



SIGNIFICANCE OF PACKAGING FEATURES ON CONSUMER BUYING BEHAVIOUR: EVIDENCE FROM THE TOILETRIES PRODUCTS CONSUMERS IN MTHATHA, SOUTH AFRICA

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This study examines the influence of packaging features on consumer purchasing behaviour in the toiletries market, with a specific focus on consumers in Mthatha, South Africa. The research is motivated by the highly competitive nature of the toiletries industry, in which packaging has become a critical determinant of consumer perception and purchase decisions. The primary objective is to identify and analyse the packaging elements, namely colour, size, shape, labelling information, and imagery, that most significantly influence consumer purchasing decisions. The study is theoretically grounded in the Theory of Reasoned Action and the Black-Box Consumer Model, which together provide a comprehensive framework for understanding the psychological and sensory processes underlying consumer choice behaviour. A quantitative, cross-sectional research design was adopted, employing structured, self-administered questionnaires. The target population comprised 13700 registered students at Walter Sisulu University in 2024, from which 207 valid questionnaires were completed and returned. The instrument measured respondents' perceptions of various packaging features and their perceived influence on purchasing decisions. Data were analysed using correlation analysis, hypothesis testing, and path analysis to examine the relationships between packaging attributes and consumer behaviour. The study contributes to the growing discourse on sustainable development by demonstrating how packaging design can influence consumer choices and support responsible consumption and production practices. The findings provide valuable insights for manufacturers, marketers, and policymakers seeking to develop packaging strategies that enhance consumer appeal while promoting sustainable packaging practices consistent with Sustainable Development Goal 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production). The study concludes by recommending the adoption of packaging designs that balance marketing effectiveness with sustainability considerations within the toiletries sector.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Toiletries are consumer goods used to enhance personal hygiene, grooming, and physical appearance, and they typically consist of both natural and synthetic chemical compounds.¹ The toiletries sector is a substantial, rapidly expanding segment of consumer goods in developing market economies, with a wide array of products targeted at diverse demographic groups. Increased globalisation has intensified competition in the industry, compelling firms to adopt more sophisticated, differentiated marketing strategies to sustain competitive advantage. In this context, packaging has emerged as a critical strategic tool for influencing consumer perceptions and stimulating purchase intent at the point of sale.

Empirical research consistently demonstrates that attractive packaging design is among the most effective strategies for capturing consumer attention and fostering brand loyalty in highly competitive markets.² Brands that succeed in cultivating strong consumer loyalty through effective packaging benefit from enhanced pricing power, stronger bargaining position within distribution channels, and reduced long-term marketing and selling costs.³ These advantages underscore the strategic role of packaging beyond its traditional protective function, positioning it as a central component of contemporary product and branding decisions.

Packaging is increasingly recognised as an integral element of the marketing mix, particularly in fast-moving consumer goods such as toiletries.⁴ At the point of purchase, packaging often serves as the final persuasive cue, influencing consumers with limited prior brand

1 R Chaudhary and P Kumar, 'Factors influencing purchase intention of consumers for toiletries products in Haryana' (2021) 42(1) *Business Analyst* 119.

2 M Abdolalizadeh, B Shahmansoori and R Pourjebeli, 'Investigating the impact of media on smuggled cosmetics and toiletries consumption' (2023) 4(7) *International Journal of Digital Content Management* 59.

3 G Bing, B Al Mughairi, AM Karim and AM Karim, 'Study on importance of brand loyalty for customer retention for consumer durable products: New era viewpoint' (2024) 14(1) *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences* 453.

4 N Siqebengu, 'Identifying factors that influence purchasing behaviour of black metrosexual facial skincare products in Gauteng' (PhD thesis, North-West University 2018)

knowledge or involvement. Key packaging attributes include shape, size, graphic elements, colour, imagery, and labelling information.⁵ The visual attributes such as shape, size, and graphic design play a crucial role in brand differentiation by enhancing product visibility and memorability on crowded retail shelves.⁵ These visual cues help consumers quickly evaluate alternatives, especially when making purchase decisions under time pressure.

Beyond aesthetics, labelling information has become an increasingly important communicative element of packaging. Labels convey essential product and brand information, including composition, usage instructions, regulatory compliance, quality assurance, and guarantees. Such information is intended to reduce perceived risk and support informed decision-making. However, empirical findings on the influence of labelling information on consumer behaviour remain mixed. While labels are designed to inform and reassure consumers, several studies suggest that consumers often do not actively engage with detailed labelling information during routine purchases. The purchasing decisions are less likely to be influenced by labelling attributes than by perceived quality, price, and overall value, particularly in low-involvement product categories such as toiletries.⁶

Consumer purchase decisions result from a cognitive evaluation process that begins with need recognition and progresses through information search and alternative evaluation.⁷ Packaging plays a crucial role within this process by providing both functional and symbolic cues that help consumers assess how well a product satisfies a particular need. The information and visual signals embedded in packaging help consumers not only understand product attributes but also form expectations about performance and brand credibility.⁸ Consequently, the global toiletries packaging market continues to grow rapidly, reflecting the high value

5 RKA Deepak and S Jeyakumar, *Marketing Management* (Educreation Publishing 2019).

6 BC Iloka and KJ Onyeke, 'Neuromarketing: A historical review' (2020) 3(3) *Neuroscience Research Notes* 27.

7 B Uzunok, *The influence of packaging on the consumer purchasing decision focusing on the cosmetic industry in Ireland* (PhD thesis, National College of Ireland 2022).

8 RKA Deepak and S Jeyakumar, *Marketing Management* (Educreation Publishing 2019).

consumers place on packaging when evaluating products prior to purchase.⁹

Existing empirical studies further confirm that packaging attributes significantly shape consumer purchasing behaviour across different contexts. The cosmetic industry in Ireland, identified colour, packaging material, design, information on the wrapper, and innovation as key determinants of consumer purchase decisions.¹⁰ Similarly, the purchasing behaviour of black metrosexual consumers in Gauteng highlighted the influence of packaging elements on their choices of facial skincare products.¹¹ Other scholars have explored the role of packaging information in consumer decision-making, finding varying degrees of importance depending on consumer involvement and product category.¹²

This study also contributes to the discourse on sustainable development by examining packaging attributes that influence consumer purchasing decisions in the toiletries sector. Packaging plays a critical role in promoting sustainable consumption and production by using environmentally responsible materials, effectively communicating sustainability information, and designing products that reduce waste and encourage resource efficiency. Understanding how consumers respond to packaging elements can help manufacturers and policymakers develop packaging strategies that support both market competitiveness and broader sustainability objectives, particularly Sustainable Development Goal 12, which promotes responsible consumption and production.

