

THE IMPORTANCE OF PACKAGING COMMUNICATION INTERFACES ON INTENTION TO PURCHASE SUPERFOODS HEALTHY PRODUCTS: TAPPING TO RISING HEALTHY FOOD TRENDS IN TIMES OF COVID-19 EPIDEMIC

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ABSTRACT

One mega customer trend in modern marketing has been the interest in total well-being and holistic health conscious particularly driven by COVID-19 raising production opportunities. Pertaining to this coronavirus pandemic situation, the biggest innovation opportunity is healthy indulgence. In particular, the impact of Covid-19 on Superfoods Market has been representing incremental growth since the last few years. Due to the rise in healthcare and medical expenses for evolving epidemic lifestyle customers, food innovation and medical discoveries are expected to reinforce the preference for superfoods among contemporary consumers. Simultaneously, urban customers leveraged their demand for nutrient-rich, natural food that contains essential minerals and vitamins in view of the rising health concerns and disease lifestyles. Superfoods, thus, have become a common dietary products among the expanding geriatric populace that requires immunity boosting products, thereby facilitating significant market expansion. Along with all the extensive key development tools in the superfoods market, packaging communication interfaces are now widely acknowledged as a potential means of deliveries better product value on the customers' perspectives. In rapid urbanization, food packaging solutions that are commonly versatile and environmentally friendly. Communication through the prominence of food packaging generates not only visually appealing but also providing product knowledge and rising brand awareness among customers. As a consequence, the growing influence of the packaging communication tools and their technological developments as those tools provide extensive information are encouraging consumers to selecting superfoods. The possible success of superfoods is undoubtedly based on how packaging communication interfaces can influence customer purchase intention. This study, therefore, aims to explore the role of packaging communication interfaces in terms of packaging visualization, packaging photography, packaging color, packaging printed information, packaging labelling, packaging materials and packaging innovation enhancing customer intention to purchase superfoods. The data collection employed a survey method with structured questionnaires which were distributed to 400 respondents who purchased superfoods products through several channels of online and offline markets. The results of the study supported that seller and buyer interactions through packaging communication tools had potential to strengthen customer demand for consuming superfoods products. Out of the seven packaging communication interfaces, while five factors including packaging visual communication, packaging photography,

packaging printed information, packaging labelling and packaging innovation were determined to influence customers to purchasing superfoods, packaging color and packaging materials did not showed positively relationship with intention to purchase superfoods products.

Index Terms—COVID-19 Crisis, Packaging communication interfaces, Superfoods healthy drinks,

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I. INTRODUCTION

Globalization and urbanization are modernizing lifestyle, speed, convenience, ready to eat products are increasing priorities for busy pattern of living. Especially, during the crisis of COVID-19, health problems are generating relatively growth in sales of health and wellness food products. The growth of health and wellness foods in response to diet-related health problems and illnesses, consumers have been

spending heavily on health and wellness products. The Asia-Pacific region leads the way in rapid growth of the market for healthy drinks, (Economic Intelligence Center, 2013). Amidst rapid urbanization and rising personalization, more than 79 percent of consumers in Thailand are embracing their benefits of personal wellness and self-betterment. An increased standard of living and rising aspirations for a more fulfilling lifestyle and encourage Thai consumers to

search for health diets (Lester, 2018). The production and development of advanced processed products including plant-based, medical food, herbal extracts, dietary supplements and superfoods are still in the early stage (Kasikornbank, 2019). Superfoods market was valued at \$166.80 billion in 2018 and is expected to reach \$274.21 billion by 2025, with a CAGR of 7.36% in that time. COVID19 has accelerated the already thriving trend for conscious consumption of superfoods (Bulliqi, 2020)

The presence of superfoods prominently appears and are marketed for exotic health benefits, representing rising aspirations for a more fulfilling lifestyles (Scrinis, 2013; Weitkamp and Eidsvaag 2014). There are several findings suggested that Superfoods can be classified as natural foods that are superior in terms of their nutritional values. They serve as nutrient-rich foods that are especially beneficial to the consumer's health and wellbeing when compared to other foods (Thaifex Anuga Asia, 2021; Thomson Reuters Foundation, 2018).

