

# THE ROLE OF BRANDING AND VISUAL PACKAGING IN SHAPING CONSUMER BUYING BEHAVIOR TOWARD INSTANT FOOD PRODUCTS

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**Abstract:** The study explores the role of branding and visual packaging in shaping consumer buying behaviour toward instant food products, focusing on how brand loyalty, brand trust, brand image, and packaging design influence purchasing decisions. The primary aim of the research was to examine the impact of branding and innovative packaging strategies on consumer preferences and decision-making. A structured survey was conducted among 200 respondents, and data were analysed using descriptive statistics to evaluate the influence of branding elements and visual packaging features. The results revealed that branding plays a significant role in consumer choices, as respondents showed a strong preference for reputed brands that ensure trust, quality, and transparency. Visual packaging elements, such as bright colours, appealing logos, premium designs, typography styles, and realistic imagery, were found to positively influence product recognition, brand perception, and purchase intentions. Furthermore, informational cues like nutritional details, certifications, health-related claims, allergen warnings, and QR codes were observed to build consumer trust and confidence, leading to higher repurchase behaviour. The conclusion of the study highlights that integrating effective branding strategies with innovative and visually appealing packaging designs significantly enhances consumer engagement, improves brand loyalty, and drives purchasing decisions in the competitive instant food products market.

**Keywords:** Branding, Brand Loyalty, Brand Trust, Brand Image, Visual Packaging, Informational Labelling, Consumer Buying Behaviour, Instant Food Products.

## INTRODUCTION

Food is a crucial element of human life. In contemporary society, time is precious to everyone, instant food plays a vital role in an individual's life [1]. The term "instant food" refers to food that is easy, convenient, and quick to prepare, as well as hygienic and easy to eat. Instant food can be consumed directly or with minimal preparation, such as heating or frying [3].

The role of branding and brand management is primarily to create differentiation and preferences for a product or service in the mind of the customer and that it is the basis for competitive advantage and profits [4]. Branding plays a critical role in shaping consumer buying behaviour for instant food products, acting as key differentiators and influencers during impulse purchases [5].

Packaging can be defined quite simply as an extrinsic element of the product [6]. The colour of a package, such as red or blue, can evoke specific cognitive associations like taste, flavour, or healthiness [7]. Different types of packaging play a vital role in the production, preservation, distribution and marketing of manufactured consumer goods and other products [8].

In certain cases, the materials used to prepare for the food packaging is an important priority for the food as some needs to be able to withstand the heat from a

microwave. For example, microwavable popcorn and microwave-ready meals. It too plays an important part in the logistic aspects of the distribution of food [9].

Food products are unique among industrial products, because sensory experiences with foods typically involve all five senses: vision, audition, touch, smell, and taste [10]. When consumers stand in front of the shelves in a supermarket, food packaging attracts their attention, and plays an important role in shaping consumers' food choice behaviour [11]. All the information, both pictorial and textual, attracts the attention of a consumer and can arouse the desire to buy the food product [12].

These consumers are more involved in the product decision and use package information more extensively. This can influence decision processes, too, as time pressure reduces detailed consideration of package elements [13]. Food retail environments, such as corner stores, supercentres, and ethnic markets, strongly influence purchasing decisions [14].

Convenience foods are used to shorten the time of meal preparation at home [15]. Packed frozen foods, pickles, juices, packet dosa, and many more are the examples of instant foods which people are buying in their day-to-day life [16]. Innovations in food and beverage packaging have been driven by factors like industrial food processing, reduced animal protein consumption,

and the need to import raw materials for domestic conversion. Many packaging innovations occurred during the period between these include aluminium foil, electrically powered packaging machinery, plastics such as polyethylene and polyvinylidene chloride, aseptic packaging, metal beer cans, flexographic printing, and flexible packaging [17].

The information function of packaging is the basic, most important function, because it is crucial in identifying the features and properties of the product, providing knowledge to the consumer, and indicating the proper handling of the product in the process of storage or consumption [18]. The scope of the study also covers the key factors which influences the customer to take decisions to buy instant food [19]. The study shows that all packaging functions are important for consumers. Products that stand out with their packaging should use these functions in a way that will satisfy the consumers and attract their attention [20].

Therefore, understanding the dynamics of brand loyalty, trust, and image is crucial for companies looking to capture and maintain consumer attention. Likewise, the packaging's design, colour scheme, typography, and the presence of innovative elements, such as eco-friendly materials or unique opening mechanisms, can greatly enhance the attractiveness of the product. Moreover, packaging that provides clear, informative cues about ingredients, preparation time, and nutritional value can increase consumer confidence and facilitate informed purchasing decisions.