The remainder of this article is organised into six sections. Following this introduction, Section 2 presents the problem statement. Section 3 reviews the literature on the theoretical and empirical literature on packaging

9 J Drobac, V Alivojvodic, P Maksic and M Stamenovic, 'Green face of packaging—sustainability issues of the cosmetic industry packaging' (2020) 318 *MATEC Web of Conferences* 01022.

10 B Uzunok, 'The influence of packaging on the consumer purchasing decision focusing on the cosmetic industry in Ireland' (PhD thesis, National College of Ireland 2022).

11 N Siqebengu, 'Identifying factors that influence purchasing behaviour of black metrosexual facial skincare products in Gauteng' (PhD thesis, North-West University 2018).

12 P Kotler, G Armstrong, J Saunders and V Wong, *Consumer Behaviour* (5th edn, Prentice Hall 2004).

features, consumer purchasing behaviour, and the policy, legal, and sustainability dimensions of toiletries packaging. Section 4 develops the study hypotheses and outlines the research methodology. Section 5 presents the empirical findings and data analysis. Section 6 and 7 discuss the results and their business and policy implications, respectively. Section 9 discusses the Sustainable Development Implications. Finally, Section 10 concludes the study and provides recommendations for practitioners and future research

2. PROBLEM STATEMENT AND RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

Packaging plays a pivotal role in shaping consumer buying behaviour within the highly competitive toiletries market. Consumers are routinely confronted with a broad range of competing products displayed on retail shelves, often with minimal perceived differences in core product quality. In such environments, packaging features including colour, shape and relevance, size, labelling information, and graphic design serve as salient extrinsic cues that guide product evaluation and selection at the point of purchase.^{13 14 15} Empirical evidence suggests that when consumers face low-involvement purchase situations, as is common with toiletries, they rely heavily on visual and symbolic packaging cues rather than detailed product assessments.

Although toiletries remain essential consumer goods with consistent demand, purchasing decisions within this category are increasingly driven by packaging appeal. Consumers tend to exhibit heightened sensitivity to packaging aesthetics and convenience, which significantly influence attention, perceived quality, and brand preference. Consequently, inadequate or poorly differentiated packaging may result in reduced consumer interest, weaker brand recognition, and suboptimal sales

13 Z Ngomthi and I Mbukanma, 'Consumer behavioural model and branding' (2024) 4 *Interdisciplinary Journal of Sociality Studies* 1.

14 A Ozcan and EA Kandirmaz, 'The effect of packaging colour' (2021) 18 *International Joint Conference on Environmental and Light Industry Technologies* 17.

15 RKA Deepak and S Jeyakumar, *Marketing Management* (Education Publishing, 2019).

performance. From a product life cycle perspective, failure to invest strategically in effective packaging design may hinder a product's growth and maturity, potentially leading to early market withdrawal due to insufficient consumer acceptance.

Despite widespread recognition of packaging as a key marketing instrument, there remains limited empirical clarity regarding the relative influence of individual packaging features on consumer buying behaviour in the toiletries market. Packaging affects how consumers analyse and evaluate products prior to purchase; however, many existing studies focus broadly on packaging without isolating and empirically testing the effects of specific design elements.¹⁶ Furthermore, while prior research acknowledges the psychological and emotional responses evoked by packaging, there is a paucity of empirical studies that directly link these responses to actual purchasing decisions, particularly in emerging and semi-urban markets.

Studies argued that packaging functions as a critical marketing communication tool and a significant determinant of consumer purchasing decisions.^{17 18} However, much of the existing literature is concentrated in developed markets or large metropolitan settings, thereby limiting its contextual applicability to smaller South African towns such as Mthatha. Consumer preferences, socio-economic conditions, and cultural interpretations of packaging cues may differ substantially across contexts, necessitating location-specific empirical investigation.

Despite the growing body of literature on packaging and consumer behaviour, there remains a notable empirical gap regarding toiletries packaging in smaller, non-metropolitan contexts in South Africa. Most existing studies have focused on metropolitan areas or international markets, thereby limiting the contextual generalisability of their findings.

16 AP Wijaya and IT Annisa, 'The influence of brand image' (2020) 18(1) *Jurnal Analisis Bisnis Ekonomi* 24.

17 B Uzunok, *The influence of packaging on consumer purchasing decision* (PhD thesis, National College of Ireland 2022).

18 M Poturak, 'Influence of product packaging on purchase decisions' (2014) *European Journal of Social and Human Sciences* 144.

To address this gap, the present study investigates the influence of toiletry packaging features on consumer purchasing decisions in Mthatha, South Africa. By focusing on this under-researched setting, the study contributes context-specific empirical evidence and enhances understanding of how packaging attributes influence consumer behaviour in emerging and semi-urban markets.

In light of these gaps, this study seeks to examine the influence of specific packaging elements, namely colour, shape, relevance, size, labelling information, and graphic design, on consumer buying behaviour within the toiletries market in Mthatha, South Africa. By empirically analysing how these packaging attributes affect purchasing decisions, the study aims to contribute contextually relevant evidence to the existing body of knowledge. The findings are expected to provide practical insights for marketers and manufacturers seeking to design effective packaging strategies that align with consumer preferences in emerging and non-metropolitan markets, while also advancing academic understanding of the relationships between packaging behaviour and consumer preferences in the toiletries sector.

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

This literature review provides an overview of the current knowledge on the packaging elements. It synthesises the findings of existing studies, examines the theories that underpin the study, and identifies the gaps and limitations of the existing literature.

3.1 Theoretical Review

The theoretical literature will comprehensively analyse the theories and conceptual frameworks relevant to toiletries packaging elements and consumer purchasing decisions. Two theories have been used in this study: the Black-Box Consumer Model and the Theory of Reasoned Action.

3.1.1 Theory of Reasoned Action

The Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) was formed in 1975 by Martin Fishbein and Icek Ajzen. They established the theory by distinguishing

between behaviour and attitude.¹⁹ One of the main advantages of the Theory of Reasoned Action is its capacity to consider various variables that combine to affect behaviour sequentially and linearly. According to this idea, behavioural intentions are shaped by attitudes and subjective standards, which in turn define behaviours. It was also emphasised that, at the most fundamental level, individual beliefs about behaviour and societal norms influence the formation of attitudes and subjective norms.²⁰ Beliefs form when a person believes that engaging in a particular behaviour will lead to a desired outcome, such as social acknowledgement or relaxation.²¹ The integration theory's first adjustment is the behavioural intent.²² This model also acknowledged that certain conditions could limit the influence of attitude on behaviour. Because it distinguishes between behavioural intention and behaviour, TRA predicts behavioural intention, which lies between predicting attitude and behaviour. This helps to clarify how attitude and subjective norms affect customer behaviour.