Consumers look beyond the reality of the product and its ingredients, packaging are purposed to design to present a good product image and positioning of the product that extends well beyond its physical attributes. Packaging can be an important communication tools through creating an impression of the product, distinctive product image and its identity. In other instances, packaging Design factors such as size, shape, color, lettering and labelling all contribute to the appeal of a package and can be as important as a communicable message in determining the consumers' purchase decisions (Belch & Belch, 2003) as modern consumers basically seek out claims on product packaging that fall in line with their general needs of wellness and wellbeing.

Even though the market grows and consumers become increasingly aware and attracted to health-boosting of superfoods, contemporary practices relating superfoods and indigenous producers are complex, and engage with ideas about responsible consumption in the context of global marketing. Furthermore, most consumers still lack of knowledge on its natural formulations and nutritional value. Providing nutritional and dietary information through the channels of packaging communication can typically paint both inspirational and aspirational to customers. Consumers may begin to seek information toward packaging communication and help guiding them in their purchase decision and aid in their desire for healthier lifestyles. Hence, the objective of the study is to explore the

relationship between packaging communicational interfaces on consumers' purchase decision for superfoods healthy drinks.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A. PACKAGING COMMUNICATIONAL MESSAGE

Packaging provides and communicates information to the consumer in several ways. For example, package labelling conveys legal requirements for product identification, nutritional value, ingredient declaration, and manufacturer information. Additionally, the printed information on package and labels can encourage potential buyers to purchase the product (Renaud, 2007). Furthermore, the customer can adopt product on the basis of its innovative packaging and its materials, which shows the relation between buying behavior and innovation of packaging (Sharma, 2008). Packaging design including, color, visual stimulation and photography plays an important role in a potential customer's decision making process. Packaging design is more importantly factor when consumers searching for food products especially in healthy food products (Theben et. al., 2020). Communication through commodity packaging is an important factor to influence consumer psychology, particularly in the food industry (Thakur et al., 2017).

Packaging Color plays an important role in influencing the potential consumer decision-making process; distinctive colors can unquestionably attract customer attention (Mitval, 2012). Packaging colors are one of the vital elements that will set your product differentiate from your competitor. Packaging colors are designated as subliminal interfaces in order to inspire any potential customer to purchase the product. Color is the best way to reflect and enhance a unified image and branding of your product as it is such a visual medium (Empower, 2008). Color incongruences in food packaging can influence consumers' product evaluations and brand perceptions. It is thus very important to choose the correct color for conveying interfaces to targeted consumers (Assunta et.al., 2018).

H1: There is a significant relationship between packaging color and intentions to purchase superfoods

Packaging visual communication is one of the main attributes when making a purchase decision. An outstanding quality of graphic design for food packaging acts as a powerful communicative

channel to attract consumers. Consumers, in general, pay attention to the functional attributes of products as well as their aesthetic attributes (Pibool, 2020). Visual packaging design revealed the effects of consumer attitudes toward visual food packaging on perceived product quality, product value, and brand preference. (Wang, 2013)

H2: There is a significant relationship between packaging visual communication and intentions to purchase superfoods

Packaging photography is the image in the customers' mind which help to identify the product recognition, product image and its value proposition by explaining benefits of the product are and what its core value is. Packaging photography background is essentially descriptive identifying details, features and qualities of the product yet often used in an inspirational aspects conveying a sense of imagination, ambition, and social image (Hoyer and Mclannis, 2010). Accordingly, it is another important factor to increase customer attention and increase familiarity with the particular product (Ahmad, 2013).