The study aims to examine these factors systematically, with a particular focus on the impact of branding elements like brand loyalty, trust, and image, as well as the role of visual packaging in shaping consumer preferences. By exploring how innovative packaging and informational cues influence consumer buying behaviour, the study seeks to provide deeper insights into the factors that drive purchasing decisions in the instant food market. Understanding these elements can help marketers and product developers design more effective branding strategies and packaging solutions that resonate with consumers and enhance brand equity.

## STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In today's highly competitive instant food market, consumers are exposed to a vast range of products, making it increasingly challenging for brands to capture attention, build trust, and influence purchasing decisions. With rapid lifestyle changes and growing demand for convenience, consumers are not only seeking quality and affordability but are also heavily influenced by branding and visual packaging. Branding elements such as brand loyalty, trust, and image play a crucial role in shaping consumer perceptions and preferences, while visual packaging features like colours, logos, typography, premium designs, and realistic imagery significantly affect

product recognition and purchase intentions. Furthermore, informational cues including nutritional details, health-related claims, certifications, and QR codes have become vital for building consumer trust and confidence. However, many brands fail to integrate effective branding strategies with innovative packaging designs, resulting in missed opportunities to engage consumers, influence buying behaviour, and establish long-term loyalty. Therefore, understanding the combined impact of branding and visual packaging on consumer decision-making is essential for developing effective marketing strategies and sustaining competitiveness in the instant food products industry.

## OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To examine the impact of branding (brand loyalty, brand trust, and brand image) on consumer purchasing decisions for instant food products.
- To analyse the influence of visual packaging elements on consumer product choice for instant food products.
- To evaluate how innovative packaging elements influence consumer buying behaviour in the instant food industry.
- To measure the effectiveness of informational cues on packaging in building consumer purchasing decisions for instant food products.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Impact of Branding (Brand Loyalty, Brand Trust, and Brand Image) on Consumer Purchasing Decisions for Instant Food Products

Brand loyalty refers to consumers' consistent preference for a particular brand, leading to repeated purchases despite competing offers. Dick & Basu found that loyal customers are less likely to switch even when alternatives provide price incentives [1]. In the context of convenience products, such as instant food, repeat purchases are often driven by positive past experiences and perceived reliability, making consumers less sensitive to competitor discounts (Aaker) [2]. Delgado-Ballester et al clarified that brand trust arises from transparent labelling, ingredient disclosure, and certifications, reassuring buyers of product safety. instant food market, brands perceived as trustworthy through consistent quality and transparency encourage consumer reliance and loyalty [3].

Brand image encompasses perceptions of quality, packaging, and reputation. Kotler and Keller argue that a positive brand image elevates perceived product value and drives purchasing intent Kotler & Keller [4]. Modern packaging and premium aesthetics enhance a brand's appeal and distinguish it from competitors, especially among convenience food consumers Keller. Additionally, a favourable market reputation shapes public perception and can decisively influence buying decisions [5]. Research indicates that strong branding shapes perceived product benefits, reducing uncertainty and fostering a willingness to pay more for brands

recognized for quality and reliability Erdem & Swait [6]. Brand is a name, term, sign, symbol, design or some combination of these elements, which is intended to identify the goods and services of a seller or group of sellers and to differentiate them from competitors Armstrong [7]. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

**H1:** Brand loyalty, brand trust, and brand image have a significant positive impact on consumers' purchasing decisions for instant food products.

#### **The Influence of Visual Packaging Elements on Consumer Product Choice for Instant Food Products**

Visual elements of the packaging affect the emotions of consumer the way they transmit the information Silayoi & Speece [8]. Visual elements are considered when consumers do not want to make an effort to search for the products and when the products are of low involvement Silayoi & Speece [9]. An investigation done by Rundh on customer requirement of packaging shows that change in the size of household in effect changes the product size [10].

An investigation done on the size attribute of packaging by Agariya et al shows that different packaging size is way to extend a product into new markets [11]. Accordingly, the study puts forward the following hypotheses to investigated:

**H2:** Packaging colour combinations have a significant positive impact on consumers' preference and choice of instant food products.

#### **Influence of Innovative Packaging Elements on Consumer Buying Behaviour of Instant Food Products**

An important role of packaging graphics is that they gain attention of consumer Silayoi & Speece [12]. Colour perceptions vary across cultures and most of the religions are believed to have their sacred colours, Singh [13]. Chen expressed a different thought on brand awareness that it was a necessary asset but not sufficient for building strong brand equity [14]. Draskovic had done his findings based on several food and beverages industry reports, and he came to the conclusion that one of the keys to motivate consumers to purchase a product is the convenience of the packaging [15]. According to Ciechomski as cited by Wyrwa and Barska, the author points out that the practice of modern packaging tends to put together an appealing product and has since left prospective buyers

a good impression on them while also stimulating purchases [16]. Accordingly, the study puts forward the following hypothesis:

**H3:** Innovative packaging elements have a significant positive influence on consumers' buying behaviour for instant food products.