3.1.2 The Black-Box Model

The underlying motivation influencing consumer behaviour is the focus of the Black Box consumer behaviour paradigm. Created in 2004 by Phillip Kotler, this theory aims to clarify what happens to consumers when they are exposed to marketing stimuli that lead them to purchase.²³ The Black Box paradigm states that marketing and other stimuli "infiltrate" the consumer's "Black Box" and trigger particular emotions. The "black box" in the model corresponds to the customer's mental processes. This results in the addition of packaging, family, cultural perceptions, and brand image to the Black Box, along with marketing. However, a customer's characteristics affect how they understand the stimuli. However, in

19 M Xiao, 'Factors influencing eSports viewership' (2020) 8(1) *Communication & Sport* 92.

20 D Dalila, H Latif, N Jaafar, I Aziz and A Afthanorhan, 'The mediating effect of personal values' (2020) 10(1) *Management Science Letters* 153.

21 M Xiao, 'Factors influencing eSports viewership' (2020) 8(1) *Communication & Sport* 92.

22 I Ajzen and AW Kruglanski, 'Reasoned action in the service of goal pursuit' (2019) 126(5). *Psychological Review* 774.

23 P Kotler, G Armstrong, J Saunders and V Wong, *Consumer Behaviour* (5th edn, Prentice Hall 2004).

purchasing behaviour, the decision-making process dictates the path of action to be followed.

3.2 Empirical Literature

Product packaging sparks customers' curiosity, appeals to their uniqueness, and creates a fleeting emotional bond.²⁴ It successfully displays and promotes products on store shelves by attracting customer interest and leaving a positive impression in a cutthroat industry.²⁵ As a result, this study has used packaging components to examine how they affect consumers' decisions to buy toiletries. The study comprises five constructs: package colour, information and instructions printed, package size, package imagery, and package shape and relevance. Consumer purchase decision-making is the dependent construct, and it is measured utilising themes such as purchasing situations, social factors, economic considerations, and personal variables.

Accordingly, packaging encompasses all the tasks in creating and manufacturing a product's container. With the rise of self-service and changing consumer lifestyles, package design is becoming increasingly popular as a sales marketing strategy and an inducer of impulse buys.²⁶ As a result, packaging attributes such as colour, background picture, printed instructions and information, box size, shape, and importance are used as independent variables. Packages are one of the most important factors influencing a consumer's decision to purchase a product.²⁷ As a result, the characteristics of the package and their influence on consumer purchasing behaviour have become more important. However, the primary purposes of packaging are divided into two categories: marketing and logistics. Packaging offers buyers an attractive way to convey product features at

24 Electrical Workbook, 'What is packaging? Definition, meaning & examples' (2021) available at: <https://electricalworkbook.com/packaging/> (accessed 7 July 2023).

25 S Kapoor and N Kumar, 'Does packaging influence purchase decisions of food products?' (2019) 23(3) *Academy of Marketing Studies Journal* 1.

26 TS Ntobela and I Mbukanma I, 'Exploring the impact of sensory marketing' (2023) 12(5) *Academic Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies* 192.

27 Z Ngomthi and I Mbukanma, 'Consumer behavioural model and branding' (2024) 4 *Interdisciplinary Journal of Sociality Studies* 1.

the point of sale. Therefore, the sections that follow cover the majority of critical packaging-related topics.

It is known that colour can evoke emotions and convey meaning. Colour combinations are purposefully chosen in design practice to convey concepts, feelings, and attitudes and be aesthetically pleasing.²⁸ In contradiction the colour influences consumers' purchase decisions because it excites their visual senses.²⁹ Colour is a visual language our eyes interpret, leaving a lasting impression.³⁰ Colours allow us to see everything around us because of light. The interaction among light, the surface, the eyes, and the brain facilitates visibility. Seher, Arshad, Ellahi, and Shahid (2012) found that advertisements and a product's colour scheme greatly influence what people decide to buy.³¹

Consumers are more likely to inherently predict specific qualities of a product's look, texture, or aroma when evaluating package information.³² In line with the growing popularity of healthy diets and consumer health concerns, skincare products should provide clear information to support consumers' decision-making.³³ Accordingly, appropriately worded communication can significantly influence consumers' purchase decisions and boost their confidence in the product. It is also established that product information can help customers choose products and that they can use this information to make well-informed purchasing decisions.³⁴

28 S Guerrero-Pineda, ME Quintero-Alejo and J Villamil, 'Sustainable packaging in the circular economy' (2023) 194 *Resources, Conservation and Recycling* 106890.

29 H Al-Samarraie, A Eldenfria, JE Doodoo, AI Alzahrani and N Alalwan, 'Packaging design elements and consumers' decision to buy from the web: A cause-and-effect decision-making model' (2019) 44(6) *Colour Research & Application* 993.

30 A Ozcan and EA Kandirmaz, 'The Effect of Packaging Colour on Product Sales' (2021) 18 *International Joint Conference on Environmental and Light Industry Technologies* 17.

31 T Seher and others, 'Impact of Colours on Advertisement and Packaging on Buying Behaviour' (2012) 2 *Management Science Letters* 2085.

32 M Poturak, 'Influence of Product Packaging on Purchase Decisions' (2014) 3 *European Journal of Social and Human Sciences* 144.

33 N Siqebengu, *Identifying Factors that Influence Purchasing Behaviour of Black Metrosexual Facial Skincare Products in Gauteng* (Doctoral dissertation, North-West University, 2018).

34 LLM Turunen and M Halme, 'Communicating Actionable Sustainability Information to Consumers: The Shades of Green Instrument for Fashion' (2021) 297 *Journal of Cleaner Production* 126605

However, they could become puzzled if the information is false or misleading. On the other hand, findings show that product packaging provides consumers with more information about the product, such as ingredients, manufacturing date, expiration date, and price.³⁵

Similarly, larger packaging attracts consumers more quickly than smaller packaging due to its visually striking features.³⁶ The concept of perceived value arises in discussions of product size and consumer happiness.³⁷ It explains how consumers consider the benefits and drawbacks of purchasing a particular commodity or service. Package size may influence consumer behaviour under various circumstances, including product type and consumer preferences.³⁸ Consumers frequently associate larger package sizes with better value.³⁹ However, smaller package sizes are frequently more convenient for consumers who are constantly on the go or have limited storage space. Images are pictures used to represent the same characters; however, the results are more accurate and vivid.⁴⁰ In addition, the pictures are believed to convey a universal language understandable to people with no academic education. However, few studies contended that a picture can be confusing and may prompt a consumer to have a range of thoughts.⁴¹

Some other studies emphasised the variety of packaging shapes, ranging from bottles and boxes to blister packs and pouches. The shape ought to

35 B Tripathi, 'Impact of Packaging on Consumer Buying Behaviour' (2022) 9 International Advanced Research Journal in Science, Engineering and Technology.

36 MUA Ahsan Ansari and DA Siddiqui, 'Packaging Features and Consumer Buying Behavior towards Packaged Food Items' (2019) 7 Global Scientific Journal 1050.