H3: There is a significant relationship between packaging photography and intentions to purchase superfoods

Silayoi and Speece (2004) stated that printed information on packaging can form a special role of providing informational element. Printed information on packaging creates product identity, enhances product recognition, and optimize product knowledge (Ulrich, 2009) as it represents the primary vehicle for communication product benefits with consumers as well as providing product details including nutritional value and added ingredients. Appropriately delivered information on the packaging has a strong impact on consumer purchase decisions, as printed information on packaging both created product credibility and reduces uncertainty. Consumers are becoming more attentive and informative, labeled information particular in healthy products, the packaging printed information are more than conscious (Coulson, 2000). nutritional primitivism functions as a knowledge framework through which consumers are encouraged to understand food and make judgments and choices based on a particular set of values and logic provided on packaging printed information (Loyer and Knight, 2018). As a consequence, the information revealed in the

package strengthening customer beliefs and consumers' decisions in choosing superfoods products (Wijaya and Annissa, 2020).

H4: There is a significant relationship between printed information on packaging and intentions to purchase superfoods

Packaging Labeling is an important element of packaging which attracts customer attention as well as influences consumers when making a purchase. As composing unique, innovative and attractive labelling styles on packaging reflects product value proposition. In particular, food packaging labelling is also a governance space in the sense that it is a direct influence the consumption choices of individual consumers based on their self-identity and self-expression (Parker et.al., 2019)

H5: There is a significant relationship between packaging labelling and intentions to purchase superfoods

Bringing packaging Innovation can create relationship between buyer and seller, innovative packaging is said to be able to increase the product value in the customer mind (Hysen, 2008). Recently, in this dynamic marketing environment, packaging innovation are required to associated on the basis of consumer oriented including safety, nutritional and wellness as well as social oriented including green marketing and social responsibilities (Silayoi and Speece, 2004). In most instances, customers will increase their satisfaction of an individual product when its packaging is innovative. Hence, packaging innovation plays a pivotal role in consumer decision making, in particular, FMCG products (Deliya and Parmar, 2012).

H6: There is a significant relationship between innovative packaging and intentions to purchase superfoods

It is suggested that the packaging materials can communicate, reflect and exhibit some salient features and intangible product attribute. Choices of packing materials can convey special interfaces of products or brands which ultimately turn to a unique selling proposition (Asadhollahi and Givee, 2007). The consumer decision making of purchasing products are typically on the basis of packaging materials, as a consequence, packaging materials have an important role in shopping behavior (Rita, 2009). Therefore, selecting appropriate packaging materials not only depending on the product functionalities but also

concerning the needs of an individual consumer (Smith, 2004). Packaging material trends in general are revolving around sustainability through lighter weight materials, flexible, and more eco-friendly such as recycled paper or biopolymer films (Lorenze, 2020), customers are more attention about social sustainability and environmental eco-friendly concerns (Fuhr, 2008). In the food market, packaging materials can be considered one of the components of supply capable of generating economic and psychological aspect (Allegra et.al., 2011).

H5: There is a significant relationship between packaging materials and intentions to purchase superfoods

B: Purchase Intention Purchase decision can be regarded as a sequence of choices formed by an individual consumer before making a decision to purchase, initiating by customers' willingness to fulfil their wants and needs, as a consequence, the consumer will reach a decision of purchasing, the desired brand, purchase quantity, and time to purchase products or services. These decisions can be influenced by providing information about their products or services that may inform consumer's assessment process (Schiffman and Kanuk, 2007). Prior research has shown that consumer purchase intentions are likely to be influenced by consumers' curiosity (Hill et al., 2016; Van de Ven et. al., 2005). Shim et al. (2001) also pointed out that consumers seeking more information about products have generally been considered to have a positive purchase intention, and the more understanding consumers have obtained, the more positive attitudes in relation to their beliefs towards the product.

One of the most common methods to transmit, display, and share product information that customers required to educate the knowledge of the product. The study of food packaging is important as packaging represents the first contact between consumer and product (Kobayashi and Benassi, 2015). Accordingly, packaging communication can be suggested as one of the important communication tools for encouraging customers' intention to purchase.

III. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Data were analyzed using combination methods; qualitative and quantitative method. Once a qualitative method, interviewing three customers who purchased superfoods from delivery channels, was conducted. Then, questionnaires were developed

based on multi-item scale of previous research studies and applied from interviewing recommendations. Afterwards, this paper constructs a multi-scale model for the measurement of packaging communicational interfaces and purchase intention. The model is applied to delivery services on smart phone application based. The data collection employed a survey method with structured questionnaires. All of the measurement items were adapted from previous studies. Packaging communicational interfaces regarded as packaging design including packaging color, packaging visual communication, and packaging photography were revised from the study of Theben et.al. (2020). Packaging Labelling and packaging printed information was developed based on the study of Renaud (2007), and Packaging innovation and packaging materials were applied from the study of Sharma (2008). The constructs of customer purchase intention was measured with five items developed from the original items of Schiffman and Kanuk (2007). Using Slovin's formula with 95% confidence level and 5% margin of error, the sample size is equal to 400 respondents who purchased superfoods through from delivery application. Nonprobability sampling technique which is Quota sampling was applied.

The Index of Item-Objective Congruence (IOC) was employed in this study to test the content validity of the items of the questionnaire, three experts were ranked items based on the score ranging from -1 to +1, all of the items corresponding to packaging communication interfaces and customer purchase intention were showed to be valid. We then calculated Cronbach's α , which is a measure of internal consistency reliability, for each multi-item scale. Descriptive Statistics were conducted to describe the data of the sample including Frequency, Percentage, mean and Standard deviation. Hypotheses testing using data analysis in multiple linear regression to describe the relationship between independent variables and dependent variables.

IV. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

A: FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was employed to assess the measurement model of all factors for the research structural model. The model exhibited acceptable fits to the data. The model fitted the data satisfactorily: $\chi^2 = 468.993$, $df = 259$, $p = 0.000$, GFI (goodness of fit) = 0.918, AGFI (adjusted goodness of fit) = 0.889, NFI (normed fit index) = 0.917, CFI (comparative fit index) = 0.961, Value of standardized RMR = 0.024 and RMSEA (root mean square error of approximation) = 0.045. All the items of factor

loadings in the constructs indicate that the model is not rejected and represented good model fit of the population. Confirmatory factor analysis was assigned to examine the convergent validity of each construct. The range for factor loadings was 0.540–0.837. Construct reliabilities, internal reliabilities using Cronbach’s alphas were examined and confirmed. Cronbach’s Alpha values for all constructs exceeded the criterion of 0.700 ranging from 0.784 to 0.896, which is above the acceptable threshold.

Multiple Linear Regression analysis was employed to test the influence of packaging communication message on purchasing superfoods products. As shown in Table 1, the results show that five independent variables including packaging visual communication, packaging photography, packaging printed information, packaging labelling, and packaging

innovation positively impact on the dependent variable of intention to purchase superfoods. Packaging printed information and packaging labelling were reported as great influences on purchase intention ($\beta = 0.753, p < 0.05$; $\beta = 0.603, p < 0.05$). The value of standardized coefficients for packaging visual and packaging photography represented moderate effect on purchase intention ($\beta = 0.448, p < 0.05$; $\beta = 0.397, p < 0.05$). Unsurprisingly, there were slightly positive relationship between packaging innovative and intention to purchase superfoods ($\beta = 0.037, p < 0.05$). In accordance with, H2, H3, H4, H5 and H6 were accepted. Nevertheless, there is no significant impact of packaging color and packaging materials found on purchase intention ($\beta = 0.159, p > 0.05$; $\beta = 0.053, p > 0.05$). Hence, H1 and H7 were not supported.