#### **Effectiveness of Informational Cues on Packaging in Building Consumer Purchasing Decisions for Instant Food Products**

Nowadays, customer is concerned not only on the appearance of the products but also on the nutritional information in the packaged food sold at retail outlets Din et al [17]. However, the use of nutritional claims was met with a great deal of backlash. Some people were concerned that larger corporations could use these claims to mislead consumers into eating food that wasn't actually healthy for them Parker [18]. The consumer market is changing, as millennials are becoming more health conscious than they were in previous generations Watson [19]. Study participants were shown different packaging labels that contained different health and nutritional claims Garretson and Burton [20]. Drawing from the literature review, the following hypothesis is proposed:

**H4:** Informational cues on packaging significantly influence consumer purchasing decisions for instant food products.

#### **RESEARCH GAP**

Despite the rapid growth of the instant food products market and increasing competition among brands, limited research has explored the combined effect of branding and visual packaging elements on shaping consumer buying behaviour. While previous studies have primarily focused on brand loyalty, trust, and image or examined packaging design features such as colour, graphics, and labelling independently, there is still a lack of comprehensive understanding of how both branding and visual packaging interact together to influence consumers' purchasing decisions. Moreover, existing literature often concentrates on general FMCG products, with relatively little attention given specifically to instant food products, where consumer choices are highly driven by visual appeal, brand perception, and quick decision-making cues. This gap highlights the need for an integrated study that examines the synergistic impact of branding strategies and visual packaging elements on consumer buying behaviour within the context of instant food products.

## **RESULTS**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

**Type of Research:** Quantitative research.

#### **Data Collection**

**Primary Data:** Data were collected using a structured survey questionnaire.

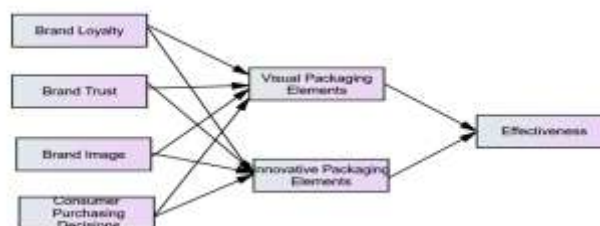
**Secondary Data:** Secondary data were compiled from government publications, industry reports, financial inclusion surveys, and academic articles to strengthen the conceptual background and support the analysis.

**Sampling Design:** The research adopted a non-probability sampling technique, specifically convenience sampling, to collect responses efficiently from targeted consumers.

**Sampling Universe:** The population consisted of consumers who are aware of or actively purchase instant food products and are influenced by branding and visual packaging.

**Sample Size:** 200 respondents.

## CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK



## Reliability of the Study

Sno	Dimensions	Number of items	Cronbach Alpha value
1	Brand Loyalty	2	0.753
2	Brand Trust	2	0.784
3	Brand Image	3	0.904
4	Consumer Purchasing Decisions	3	0.952
5	The Influence of Visual Packaging Elements on Consumer Product Choice for Instant Food Products	7	0.997
6	Influence of Innovative Packaging Elements on Consumer Buying Behaviour of Instant Food Products	6	0.985
7	Effectiveness of Informational Cues on Packaging in Building Consumer Purchasing Decisions for Instant Food Products	7	0.991

The Cronbach's Alpha values for most dimensions fall within the acceptable range of 0.7 to 0.9, indicating that the scales used to analyse the impact of branding, packaging elements, and consumer purchasing behaviour toward instant food products are generally reliable.

**Tools used for the study:** Principal Axis Factoring (PA), Descriptive Statistics, and One-Way ANOVA have been used for the study.

## ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

### Personal Details of the Respondents

Personal Details	Particulars	Frequency	Percent
Age	18-25 years	51	25.5
	26-35 years	40	20.0
	36-45 years	36	18.0
	46-55 years	46	23.0
	More than 56 years	27	13.5
Gender	Male	111	55.5
	Female	89	44.5
Educational Qualification	School Education	46	23.0
	Diploma	69	34.5
	UG	53	26.5
	PG	12	6.0
	Professional Courses	20	10.0
Occupation	Student	48	24.0
	Salaried employee	53	26.5
	Entrepreneur	57	28.5
	Retired	25	12.5
	Others	17	8.5
Monthly Income	Below Rs.10,000	11	5.5
	Rs.10,000 - Rs.30,000	74	37.0
	Rs.30,000 - Rs.50,000	63	31.5
	Rs.50,000 - Rs.70,000	19	9.5
	Above Rs.70,000	33	16.5
	Total	200	100.0



Among the 200 respondents, 25.5% were between 18–25 years, 23% in the 46–55 years, 20% in the 26–35 years, 18% in the 36–45 years and 13.5% accounted for above 56 years. Regarding gender, 55.5% were male and 44.5% were female. Regarding educational background, 34.5% had completed diploma, 26.5% had completed UG, 23% had completed school-level education, 10% had pursued professional courses and 6% completed PG. For occupation, 28.5% were entrepreneurs, 26.5% were salaried employees, 24% were students, 12.5% were retired and 8.5% accounted for others. In terms of income distribution, 37% earned between Rs.10,000-Rs.30,000, 31.5% earned Rs.30,000 to Rs.50,000, 16.5% earned above Rs.70,000, 9.5% earned between Rs.50,000-Rs.70,000 and 5.5% earned below Rs.10,000.

#### Consumption and Shopping Preferences of the Respondents

Consumption and Shopping Preferences	Particulars	Frequency	Percent
Frequency of Purchasing Instant Food Products	Daily	24	12.0
	2–3 Times a Week	35	17.5
	Weekly	45	22.5
	Monthly	62	31.0
	Occasionally	34	17.0
Type of Instant Food Products Purchased	Instant noodles	45	22.5
	Ready-to-eat meals	46	23.0
	Frozen food	23	11.5
	Instant soups	49	24.5
	Others	37	18.5
Preferred Type of Brands	Indian Brands	59	29.5
	International Brands	94	47.0
	No Specific Preference	47	23.5
Preferred Shopping Channel	Supermarkets / Hypermarkets	43	21.5
	Local Grocery Stores	64	32.0
	Online Platforms	41	20.5
	Convenience Stores	16	8.0
	Others	36	18.0
Monthly Expenditure on Instant Food Products	Less than Rs.500	23	11.5
	Rs.500 - Rs.1,000	38	19.0
	Rs.1,000 - Rs.2,000	39	19.5
	Rs.2,000 - Rs.5,000	60	30.0
	More than Rs.5,000	40	20.0
	Total	200	100.0

Among the 200 respondents, 31% purchasing instant food products monthly, 22.5% weekly purchases, 17.5% purchased 2–3 times a week, 17% occasionally purchased and 12% purchased daily. Regarding the type of instant food products purchased 24.5% were instant soups, 23% were ready-to-eat meals, 22.5% were Instant noodles, 11.5% accounted for frozen food and 18.5% purchased other products. Regarding preferred type of brands 47% preferred international brands, 29.5% preferred Indian brands and 23.5% having no specific brand preference.

For purchasing instant food products, 32% preferred purchasing instant food products from local grocery stores, 21.5% preferred supermarkets and hypermarkets, 20.5% preferred online platforms, 8% preferred convenience stores and 18% used other channels such as wholesale markets. Regarding monthly expenditure, 30% spending between Rs.2,000-Rs.5,000 per month on instant food products, 19.5% spend Rs.1,000 to Rs.2,000, 19% spend Rs.500 to Rs.1,000, 20% spent more than Rs.5,000 and 11.5% spent less than ₹500 on instant food products.

#### Descriptive Statistics for the Impact of Branding (Brand Loyalty, Brand Trust, and Brand Image) on Consumer Purchasing Decisions for Instant Food Products

Statements	N	Mean	SD
<b>Brand Loyalty</b>			
I regularly purchase instant food products from the same brand.	200	2.67	1.382
I prefer sticking to my favourite brand even if competitors offer discounts.	200	3.18	1.321
<b>Brand Trust</b>			
I believe branded instant food products are safer and more reliable.	200	2.76	1.488
I choose products from brands that are transparent about ingredients and certifications.	200	3.20	1.276
<b>Brand Image</b>			
I believe well-known brands reflect higher quality and reliability.	200	3.19	1.476
I am attracted to brands with premium and modern packaging styles.	200	2.88	1.286

Brands with positive market reputations influence my purchase decisions.	200	3.03	1.297
<b>Consumer Purchasing Decisions</b>			
I prefer branded instant food products over unbranded alternatives.	200	2.92	1.396
I am willing to pay more for instant food products from reputed brands.	200	3.08	1.316
Branding strongly affects my decision to repurchase a product.	200	3.18	1.392
Valid N (listwise)	200		

The above table indicates that the customers agree with prefer their favourite brand even if competitors offer discounts (3.18), choosing products from brands that are transparent about ingredients and certifications (3.20), well-known brands reflect higher quality and reliability (3.19), brands with positive market reputations influence their purchase decisions (3.03), willing to pay more for instant food products from reputed brands (3.08) and branding strongly affects my decision to repurchase a product (3.18). The customers disagree with regularly purchasing instant food products from the same brand (2.67), branded instant food products are safer and more reliable (2.76), attracted to brands with premium and modern packaging styles (2.88) and prefer branded instant food products over unbranded alternatives (2.92).