37 IT Trigui and M Abdelmoula, 'The Effect of Packaging Size on Purchase Intention: The Case of Tunisian Olive Oil in the USA Market' (2019) 8 International Journal of Business and Economics Research 320.

38 F Testa, R Iovino and F Iraldo, 'The Circular Economy and Consumer Behaviour: The Mediating Role of Information Seeking in Buying Circular Packaging' (2020) 29 Business Strategy and the Environment 3435.

39 Z Boz, V Korhonen and C Koelsch Sand, 'Consumer Considerations for the Implementation of Sustainable Packaging: A Review' (2020) 12 Sustainability 2192.

40 W Pensatorn, 'The Use of Images in Graphic Design on Packaging of Food and Beverages' (2015) 3 Journal of Economics, Business and Management 1159.

41 I Gil-Pérez, R Rebollar and I Lidón, 'Without Words: The Effects of Packaging Imagery on Consumer Perception and Response' (2020) 33 Current Opinion in Food Science 69.

be designed with ease of use and handling in mind.⁴² Many customers favour environmentally friendly packaging materials and designs that reduce waste and have negative environmental effects.⁴³ Thus, shop managers must consider packaging shape when choosing which products to offer, and users have a more pleasurable experience when handling and using well-shaped packaging.⁴⁴

3.3 Policy, Legal and Sustainability Dimensions of Toiletries Packaging

Packaging today does far more than protect, contain, or label a product; it has become a meaningful part of the broader sustainability conversation.⁴⁵

⁴⁶ As concerns about environmental damage, resource scarcity, and mounting waste have grown, governments and organisations around the world have stepped in with policies and legal frameworks to push packaging in a greener direction.⁴⁷ ⁴⁸ In the toiletries industry specifically, packaging is a notable contributor to plastic waste, making sustainability an increasingly pressing concern for both manufacturers and consumers.⁴⁹

42 AM Darwish and others, 'Packaging, Logistics, and Storage Strategies for Minimizing Postharvest Decay of Perishable Commodities' in *Postharvest Management of Fresh Produce* (2023) 323.

43 G Prakash and others, 'Do Altruistic and Egoistic Values Influence Consumers' Attitudes and Purchase Intentions towards Eco-Friendly Packaged Products? An Empirical Investigation' (2019) 50 *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services* 163.

44 I Rizomyliotis and others, 'Sustaining Brand Loyalty: The Moderating Role of Green Consumption Values' (2021) 30 *Business Strategy and the Environment* 3025.

45 MK Eriksen and A Olsson, 'Strategizing for Sustainable Packaging: A Systematic Literature Review of Drivers, Barriers, and Practices' (2022) 31 *Sustainable Production and Consumption* 678.

46 B Nemat, SI Hallstedt and D Peck, 'Sustainable Packaging Design Strategies: A Review of Environmental and Resource Efficiency Approaches' (2023) 397 *Journal of Cleaner Production* 136485.

47 B Geueke, K Groh and J Muncke, 'European Union Policy and Legislation on Packaging and Packaging Waste: Implications for Food Packaging' (2023) 132 *Trends in Food Science & Technology* 68.

48 United Nations Environment Programme, *Global Plastics Treaty: Zero Draft and Policy Options for Packaging and Single-Use Products* (UNEP, 2024).

49 JS Yeo, E Kwon and S Kim, 'Consumer Responses to Eco-Friendly Packaging in Cosmetic Products: The Role of Environmental Concern and Perceived Effectiveness' (2023) 15 *Sustainability* 6172.

On the policy side, governments have moved toward regulations that encourage reducing, reusing, recycling, and recovering packaging materials.⁵⁰ The goal is to limit environmental harm across the entire lifecycle of packaging, from the moment materials are produced, through distribution and consumer use, all the way to disposal.⁵¹ Many of these policies draw on circular economy thinking, in which materials are kept in use for as long as possible rather than discarded, thereby reducing waste and preserving natural resources.⁵²

Legally, the focus shifts to compliance, basically, what manufacturers are required to do when it comes to packaging materials, labelling, environmental claims, consumer protection, and waste handling (Horne, 2023). Legislation in this space typically requires brands to provide clear, accurate information on ingredients, disposal guidance, recycling symbols, and any environmental claims they make.⁵³

Sustainability has also become a factor that consumers genuinely consider when deciding what to buy, especially in the toiletries sector.⁵⁴ At its core, sustainable packaging aims to reduce environmental impact without sacrificing a product's performance or convenience.⁵⁵ Research increasingly shows that consumers are growing more environmentally aware and tend to gravitate toward brands that visibly commit to greener packaging practices.⁵⁶ This shift in consumer values has not gone

50 OECD, *Global Plastics Outlook: Economic Drivers, Environmental Impacts and Policy Options* (OECD Publishing, 2022).

51 S Guerrero-Pineda, ME Quintero-Alejo and J Villamil, 'Sustainable Packaging in the Circular Economy: A Systematic Literature Review and Research Agenda' (2023) 194 *Resources, Conservation and Recycling* 106890.

52 J Kirchherr, D Reike and M Hekkert, 'Governing the Circular Economy Transition: Policy Mixes for Plastics and Packaging' (2024) 28 *Journal of Industrial Ecology* 134

53 OECD, *Global Plastics Outlook: Economic Drivers, Environmental Impacts and Policy Options* (OECD Publishing, 2022).

54 O Mhlana and T Moloi, 'Green Packaging and Consumer Purchase Behaviour for Personal Care Products in Emerging Markets' (2024) 16 *Sustainability* 845.

55 JS Yeo, E Kwon and S Kim, 'Consumer Responses to Eco-Friendly Packaging in Cosmetic Products: The Role of Environmental Concern and Perceived Effectiveness' (2023) 15 *Sustainability* 6172

56 L Magnier and J Schoormans, 'The Role of Sustainable Packaging Cues in Shaping Consumer Perceptions and Purchase Intentions' (2023) 159 *Journal of Business Research* 113708.

unnoticed at the corporate level. Many toiletries companies are now embracing eco-friendly packaging not only to shrink their environmental footprint but also to strengthen their reputation and meet stakeholder expectations.⁵⁷ Thus, environmental benefits, sustainable packaging can also shape how consumers perceive a brand, whether they intend to buy it again, and how loyal they ultimately become.

