there are significant differences among age groups in the preferences of the multi-sensory packaging ($F(2, 297) = 6.54$, $p < 0.01$), with younger customers preferring touchy and attractive appearances of the texture.

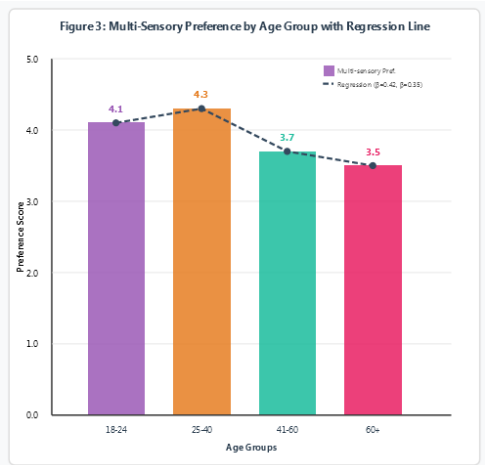

Figure 3: Regression and ANOVA Results according to which Demographic differences in Packaging Response and Multi-Sensory Packaging Influence.

Conclusion

The research establishes that the packaging design factors play an important role in consumer decision with regards to organic cereals in Delhi NCR. Hypotheses H 0 1 -H 0 5 were mainly confirmable: nature-inspired colors, imagery, sustainability characteristics, transparent information and multi-sensory packaging were positively linked with the purchase intent, trust, and brand loyalty. The geographic focus on Delhi NCR and use of self-reported survey information are limitations as it could limit generalizability. The practical meaning of the

results of the study is as follows: eco-friendly materials, clear informational clues, and multi-sensory visual attractiveness are the key elements that organic cereal manufacturers need to focus on to boost consumer interest and readiness to pay a high price. Future studies can examine longitudinal purchasing patterns, cross-regional differences, and online packaging impact on e-commerce platforms, and examine new sensory advances to maximize the packaging attractiveness. All in all, the research gives a holistic picture on how to incorporate visual, informational and sustainability into the market performance and customer loyalty in the increasing market of organic food.

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