#### Descriptive Statistics for the Influence of Visual Packaging Elements on Consumer Product Choice for Instant Food Products

Statements	N	Mean	SD
Bright and vibrant packaging colours attract my attention.	200	2.97	1.348
Compact and easy-to-hold packaging influences my purchase decision.	200	2.96	1.359
Attractive logos and brand visuals help me recognize the product easily.	200	2.97	1.354
Typography style contributes to my perception of brand quality.	200	3.03	1.322
Appealing packaging increases my likelihood of repurchasing the product.	200	3.01	1.337
Premium visual packaging makes me perceive products as more trustworthy.	200	2.97	1.354
Realistic food imagery increases my likelihood of purchasing the product.	200	3.05	1.353
Valid N (listwise)	200		

The above table indicates that the customers disagree with bright and vibrant packaging colours attract their attention (2.97), compact and easy-to-hold packaging influences purchase decision (2.96), attractive logos and brand visuals help them recognize the product easily (2.97) and premium visual packaging makes them perceive products as more trustworthy (2.97). The customers agree with typography style contributes to their perception of brand quality (3.03), appealing packaging increases their likelihood of repurchasing the product (3.01) and realistic food imagery increases their likelihood of purchasing the product (3.05).

#### Descriptive Statistics for the Influence of Innovative Packaging Elements on Consumer Buying Behaviour of Instant Food Products

Statements	N	Mean	SD
Innovative packaging technologies (e.g., resealable packs, microwave-safe packs) influence my purchase decisions.	200	2.95	1.370
Transparency in ingredients and certifications (e.g., organic, vegan) affects my buying decision.	200	3.09	1.316
I prefer buying instant food products with eco-friendly or biodegradable packaging.	200	3.23	1.395
Brands that adopt green packaging earn my long-term loyalty.	200	2.98	1.332
Innovative storage-friendly packaging motivates me to buy instant food products.	200	3.07	1.347
Innovative packaging makes me more likely to recommend the product to others.	200	3.03	1.322
Valid N (listwise)	200		

The above table indicates that the customers agree with transparency in ingredients and certifications affects buying decision (3.09), prefer buying instant food products with eco-friendly or biodegradable packaging (3.23), innovative storage-friendly packaging motivates them to buy instant food products (3.07) and innovative packaging makes more likely to recommend the product to others (3.03). The customers disagree with innovative packaging technologies influence purchase decisions (2.95) and brands that adopt green packaging earn their long-term loyalty (2.98).

#### Descriptive Statistics for the Effectiveness of Informational Cues on Packaging in Building Consumer Purchasing Decisions for Instant Food Products

Statements	N	Mean	SD
Clear nutritional information helps me make better purchase decisions.	200	3.13	1.320
Health-related claims (e.g., low-fat, high-protein) affect my buying behaviour.	200	3.16	1.394
Allergen and dietary warnings improve my trust in the product.	200	3.04	1.314
Expiry dates and batch numbers improve my confidence in the product.	200	3.00	1.345
Certifications like FSSAI, ISO, HACCP, or FDA increase my trust in the brand.	200	2.96	1.359
QR codes or scannable features increase my trust in the product.	200	3.12	1.327

I choose one brand over another based on better informational labelling.	200	3.01	1.324
Valid N (listwise)	200		

The above table indicates that the customers agree with clear nutritional information helps make better purchase decisions (3.13), health-related claims affect buying behaviour (3.16), allergen and dietary warnings improve trust in the product (3.04), QR codes or scannable features increasing trust in the product (3.12) and choose one brand over another based on better informational labelling (3.01). The customers are neutral towards expiry dates and batch numbers improving confidence in the product (3.00). The customers disagree with certifications like FSSAI, ISO, HACCP, or FDA increasing trust in the brand (2.96).

### Comparison between the Personal Details (Occupation) of the Respondents and Various Dimensions

Ho1: There is a substantial link between the personal details(occupation) of the respondents and various dimensions.