3.4 Consumer Purchasing Decision Making

Customer decision-making is the process by which a purchaser considers the advantages and disadvantages of their selections before deciding on one.⁵⁸ A customer's decision-making process usually consists of five steps: identifying an issue, obtaining information, assessing alternatives, purchasing, and acting after the purchase. The researcher will focus on only three elements because the main objective of this study is to investigate how toiletry packaging affects consumers' decisions to buy; as a result, the study's focus on economic and social issues is broader. Customers' intent to buy is based on how well they think the product will meet their usage expectations. Packaging thus significantly influences consumers' decision-making process through the internal and external signals it transmits.⁵⁹

Individual Factors - Individual aspects are essential in customer purchasing decisions. The aspects above include age, occupation, motivation, lifestyle, and income. These could explain why, if our "situation" shifts, so do our choices. Undoubtedly, the distinct attributes of every customer impact their decision-making and purchasing behaviours.⁶⁰

57 MK Eriksen and A Olsson, 'Strategizing for Sustainable Packaging: A Systematic Literature Review of Drivers, Barriers, and Practices' (2022) 31 Sustainable Production and Consumption 678.

58 S Qazzafi, 'Factor Affecting Consumer Buying Behavior: A Conceptual Study' (2020) 8 International Journal for Scientific Research & Development 1205.

59 IT Trigui and M Abdelmoula, 'The Effect of Packaging Size on Purchase Intention: The Case of Tunisian Olive Oil in the USA Market' (2019) 8 International Journal of Business and Economics Research 320.

60 S Qazzafi, 'Factor Affecting Consumer Buying Behavior: A Conceptual Study' (2020) 8 International Journal for Scientific Research & Development 1205.

Social factors - Social influences significantly influence consumer purchase decisions. These elements, derived from a person's contacts and social relationships, significantly impact the decisions they make when purchasing goods or services. Additionally, social influences impact customer behaviour.⁶¹ Family, friends, and reference groups are examples of social factors.

Purchase Situation - The term "purchase situation" refers to the specific context, setting, or collection of events that lead a customer to decide whether to acquire a good or service. It includes elements that jointly influence the purchasing process and final decision, such as the buyer's needs, the time of the purchase, and the physical surroundings.⁶²

4. HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

A hypothesis is a precise, testable assertion or prediction regarding the relationship between two or more study variables. It is a claim that may be verified by empirical investigation and analysis. Alternate hypotheses are formulated to guide and structure the research process, helping researchers test the positive relationships implied by the assumptions.

H₁ - The colour of the package and the decision made by the customer to buy are positively correlated.

Colours can evoke emotions and create a certain mood. Thus, brands often use colour psychology to elicit specific feelings that align with their products, and that positive emotional connections can impact purchasing decisions.⁶³ Colours can convey information about a product, such as

61Y Durmaz and G Gündüz, 'A Theoretical Approach to Social Factors Influencing Consumer Behaviour' (2021) 9 International Journal of Research – GRANTHAALAYAH 252.

62 D Dalila and others, 'The Mediating Effect of Personal Values on the Relationships between Attitudes, Subjective Norms, Perceived Behavioral Control and Intention to Use' (2020) 10 Management Science Letters 153.

63 B Nemat, SI Hallstedt and D Peck, 'Sustainable Packaging Design Strategies: A Review of Environmental and Resource Efficiency Approaches' (2023) 397 Journal of Cleaner Production 136485.

freshness, quality, or flavour.⁶⁴ Specifically, green might be associated with freshness, while gold can convey a sense of luxury in some toiletry products. However, personal preferences, experiences, and cultural backgrounds influence how individuals perceive and react to colours.

H₂ - The printed information on a package and consumers' purchasing decision-making are positively correlated.

The presence of printed information or instructions on product packaging can indeed positively impact consumer purchasing decisions. Previous studies noted that printed information provides consumers with details about a product, including its features, uses, and benefits. This helps consumers better understand their purchasing, leading to more informed decisions. Clear and accurate information builds trust between consumers and brands.⁶⁵ Customers are more inclined to believe in a toiletry product and brand when they feel knowledgeable, influencing their decision to purchase. They are more likely to choose products that provide clear guidelines for safe and effective use.

H₃ - Consumers' purchasing decision-making process positively correlates with the packaging size.

Consumers may perceive a more significant quantity as a better deal, especially if the price remains reasonable. Larger packages may offer better value for money.⁶⁶ Consumers with larger households or those who share toiletry products with family or friends may prefer larger package sizes to meet the needs of multiple users. Products meant to be portable or consumed on the go, such as personal care items, may be more popular in smaller packaging for convenience.

64 O Mhlanga and T Moloi, 'Green Packaging and Consumer Purchase Behaviour for Personal Care Products in Emerging Markets' (2024) 16 Sustainability 845.

65 J Drobac and others, 'Green Face of Packaging – Sustainability Issues of the Cosmetic Industry Packaging' in *MATEC Web of Conferences* (2020) vol 318, 01022.

66 IT Trigui and M Abdelmoula, 'The Effect of Packaging Size on Purchase Intention: The Case of Tunisian Olive Oil in the USA Market' (2019) 8 International Journal of Business and Economics Research 320

H₄ - Consumer decision-making regarding purchases positively correlates with the images on the package.

Influencing consumer impressions and decisions is a significant function of visual components, such as images and graphics. Engaging and visually appealing imagery can capture consumers' attention. When a package stands out on the shelf through attractive visuals, it increases the likelihood that consumers will notice and consider the product.⁶⁷ Imagery can effectively convey product features, benefits, and usage and showcase the product in action, highlighting its key attributes and helping consumers understand what to expect. Well-chosen imagery can evoke emotions, and emotional connections can influence purchasing decisions, as consumers may be drawn to products that resonate with their feelings, aspirations, or values.

H₅ - Consumer purchase decision-making positively correlates with the package's shape and relevancy.

The shape of the package contributes to its overall aesthetic appeal, as consumers are often drawn to visually appealing, unique packaging. A well-designed package that aligns with the product and its intended use can capture the consumer's attention and create a positive impression, and a distinctive package can attract attention and make the product more memorable.⁶⁸ This differentiation can be a key factor in influencing a consumer's decision-making process.

5. RESEARCH METHOD

This study adopted a quantitative research approach to examine the relationship between toiletry packaging features and consumer purchasing decision-making. Guided by a positivist research philosophy and deductive reasoning, the study tested hypothesised relationships derived from existing theory and literature using empirical data. A cross-sectional

67 TS Ntobela and I Mbukanma, 'Conceptual Interface between Sensory Marketing and Impulsive Buying Behaviour of Millennials in South Africa' (2024) 14 *Journal of Accounting and Management* 81.

68 B Tripathi, 'Impact of Packaging on Consumer Buying Behaviour' (2022) 9 *International Advanced Research Journal in Science, Engineering and Technology*.

research design was employed to capture respondents' perceptions at a single point in time. Data were collected through a structured, self-administered questionnaire. A pilot study was conducted to assess instrument clarity, reliability, and validity, with measurement properties evaluated using SmartPLS to ensure empirical robustness. The target population comprised consumers in Mthatha, while the sampling frame consisted of registered undergraduate students at Walter Sisulu University, Nelson Mandela Drive campus. A simple random sampling technique was used to minimise selection bias.

