

# A Conceptual Framework of the Influence of Packaging Design on Purchase Intention

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## ABSTRACT

The objective of this study is to provide an understanding of the influence of packaging design on consumer purchase intentions through the presentation of a conceptual framework. The proposed conceptual framework incorporates fundamental principles derived from the Stimulus-Organism-Response (SOR) model and the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB). This analysis explores the impact of external cues, particularly packaging design, on customers' cognitive and affective reactions (Organism), ultimately influencing their intentions to make a purchase (Response). The

elements of the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), including Attitudes, Subjective Norms, and Perceived Behavioural Control, serve as intermediary variables within the organism component of the Social Organisational Relations (SOR) model. It is important to incorporate both exterior cues and internal psychological aspects when studying consumer behaviour, as this integration provides vital insights into the psychological processes that influence customer purchase intentions.

**Keywords:** *Aesthetics, Purchase intention, Packaging design, Stimulus-organism-response (SOR) model, Theory of planned behaviour (TPB)*

## INTRODUCTION

In a very competitive market, brands are consistently striving to establish distinctiveness and attract the interest of consumers. Packaging design plays a significant role in attaining these goals through its ability to visually captivate consumers, offer functional advantages, and communicate brand values (Chitturi et al., 2022). Consumer impressions and buying decisions are significantly influenced by its pivotal position. Recent research has brought attention to the diverse effects of packaging design on consumer behaviour, underscoring its significance not just in terms of visual attractiveness but also in terms of functionality and its capacity to convey brand identity (Smith, 2020).

According to the findings of a study conducted by Lee and Hong (2023), people tend to regard products that possess well-designed packaging as of superior quality and value. In addition, a study conducted by Simmonds and Spence (2017) revealed that packaging components, including colour, font, and material, have a substantial impact on consumers' emotional reactions and intents to make a purchase. Although the importance of packaging design is widely recognized, there is a significant research gap on the precise mechanisms by which it influences consumer purchase intentions (Adams & Johnson, 2023).

Previous scholarly investigations frequently focus on either the cognitive mechanisms triggered by external stimuli or the psychological determinants that impact behavioural reactions, often lacking a cohesive integration of both viewpoints (Kimiagari & Malafe, 2021). Therefore, there is an urgent need for a comprehensive paradigm that combines external stimuli and internal psychological elements to provide a detailed knowledge of how packaging design influences customer purchase intentions (Sun et al., 2023).

In order to bridge this existing knowledge gap, the present study aims to provide a comprehensive framework that combines fundamental components from the Stimulus-Organism-Response (SOR) model and the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB). According to Kim et al. (2020), the SOR model proposes that organisms undergo cognitive and affective responses in response to environmental stimuli, which then influence their behavioural responses. While the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) suggests that attitudes, subjective standards, and perceived behavioural control play a mediating role in the relationship between stimuli and behavioural responses (Sultan et al., 2020).

This study seeks to cultivate a comprehensive comprehension of the impact of packaging design on consumer purchase intentions by amalgamating these two theoretical approaches within a conceptual framework. The integration of external stimuli and internal psychological elements, as outlined in our conceptual framework, is crucial in shaping consumer behaviour, specifically in relation to purchase decisions influenced by packaging design. Furthermore, the objective of this study is to make a scholarly contribution to the advancement of theoretical understanding in the domains of consumer behaviour and marketing by utilising this conceptual framework. Simultaneously, it seeks to provide valuable practical

insights for marketers and businesses, enabling them to enhance their packaging strategies in accordance with consumer preferences and expectations, guided by the principles outlined in the conceptual framework.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

The integration of the Stimulus-Organism-Response (SOR) model and the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) offers a robust framework for understanding the influence of packaging on consumer intention to purchase. The SOR model, as proposed by Li et al. (2021), elucidates that environmental stimuli trigger cognitive and affective responses in organisms, which subsequently influence their behavioural responses. In the context of packaging, stimuli such as design elements, colours, and materials can evoke cognitive and affective reactions in consumers. For instance, vibrant colours or eco-friendly materials may stimulate positive emotions and perceptions, while dull packaging or excessive plastic usage might trigger negative reactions.