Dimensions	Occupation	N	Mean	SD	F	Sig.
Brand Loyalty	Student	48	2.39	1.038	7.125	0.000
	Salaried employee	53	3.37	1.052		
	Entrepreneur	57	3.25	1.188		
	Retired	25	2.42	1.312		
	Others	17	2.74	1.276		
	Total	200	2.93	1.211		
Brand Trust	Student	48	2.35	1.086	6.363	0.000
	Salaried employee	53	3.13	1.161		
	Entrepreneur	57	3.49	1.197		
	Retired	25	2.86	1.388		
	Others	17	2.74	1.276		
	Total	200	2.98	1.257		
Brand Image	Student	48	2.33	1.052	7.509	0.000
	Salaried employee	53	3.14	0.997		
	Entrepreneur	57	3.53	1.239		
	Retired	25	3.25	1.457		
	Others	17	2.71	1.263		
	Total	200	3.03	1.242		
Consumer Purchasing Decisions	Student	48	2.58	1.071	3.547	0.008
	Salaried employee	53	3.36	1.150		
	Entrepreneur	57	3.33	1.393		
	Retired	25	3.00	1.581		
	Others	17	2.65	1.272		
	Total	200	3.06	1.308		
The Influence of Visual Packaging Elements on Consumer Product Choice for Instant Food Products	Student	48	2.62	1.046	5.219	0.001
	Salaried employee	53	3.32	1.156		
	Entrepreneur	57	3.33	1.393		
	Retired	25	3.00	1.581		
	Others	17	2.65	1.272		
	Total	200	3.06	1.299		
Influence of Innovative Packaging Elements on Consumer Buying Behaviour of Instant Food Products	Student	48	2.62	1.046	3.102	0.017
	Salaried employee	53	3.32	1.156		
	Entrepreneur	57	3.33	1.393		
	Retired	25	3.00	1.581		
	Others	17	2.65	1.272		
	Total	200	3.06	1.299		
Effectiveness of Informational Cues on Packaging in Building Consumer Purchasing Decisions for Instant Food Products	Student	48	2.62	1.088	3.077	0.017
	Salaried employee	53	3.32	1.156		
	Entrepreneur	57	3.33	1.393		
	Retired	25	3.00	1.581		
	Others	17	2.65	1.272		
	Total	200	3.06	1.307		

There is no substantial link between brand loyalty (0.000), brand trust (0.000), brand image (0.000), consumer purchasing decisions (0.008), the influence of visual packaging elements on consumer product choice for instant food products (0.001), influence of innovative packaging elements on consumer buying behaviour of instant food products

(0.017), effectiveness of informational cues on packaging in building consumer purchasing decisions for instant food products (0.017) and the Occupation of the respondents.

#### **Brand Loyalty**

Salaried employees reported the highest loyalty (3.37), followed by entrepreneurs (3.25), In contrast, students (2.39) and retired respondents (2.42) reported lower loyalty.

#### **Brand Trust**

Entrepreneurs exhibited the highest trust in branded products (3.49), followed by salaried employees (3.13). However, students (2.35) and others (2.74) showed lower levels of trust.

#### **Brand Image**

Entrepreneurs (3.53) had the strongest positive perception, followed by retired respondents (3.25,) and salaried employees (3.14), Conversely, students (2.33) rated brand image the lowest.

#### **Consumer Purchasing Decisions**

Salaried employees (3.36) and entrepreneurs (3.33) showed greater inclination toward purchasing branded instant food products compared to students (2.58) and others (2.65).

#### **Influence of Visual Packaging Elements**

Entrepreneurs (3.33) and salaried employees (3.32) rated visual packaging elements (e.g., colours, images, design) as more influential compared to students (2.62) and others (2.65).

#### **Influence of Innovative Packaging Elements**

Entrepreneurs (3.33) and salaried employees (3.32) reported a stronger preference for innovation in packaging compared to students (2.62) and others (2.65).

#### **Effectiveness of Informational Cues on Packaging**

Entrepreneurs (3.33) and salaried employees (3.32) considered details like ingredients, nutritional facts, and certifications more relevant than students (2.62) and others (2.65).

#### **Comparison between the Consumption and Shopping Preferences (Type of Instant Food Products Purchased) of the Respondents and Various Dimensions**

H<sub>01</sub>: There is a substantial link between the consumption and shopping preferences (type of instant food products purchased) of the respondents and various dimensions.