Using the Raosoft sample size calculator, a sample of 375 respondents was initially targeted from a population of 13,700 students. Due to network challenges and student protests, 207 usable responses were obtained. This sample size was deemed adequate for Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM). Data analysis was conducted using SmartPLS version 4.0 for structural equation modelling and SPSS version 26.0 for descriptive and demographic analysis. Ethical approval was obtained from the Walter Sisulu University Senate Research Ethics Committee (Ethics Protocol No: 008/2024/MBM/BME-8705), and all ethical standards regarding informed consent, confidentiality, and voluntary participation were upheld.

6. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Data collection involves obtaining and evaluating data from the unit of inquiry to address the study questions and develop and evaluate prospective outcomes. The researcher used the primary data collection method: questionnaires distributed via Google Forms to respondents via the Whatup app, as it is the least costly and most effective method. Other forms were distributed as hard copies where necessary.

6.1 Reliability Test

Cronbach's alpha and Composite reliability values were used to test the internal consistency of measurement instruments. Findings suggested that the benchmarks for Cronbach's Alpha values (α) that are $\alpha < 0.60$ are considered acceptable, indicating poor internal consistency amongst the items in the scale. On $0.60 \leq \alpha < 0.70$, it is marginally acceptable; on

$0.70 \leq \alpha < 0.80$, it is acceptable, indicating moderate internal consistency among the items.⁶⁹ The measures on the questionnaire consistently assess the same notion when $0.80 \leq \alpha < 0.90$, which is considered acceptable internal consistency. When the internal consistency is $0.90 \leq \alpha$, it is considered exceptional. Conversely, composite reliability ranges from 0 to 1, with higher values indicating better reliability.

Table 1: Cronbach’s alpha and Composite reliability Output

	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (rho_a)	Composite reliability (rho_c)	Average variance extracted (AVE)
Colours on Packaging	0.939	0.942	0.953	0.803
Consumer Purchasing Decision Making	0.929	0.932	0.940	0.566
Images on Packaging	0.897	0.900	0.924	0.709
Information and Instruction on Packaging	0.921	0.923	0.940	0.759
Shape and Relevance of Packaging	0.894	0.896	0.922	0.702
Size of Packaging	0.873	0.879	0.907	0.662

Table 1 shows that all instruments' Cronbach's alphas are greater than 0.60. This demonstrates the precision of the tools used in the research. The results of the researcher's use of SmartPLS software to verify the constructs' dependability are also shown in Table 4.6. The study's reliability measures for evaluating various packaging-related constructions achieve or exceed the acceptable reliability threshold, as indicated by the composite reliability values for all variables.

⁶⁹J Barbera and others, 'Clarity on Cronbach's Alpha Use' (2020) 98 Journal of Chemical Education 257.

6.2 Validity Test

When the standardised average variance extracted (AVE) of any variable is greater than the correlation between that same variable and any other variable in the model, discriminant validity is verified, as per the Fornell-Larcker Criterion. There is no globally accepted baseline for specific thresholds; nevertheless, values above 0.5 are generally regarded as acceptable. For strong discriminant validity, each variable's standardised AVE should ideally exceed 0.7.⁷⁰

Table 2: Fornell-Lacker Criterion

	Colours on Packagin g	Consume r Purchasin g Decision Making	Images on Packagin g	Informatio n and Instruction on Packaging	Shape and Relevanc e of Packagin g	Size of Packaging
Colours on Packaging	0.896					
Consumer Purchasing Decision Making	0.441	0.752				
Images on Packaging	0.433	0.547	0.842			
Informatio n and Instruction on Packaging	0.529	0.366	0.419	0.871		
Shape and Relevance of Packaging	0.272	0.496	0.494	0.339	0.838	

70 GW Cheung and others, 'Reporting Reliability, Convergent and Discriminant Validity with Structural Equation Modeling: A Review and Best-Practice Recommendations' (2023) Asia Pacific Journal of Management 1.

Size of Packaging	0.398	0.374	0.453	0.540	0.376	0.813
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Table 2 shows the square root of the AVE for each latent variable (indicating convergent validity) and the latent variables' correlations, displayed on the diagonal. Because the latent variables correlate between 0.529 and 0.272, and each latent variable's square root of its AVE falls between 0.752 and 0.896, the study's results demonstrate the latent variables' discriminant validity.

6.3 Correlation Matrix

Accordingly, correlation is the extent to which two variables are statistically related.⁷¹ Thus, the strength of the correlation is classified into the following categories when taking into account the absolute values of *r*, the correlation coefficient: Values in the range of 0 to 0.19 are considered extremely weak, 0.20 to 0.39 are considered weak, 0.40 to 0.59 are considered moderate, 0.6 to 0.79 are considered vital, and 0.8 to 1 are considered very strong. There is no relationship when the correlation is *r* = 0. In the case of negative values of *r*, the relationship's intensity is classified as weak for *r* ≤ -0.33 < 0, moderate for *r* ≤ -0.67 < -0.33, and vital for *r* ≤ -1 < -0.67. The researcher used a correlation matrix to assess the relationship between the independent and dependent variables in this inquiry.

71 Y Li and others, 'Effects of Cross-Loadings on Determining the Number of Factors to Retain' (2020) 27 Structural Equation Modeling: A Multidisciplinary Journal 841

Table 3: Correlation Matrix Results

	Colours on Packaging	Consumer Purchasing Decision Making	Images on Packaging	Information and Instruction on Packaging	Shape and Relevance of Packaging	Size of Packaging
Colours on Packaging	1.000					
Consumer Purchasing Decision Making	0.440	1.000				
Images on Packaging	0.432	0.548	1.000			
Information and Instruction on Packaging	0.484	0.359	0.395	1.000		
Shape and Relevance of Packaging	0.262	0.494	0.497	0.339	1.000	
Size of Packaging	0.400	0.374	0.455	0.535	0.376	1.000

The correlation matrix is shown in Table 3; since all correlations are positive, the variables move in the same direction. There are some variables, though, that have a weakly positive association. The relationship between Shape and Relevance of Packaging and Colours on Packaging is the strongest, with a value of 0.272; the relationship between Images on Packages and Consumer Purchasing Decision Making is 0.548, which is a moderately positive relationship.

6.4 Structural Equation Modelling (SEM)

The structural equation modelling (SEM) presents the statistical method for analysing the relations between latent and observable variables. In this study, the five independent variables and one dependent variable are shown below to determine how they relate to one another.