On the other hand, the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), as described by Lim and Weissmann, (2023), emphasises the mediating role of attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control in shaping behavioural responses to stimuli. In the case of packaging, attitudes towards sustainability, social norms regarding environmentally friendly choices, and perceived control over purchasing decisions can significantly impact consumer intentions.

By integrating these two theories, the framework acknowledges that packaging stimuli not only directly influence consumer behaviour but also operate through cognitive and affective responses, attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived control. For example, a consumer may perceive eco-friendly packaging positively (cognitive response) and feel a social pressure to choose sustainable options (subjective norm), which together enhance their intention to purchase the product.

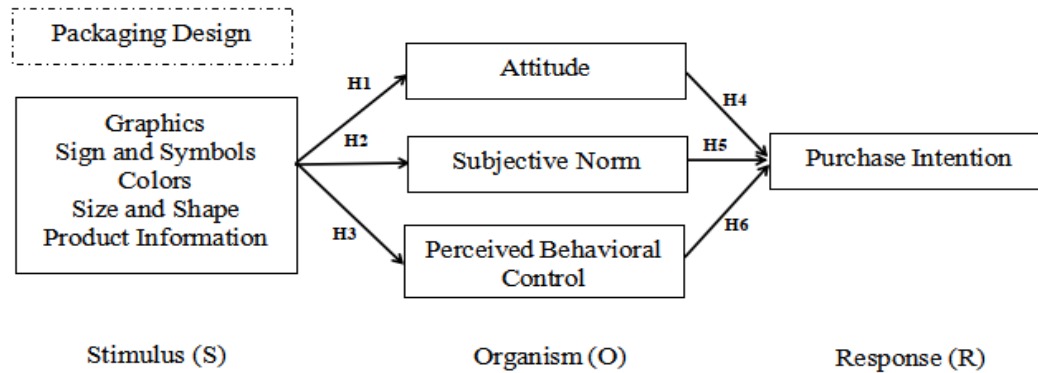
Furthermore, this integrated framework recognizes the dynamic interplay between cognitive, affective, and social factors in shaping consumer responses to packaging stimuli. It underscores the importance of considering both the immediate sensory reactions to packaging and the underlying beliefs, attitudes, and social influences that drive consumer behaviour.

The combination of the SOR model and the TPB offers a comprehensive approach to understanding the complex relationship between packaging stimuli and consumer intention to purchase, providing valuable insights for marketers and designers to create packaging strategies that resonate with consumers' cognitive, affective, and social dynamics.

## THEORETICAL FOUNDATION

The study underlying the integration of the Stimulus-Organism-Response (SOR) model, Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) and Silayoi and Speece (2007) model. The integration offers a comprehensive framework for understanding how packaging design influences purchase intention. The SOR model posits that external stimuli elicit cognitive and affective responses in organisms, which subsequently influence behavioural responses (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974). On the other hand, the TPB emphasises the role of attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control in shaping behavioural intentions (Ajzen, 1991). While Silayoi and Speece (2007) model defined packaging elements which affect a consumer's buying decision. By integrating these theoretical perspectives, researchers can examine how packaging

design stimuli trigger cognitive and affective responses in consumers (Stimulus), which, in turn, influence their attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control (Organism), ultimately shaping purchase intentions and behaviours (Response). Through empirical research applying this integrated framework, scholars can gain a deeper understanding of the psychological processes underlying consumer responses to packaging design and its implications for marketing practice.



**Figure 1. Conceptual framework**

*Source: Adapted from (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974; Silayoi & Speece, 2007; Ajzen, 1991)*

## HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

### Packaging Design and Attitude towards Sustainability

Packaging design encompasses several elements such as graphics, symbols, colours, shape, and product information (Stenis et al., 2017; Schifferstein et al., 2022). The amalgamation of these various elements conveys a visual representation, while packaging design plays a crucial role in shaping consumers' attitudes towards sustainability. Drawing on prior research indicating the impact of visual cues and eco-friendly packaging on consumer attitudes (Chen & Chang, 2017; Kim & Park, 2019), it is anticipated that aesthetically appealing and environmentally conscious packaging designs will positively influence consumers' attitudes towards sustainability. Therefore, based on the justifications above, the following hypothesis is derived:

H1: packaging design has a significant relationship on attitude

### Packaging Design and Subjective Norm

Previous studies have examined the influence of packaging design on various psychological constructs, including subjective norms. For instance, research by James and Kurian (2021) found that packaging aesthetics can affect consumers' perceptions of social approval or disapproval regarding product choices. Similarly, Khan et al. (2021) demonstrated that packaging elements such as colors, images, and typography can convey social cues that shape subjective norms. Therefore, based on the justifications above, the following hypothesis is derived:

H2: packaging design has a significant relationship on subjective norm

## **Packaging Design and Perceived Behavioral Control**

One important aspect that has gained attention is the impact of packaging design on perceived behavioural control, which refers to individuals' perceptions of their ability to perform a behaviour. Previous studies have investigated the influence of packaging design on various psychological constructs, including perceived behavioural control. For instance, research by Kovačević et al. (2022) demonstrated that packaging elements such as visual complexity and clarity can affect consumers' perceptions of their ability to use a product. Similarly, Chen and Chang (2017) found that eco-friendly packaging designs can enhance consumers' perceived control over their environmental impact. Therefore, based on the justifications above, the following hypothesis is derived:

H3: packaging design has a significant relationship on perceived behavioural control

## **Attitude and Purchase Intention**

Numerous studies have explored the relationship between consumer attitudes and purchase intentions across various product categories (Costa et al., 2021). These studies have consistently found a positive correlation between favourable attitudes towards a product and the intention to purchase it. For instance, research by Shimul et al. (2022) demonstrated that positive attitudes towards cosmetic products significantly influence consumers' purchase intentions. Similarly, Chhetri et al. (2021) highlighted the importance of attitude formation in predicting consumers' purchase intentions regarding green cosmetics. Therefore, based on the justifications above, the following hypothesis is derived:

H4: attitude has a significant relationship on purchase intention

## **Subjective Norm and Purchase Intention**

Previous research has shown that subjective norms, which represent perceived social pressures to perform or not perform a behaviour, significantly influence individuals' purchase intentions (Ruangkanjanases, 2020). For example, Wang and Chu (2021) found that consumers' perceptions of social approval or disapproval regarding product choices impact their purchase intentions. Similarly, Aziz et al. (2020) demonstrated that subjective norms play a crucial role in shaping consumers' attitudes and behaviours towards products. Therefore, based on the justifications above, the following hypothesis is derived:

H5: subjective norm has a significant relationship on purchase intention

## **Perceived Behavioral Control and Purchase Intention**

Previous studies have examined the influence of perceived behavioural control, which refers to individuals' perceptions of their ability to perform a behaviour, on purchase intentions (Joshi et al., 2021). For example, Baccarella (2021) found that packaging designs that enhance perceived usability positively affect purchase intentions. Similarly, Nguyen et al. (2021) demonstrated that eco-friendly packaging designs can increase consumers' perceived control over their environmental impact, thereby influencing purchase intentions. Therefore, based on the justifications above, the following hypothesis is derived:

H6: perceived behavioural control has a significant relationship on purchase intention

## CONCLUSION

This study lies in its comprehensive exploration of the influence of packaging design on consumer purchase intentions. By presenting a conceptual framework that integrates fundamental principles from the Stimulus-Organism-Response (SOR) model and the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), this research endeavours to provide a deeper understanding of the mechanisms underlying consumer decision-making processes.

Through this analysis, the study delves into the impact of external cues, specifically packaging design, on customers' cognitive and affective reactions (Organism), which subsequently influence their intentions to make a purchase (Response). By incorporating elements of the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) as intermediary variables within the organism component of the SOR model, the research elucidates the role of attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control in shaping consumer perceptions and behaviours.

This study underscores the importance of considering both external cues and internal psychological aspects when examining consumer behaviour. By integrating these factors, the research aims to provide valuable insights into the psychological processes that drive customer purchase intentions. Ultimately, this holistic approach facilitates a more nuanced understanding of the complex interplay between packaging design, consumer perceptions, and purchase decisions, thereby offering practical implications for marketers and businesses seeking to enhance their packaging strategies and effectively engage consumers in the marketplace.

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