Dimensions	Type of instant food products purchased	N	Mean	SD	F	Sig.
Brand Loyalty	Instant noodles	45	2.62	0.880	3.264	0.013
	Ready-to-eat meals	46	3.18	0.962		
	Frozen food	23	3.52	1.123		
	Instant soups	49	2.89	1.433		
	Others	37	2.65	1.409		
	Total	200	2.93	1.211		
Brand Trust	Instant noodles	45	2.51	0.974	5.347	0.000
	Ready-to-eat meals	46	2.85	0.906		
	Frozen food	23	3.65	1.143		
	Instant soups	49	3.39	1.466		
	Others	37	2.76	1.422		
	Total	200	2.98	1.257		
Brand Image	Instant noodles	45	2.60	0.886	5.048	0.001
	Ready-to-eat meals	46	2.93	0.902		
	Frozen food	23	3.41	1.073		
	Instant soups	49	3.56	1.506		
	Others	37	2.76	1.422		
	Total	200	3.03	1.242		
Consumer Purchasing Decisions	Instant noodles	45	2.66	0.911	3.297	0.012
	Ready-to-eat meals	46	3.10	1.093		
	Frozen food	23	3.52	1.238		
	Instant soups	49	3.41	1.593		
	Others	37	2.76	1.422		
	Total	200	3.06	1.308		
The Influence of Visual Packaging Elements on Consumer Product Choice for Instant Food Products	Instant noodles	45	2.51	0.978	4.095	0.003
	Ready-to-eat meals	46	2.95	1.122		
	Frozen food	23	3.52	1.238		
	Instant soups	49	3.41	1.593		
	Others	37	2.76	1.422		
	Total	200	2.99	1.335		



Influence of Innovative Packaging Elements on Consumer Buying Behaviour of Instant Food Products	Instant noodles	45	2.69	0.865	3.142	0.016
	Ready-to-eat meals	46	3.06	1.095		
	Frozen food	23	3.52	1.238		
	Instant soups	49	3.41	1.593		
	Others	37	2.76	1.422		
	Total	200	3.06	1.299		
Effectiveness of Informational Cues on Packaging in Building Consumer Purchasing Decisions for Instant Food Products	Instant noodles	45	2.67	0.903	3.247	0.013
	Ready-to-eat meals	46	3.08	1.100		
	Frozen food	23	3.52	1.238		
	Instant soups	49	3.41	1.593		
	Others	37	2.76	1.422		
	Total	200	3.06	1.307		

There is no substantial link between brand loyalty (0.013), brand trust (0.000), brand image (0.001), consumer purchasing decisions (0.012), the influence of visual packaging elements on consumer product choice for instant food products (0.003), influence of innovative packaging elements on consumer buying behaviour of instant food products (0.016), effectiveness of informational cues on packaging in building consumer purchasing decisions for instant food products (0.013) and the type of instant food products purchased of the respondents.

#### Brand Loyalty

Consumers of frozen food reported the highest loyalty (3.52), followed by ready-to-eat meals (3.18). In contrast, consumers of instant noodles (2.62) and other products (2.65) demonstrated lower loyalty.

#### Brand Trust

Consumers of frozen food had the highest trust in branded products (3.65), followed by instant soups (3.39). Conversely, instant noodle consumers reported the lowest trust (2.51).

#### Consumer Purchasing Decisions

There was a significant difference in consumer purchasing decisions across categories. Consumers of frozen food (3.52) and instant soups (3.41) were more inclined toward branded products, compared to instant noodle buyers (2.66).

#### Influence of Visual Packaging Elements

Frozen food buyers (3.52) and instant soup consumers (3.41) were most influenced by visual packaging, while instant noodle consumers (2.51) were the least influenced.

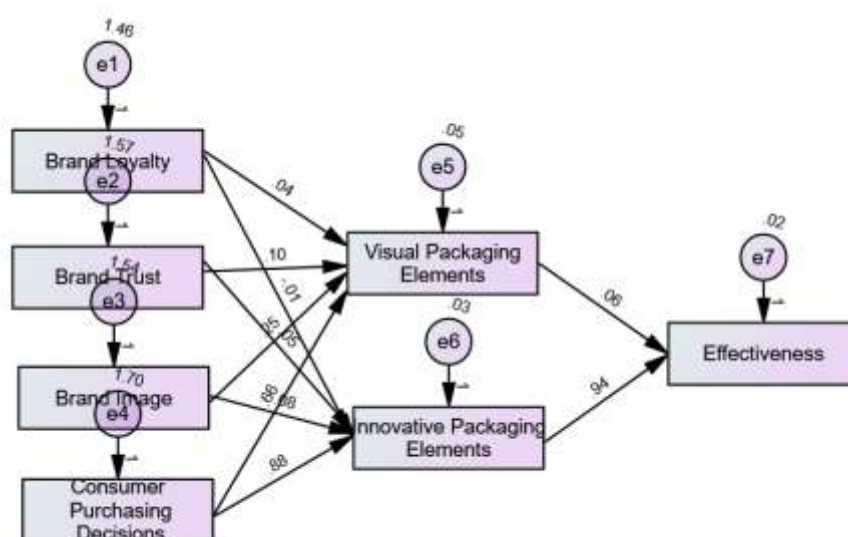
#### Influence of Innovative Packaging Elements

Consumers of frozen foods (3.52) and instant soups (3.41) valued innovation more highly than instant noodle buyers (2.69).