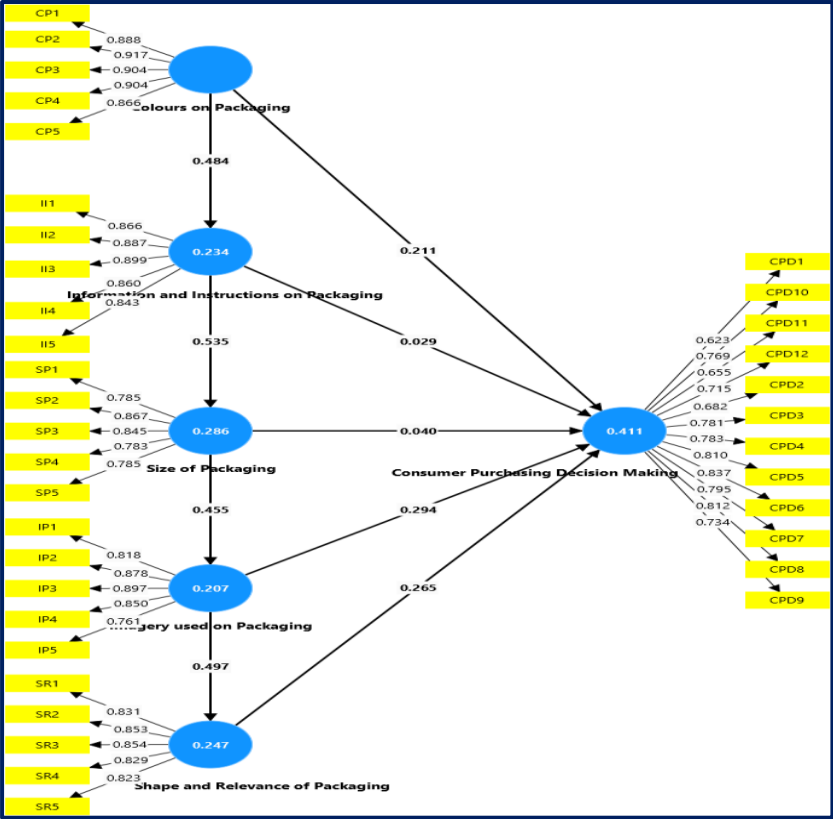


Figure 1: Structural Equation Model (SEM)

All five examined hypotheses showed positive correlations, with images on packaging having the most significant relationship with consumer purchasing decision-making (0.294), followed by shape and relevance (0.265) and colours on packaging (0.211). The packaging size, information, and instructions have weak positive relationships with consumer purchasing decision-making, with coefficients of 0.040 and 0.029, respectively. Additionally, this research aimed to investigate the influence of packaging on consumers' toiletry purchasing decisions. Therefore, the

packaging is the domain variable, with five micro variables; this research explores the relationship between the micro variables to understand their correlation as measures of the domain variable, packaging. From Figure 1, all micro variables have a strong positive correlation.

Table 4 Path Analysis Results

Hypothesized relationship	Hypotheses	Path Co-efficient	T-statistics	P-value	OUTCOME
CP ➡ CPD	H1	0.211	2.603	0.009	Significant & supported
II ➡ CPD	H2	0.029	0.366	0.715	Insignificant & not supported
SP ➡ CPD	H3	0.040	0.484	0.628	Insignificant & not supported
IP ➡ CPD	H4	0.294	3.635	0.000	Significant & supported
SR ➡ CPD	H5	0.265	3.702	0.000	Significant & supported

Note: CP Colours on Packaging; II

Information and Instructions on Packaging; SP Size of Packaging; IP Images on Packages; SR Shape and Relevance; CPD Consumer Decision Making. Kindly note that a significant and supported value indicates that the association is statistically significant and that the hypothesis is

supported. Insignificant and not supported indicates no statistically significant association, so the hypothesis is not supported.

The researcher used bootstrapping to determine the hypothesis's significance. For the proposed hypothesis to be significant and acceptable, the t-statistics should be larger than 1.96 and the p-value ≤ 0.05 . As a result of the hypotheses in Table 4, H2 with $p=0.715$, T-statistics=0.366, and H3 with $p=0.628$, T-statistics=0.484 were determined to be insignificant and unsupported in this investigation. H1 had a t-statistic value of 2.603 and a p-value of 0.009. H1, H2, and H4 were determined to be significant and supported because H4 had a p-value of 0.000 and a t-statistic value of 3.635, and H5 had a p-value of 0.000 and a t-statistic value of 3.702.

The relationships between variables in a proposed causal model are examined and measured using a statistical method known as path analysis.⁷² The relationship between two variables that the researcher anticipates based on theory is shown in the hypothesised Relationship column of Table 4. Every hypothesis has a corresponding particular link between variables in the hypothesis's column. For example, H1 supports the hypothesis that consumer purchasing decision-making (CPD) and packaging colours (CP) are correlated. The path coefficient indicates the strength and direction of the relationship between the variables. When the independent variable changes by 1 unit, it shows how much the dependent variable (CPD) changes. Researchers use t-statistics to assess whether the observed correlation between variables is statistically significant. The chance of observing a connection among the variables if there is no genuine association in the population is indicated by the p-value associated with each path coefficient. Outcome: This column summarises the outcome of each hypothesis test based on the p-value:

7. DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

The study's findings underscore the significant influence of various packaging elements on consumer purchasing decisions within the toiletries

72 H Zhang, 'Structural Equation Modeling' in *Models and Methods for Management Science* (Springer Nature Singapore 2022) 363.

market, aligning with and challenging existing literature in important ways.

Colour Perception and Consumer Purchase Decision-making - The significant positive relationship between colour perception and consumer purchase decisions corroborates the existing literature, underscoring the critical role of colour in shaping consumer behaviour. Prior research highlights how colour can evoke emotional responses and shape perceptions of brand identity, thereby affecting purchasing decisions.⁷³ The positive coefficient reinforces that favourably perceived packaging colours enhance the likelihood of purchase, underscoring the importance of strategic colour use in toiletry packaging to attract and retain consumers.

Information and Instructions on Packaging - Contrary to expectations and previous findings, some other studies found that information and instructions on packaging did not significantly influence consumer purchase decisions in the toiletries market.⁷⁴ This suggests that, despite clear and concise product information enhancing consumer confidence and trust, other factors, such as brand recognition or packaging aesthetics, might play a more pivotal role in influencing purchasing behaviour. This could imply a market context in which quick decision-making processes deprioritise detailed information.

Size of Packaging - The study found that packaging size had an insignificant effect on consumer purchasing decisions. This finding diverges from the literature, which suggests that packaging size might influence perceptions of value and utility. Consumers prioritise product quality, brand image, or other packaging features in the toiletries sector,

73 M Gabbas, K Kim and JA Self, 'Colour in package design: A case study of user response to skincare packaging colour' (2021) 34(1) *Archives of Design Research* 5.