Table 1: The Results of Regression Analysis

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	4.740	.440		10.768	0.000
Packaging Color (X ₁)	.276	.171	.159	1.615	0.107
Packaging Visual (X ₂)	.582	.199	.448	2.927	0.004*
Packaging Photography (X ₃)	.677	.310	.397	2.186	0.029*
Packaging Printed Information (X ₄)	.375	.158	.753	1.772	0.037*
Packaging Labelling (X ₅)	.602	.219	.603	2.745	0.006*
Packaging Innovation (X ₆)	.057	.213	.037	.266	0.009*
Packaging Materials (X ₇)	.075	.158	.053	.472	0.637

R² = .491, F= 2.798, *p<.05

B: DISCUSSIONS OF THE STUDY

Among seven packaging communicational interfaces assigned in this research, five constructs were determined to be positively relative to intention to purchase superfoods. This study affirmed that packaging communication interfaces including packaging visual communication; packaging photography; packaging printed information; packaging labelling and packaging innovation can capture the attention of customers, and these packaging features create the value of superfoods products as added discrete benefits. Simultaneously, can determine their purchase intention on superfoods.

In contrast with the past research, this is due to the fact that most consumers who seek to purchase superfoods are not able to judge the quality of the packaging material as most superfoods packaging available in Thai market are commonly made with high-quality premium materials targeting for hi-end customers. Differing from the previous research, when consumers particularly purchase superfoods; consumer's buying behavior became a non- relevant issue with color packaging. Due to the attempt to capturing the attention of customer to determine the quality of superfoods as well as portray the image of higher quality superfoods inside its packaging and demand on its product appearance,

most superfoods products are being contained in transparent packaging. As a consequence, color of the packaging were shown to be not relative with intention to purchase superfoods products.

I. CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

A. CONCLUSION

This study enhances an understanding of underlying packaging communication interfaces that are salient to intention to purchase superfoods products among customers particular in modern customers who concern more about wellness and healthy. Five constructs of communicating through interfaces incorporated the purchase decisions of superfoods. The findings suggested that the five measurement scales were applicable to induce purchase intention in the context of superfoods. In terms of product image, the findings supported the previous research that packaging visual communication and packaging photography had positive impact on purchase intention of superfoods. In terms of proving product knowledge, packaging printed information and packaging labelling can be defined as a powerful predictor of superfoods' purchase intention. Furthermore, there were relatively significant relationship between product innovation and intention to purchase superfoods products. Nevertheless, packaging color and packaging materials appeared to have no impact on the relationship with purchase intention in superfoods context.

B. IMPLICATIONS

The proposed scale offers a validated measurement tool for assessing the relationship between packaging communication interfaces. The scale's reliability and its convergent and discriminant validities were confirmed. The findings identified which packaging communication interfaces can encourage buying intentions of superfoods in the virtual environment. This study supported that packaging communication interfaces play a significant role with regard to intention to purchase superfoods. The findings provide useful information for venders to better understand customers' response processes when searching for superfoods products. To increase customer purchase intention, retailers should focus on packaging communication factors including packaging visualization, packaging photography, packaging printed information, packaging labelling, and packaging innovation. The results of this study suggest that packaging visualization and packaging photography increased the opportunities of tailoring higher number groups of customers. In addition, the findings also implied that vendors should focus on the nature of the innovative of its packaging that the

superfoods consumers aim to fulfil their needs and wants. Moreover, packaging printed information and packaging labelling were important to consumers as it may play a role in building product knowledge toward customers.

II. LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The findings from this study should be interpreted with caution for some several reasons. First of all, the results were accomplished using single segment of customer who purchase superfoods drinks. As a consequence, it should be noted in applying the results to other areas of industry. Related to this, the conceptualization of superfoods purchasing behavior might benefit from additional investigation to other industry domains including online channels and delivery services. Next, future studies may include different types of service/product categories to enhance the generalizability of the findings. Finally, while a cross-sectional survey method is applied to this study, longitudinal studies in the future may capture the dynamic nature of intention to purchase superfoods and provide a better understanding of consumers 'responses over a period of time.

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