#### Effectiveness of Informational Cues

Frozen food buyers (3.52) and instant soup consumers (3.41) placed greater importance on these cues than instant noodle buyers (2.67).

#### Output towards the model



## DISCUSSION

### FINDINGS

#### Personal Details of the Respondents

Most of the respondents have an age group within 46-55 years. Most of the respondents were male. Most of the respondents completed diploma. Most of the respondents were Salaried employee. Most of the respondents are earning a monthly income of Rs.10,000 - Rs.30,000.

#### Consumption and Shopping Preferences of the Respondents

Most of the respondents purchasing instant food products monthly. Most of the respondents prefer ready-to-eat meals. Most of the respondents preferred international brands. Most of the respondents purchasing instant food products from local grocery stores. Most of the respondents spend Rs.2,000 to Rs.5,000 per month on instant food products.

#### Impact of Branding (Brand Loyalty, Brand Trust, and Brand Image) on Consumer Purchasing Decisions for Instant Food Products

The findings indicate that brand loyalty, trust, and image play a significant role in shaping consumer purchasing decisions for instant food products. Consumers prefer reputed brands, value transparency in ingredients and certifications, and are influenced by positive brand reputation and attractive packaging. Overall, branding strongly impacts both initial purchase choices and repurchase intentions, reflecting its importance in building long-term consumer relationships.

#### The Influence of Visual Packaging Elements on Consumer Product Choice for Instant Food Products

The findings reveal that packaging design significantly influences consumer purchasing behaviour for instant food products. Consumers are attracted to bright colours, appealing logos, realistic imagery, and premium visual designs, which enhance brand recognition and trust. Additionally, typography, compact packaging, and overall aesthetics play an important role in shaping perceptions of quality and increase the likelihood of purchase and repurchase decisions.

#### Influence of Innovative Packaging Elements on Consumer Buying Behaviour of Instant Food Products

The findings indicate that packaging elements play a significant role in influencing consumer purchasing decisions for instant food products. Consumers are particularly drawn to bright colours, attractive logos, realistic food imagery, and premium visual designs, which enhance product recognition and trust. Additionally, features like typography, compact packaging, and overall aesthetic appeal positively impact perceptions of brand quality and increase the likelihood of purchase and repurchase.

#### Effectiveness of Informational Cues on Packaging in Building Consumer Purchasing Decisions for Instant Food Products

The findings indicate that informational labelling plays a crucial role in shaping consumer purchasing decisions for instant food products. Consumers highly value clear nutritional information, health-related claims, allergen warnings, and expiry details, as these factors enhance trust and confidence in the product. Additionally, certifications, QR codes, and comprehensive labelling significantly influence brand preference and encourage informed buying behaviour.

## CONCLUSION

Consumers are strongly influenced by factors such as brand loyalty, trust, and image, which enhance their confidence and preference for reputed brands. Similarly, visual packaging elements including attractive colours, premium designs, logos, typography, and realistic imagery capture attention and create positive perceptions of quality and reliability. Furthermore, clear nutritional information, health-related claims, certifications, and transparent labelling enhance consumer trust and support informed purchase decisions. Overall, the findings highlight that effective branding combined with appealing visual packaging not only drives initial purchase intentions but also fosters long-term loyalty and repurchase behaviour, making them critical strategies for success in the competitive instant food market.

The study highlights that branding and visual packaging are powerful determinants of consumer buying behaviour toward instant food products. It demonstrates that consumers make purchase decisions not just based on product quality but also on how a brand communicates its trustworthiness, transparency, and identity. Strong brand loyalty, trust, and positive brand image motivate consumers to prefer reputed brands, fostering confidence and long-term relationships. The study highlights that consumers are increasingly drawn to brands that are consistent, credible, and emotionally engaging, showing that branding plays a central role in shaping perceptions and influencing repeat purchases. Furthermore, the study highlights the significant impact of visual packaging elements including vibrant colours, appealing logos, typography styles, realistic imagery, and premium designs in attracting attention and enhancing product appeal. Packaging acts as a silent salesperson, creating the first impression and differentiating products in a highly competitive market. In addition, clear informational labelling such as nutritional facts, health claims, allergen warnings, expiry details, certifications, and QR codes builds consumer trust and supports informed, confident buying decisions.

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