74 LLM Turunen and M Halme, 'Communicating Actionable Sustainability Information to Consumers: The Shades of Green Instrument for Fashion' (2021) 297 *Journal of Cleaner Production* 126605.

potentially due to the standardised nature of these products and their regular use.⁷⁵

Imagery on Packaging - The robust positive relationship between packaging imagery and consumer purchase decisions emphasises the vital role of visual elements in toiletry packaging. Imagery effectively creates emotional connections, conveys brand identity, and quickly communicates product benefits. This finding aligns with the literature by Gil-Pérez et al. (2020), highlighting that high-quality, relevant imagery can significantly enhance consumer engagement and purchasing likelihood in the toiletries market. The positive coefficient confirms that appealing imagery draws consumer attention and drives sales.

Shape and Relevance of Packaging - The study found that the shape and relevance of packaging have a significant, positive impact on consumer purchasing decisions, aligning with previous studies.⁷⁶ Packaging shapes can attract consumer attention and influence perceptions of product quality and usability. Ergonomically designed or uniquely shaped packages enhance product appeal, making them more likely to be chosen by consumers. Additionally, the packaging's relevance, including its protective qualities and ease of use, is crucial in purchase decisions, suggesting that consumers value both aesthetic and functional aspects of packaging.

In conclusion, these findings highlight critical aspects of packaging design that can be strategically leveraged to influence consumer behaviour in the toiletries market, suggesting avenues for further research and practical applications in packaging innovation.

75 IT Trigui and M Abdelmoula, 'The Effect of Packaging Size on Purchase Intention: The Case of Tunisian Olive Oil in the USA Market' (2019) 8 *International Journal of Business and Economics Research* 320.

76 I Rizomyliotis and others, 'Sustaining Brand Loyalty: The Moderating Role of Green Consumption Values' (2021) 30 *Business Strategy and the Environment* 3025.

8. EMPIRICAL FINDINGS AND BUSINESS POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Colours on Packaging and Consumer Purchasing Decision-making - Hypothesis 1 confirmed a positive correlation between the colours used in packaging and consumer purchasing decisions, with a path coefficient of 0.211. This suggests that vibrant and attractive packaging colours capture consumer attention and evoke positive emotions, thereby increasing the likelihood of purchase. In the competitive toiletries market, strategic colour choices can be a powerful differentiator, helping products stand out on crowded shelves. Companies should leverage colour psychology and aesthetics in packaging design to enhance visibility and appeal, ensuring alignment with brand identity to capture consumer attention.

Information and Instructions on Packaging and Consumer Purchasing Decision-making - Hypothesis 2 validated a positive relationship between informative packaging and purchasing decisions, albeit with a smaller path coefficient of 0.029. This highlights the critical role of clear, relevant information in shaping consumer behaviour, particularly in fast-paced shopping environments. Packaging that includes detailed product ingredients, usage instructions, benefits, and certifications can empower consumers to make informed decisions aligned with their preferences and values. Transparency and clarity should be prioritised by including comprehensive product information on packaging. This approach not only facilitates better consumer decision-making but also builds trust.

Size of Packaging and Consumer Purchasing Decision-making - Hypothesis 3 demonstrated a weak positive relationship between packaging size and purchasing decisions, indicated by a path coefficient of 0.040. This may reflect consumer priorities beyond packaging size, as toiletry products are often used frequently and repurchased regularly. Consumers might focus more on content value or reusability rather than size alone. While size is a lower priority, innovative packaging designs that offer convenience, sustainability, or multi-use functionalities can attract consumers who value practicality and eco-friendliness.

Images on Packaging and Consumer Purchasing Decision-making - Hypothesis 4 established a strong positive relationship between packaging imagery and consumer decisions, with a path coefficient of 0.294. This underscores the significance of visual cues in effectively marketing toiletry products. Imagery, such as product visuals, ingredient highlights, or depicting usage benefits, can elicit emotional responses, strengthen brand identity, and visually communicate product benefits to consumers. Invest in high-quality imagery that resonates emotionally and communicates clear product benefits, reinforcing the brand message and appeal.

Shape and Relevance and Consumer Purchasing Decision-making - Hypothesis 5 identified a moderate positive relationship between packaging shape and relevance and consumer purchasing decisions, reflected by a path coefficient of 0.265. This suggests that the physical shape, design, and alignment with consumer expectations are influential factors. In the toiletries market, while consumers appreciate aesthetic and functional design, they also consider factors such as product efficacy, brand reputation, and value for money, alongside packaging attributes. Focus on packaging designs that are visually appealing and functionally relevant to consumer needs. Consider ergonomic designs or materials that enhance usability and consumer experience. By implementing these strategies, companies can optimise their packaging to influence consumer buying behaviours and maintain a competitive edge in the toiletry market.

9. CONCLUSION AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS

The findings have important implications for sustainable development. Packaging serves not only as a marketing tool but also as a mechanism for promoting responsible consumption and sustainable production practices. Packaging designs that effectively communicate product information, sustainability credentials, and environmental benefits can influence consumers towards more informed purchasing decisions. Furthermore, environmentally responsible packaging solutions can reduce waste generation, improve resource efficiency, and support circular economy objectives. Consequently, organisations should align packaging

innovation strategies with sustainability goals to balance commercial performance with environmental responsibility.

This study's conclusions and recommendations are based on the quantitative analysis of how packaging influences consumer decision-making in the toiletry sector. The research highlights the significant impact of various packaging characteristics, such as colour, imagery, information, size, shape, and overall packaging relevance, on consumer behaviour. Through empirical analysis, the study found that these factors play a critical role in shaping consumer choices in the toiletry market, underscoring the importance of attractive, informative packaging.

Optimise Packaging Design: Toiletry manufacturers should prioritise optimising packaging design to enhance product attractiveness and resonate with target consumers. This involves strategically using colour, imagery, and clear, engaging information to capture consumer attention and provide valuable insights into product benefits and usage.

Incorporate Educational Content: Including educational content on packaging can significantly influence consumer decisions. Providing key information about product ingredients, usage instructions, and benefits can enhance consumer trust and satisfaction, increasing product appeal.

Adapt to Market Trends: Given the dynamic nature of market trends and consumer preferences, companies must regularly review and adjust their packaging strategies. This involves staying attuned to emerging trends, analysing competitor actions, and gathering customer feedback to remain responsive to changing consumer demands.

Continuous Consumer Feedback: Companies should continuously implement mechanisms to collect and analyse consumer feedback regarding packaging. This can provide valuable insights into consumer preferences and perceptions, allowing businesses to refine their packaging strategies accordingly and maintain a competitive edge.

By focusing on these strategies, organisations can significantly enhance the effectiveness of their packaging, leading to greater consumer engagement and higher sales in the toiletries market. The study further contributes to sustainable development by highlighting the role of packaging in supporting responsible consumption, sustainable production practices, and environmentally conscious consumer behaviour.