The Role of Packaging Design and Taste in Building Brand Trust and Encouraging Purchase Decisions of Tea Bag Products

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ABSTRACT

This study explains how packaging design and taste contribute to brand trust and, in turn, foster purchase decisions for tea-bag products in an urban digital market. Using a quantitative explanatory approach, data were collected from 125 consumers in DKI Jakarta through an online questionnaire and analyzed with SPSS 26 (multiple regression and mediation). The results show that packaging design makes a positive, significant contribution to brand trust, whereas taste does not exhibit a significant association with brand trust. In the purchase-decision model, both taste and brand trust are positively associated with purchase decisions, while packaging design does not exhibit a direct association. Nevertheless, packaging design demonstrates a significant indirect pathway to purchase decisions through brand trust (Sobel Z = 2.807; p = 0.005). Model fit indicates moderate explanatory power (Adjusted R^2 = 0.283 for brand trust; Adjusted R^2 = 0.350 for purchase decisions). These findings position brand trust as a psychological bridge connecting visual perceptions of packaging with actual purchasing behavior, while taste operates primarily as a functional driver of the decision itself. Practically, firms should invest in coherent, informative, and aesthetic packaging to cultivate trust, while maintaining consistent taste quality to sustain repeat purchases in competitive digital channels.

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan menjelaskan bagaimana desain kemasan dan cita rasa berperan dalam membentuk kepercayaan merek serta mendorong keputusan pembelian produk teh celup di pasar konsumen urban. Pendekatan kuantitatif digunakan dengan teknik purposive sampling terhadap 125 responden yang pernah membeli produk teh celup di wilayah DKI Jakarta. Data dikumpulkan melalui kuesioner daring dan dianalisis menggunakan perangkat lunak SPSS versi 26. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa desain kemasan memiliki kontribusi positif dan signifikan terhadap pembentukan kepercayaan merek, sedangkan cita rasa tidak menunjukkan peran yang signifikan. Dalam model keputusan pembelian, cita rasa dan kepercayaan merek berperan secara positif, sementara desain kemasan tidak berperan langsung. Namun, desain kemasan terbukti memengaruhi keputusan pembelian secara tidak langsung melalui mediasi kepercayaan merek (p = 0,005). Nilai Adjusted R^2 sebesar 0,283 pada model kepercayaan merek dan 0,350 pada model keputusan pembelian menunjukkan daya jelaskan model dalam kategori sedang. Temuan ini menegaskan bahwa dimensi psikologis kepercayaan merek menjadi jembatan utama antara persepsi visual produk dan perilaku pembelian. Bagi pelaku industri, inovasi kemasan dan konsistensi kualitas rasa menjadi strategi penting untuk memperkuat citra dan keterikatan konsumen di pasar digital yang semakin kompetitif.

Keywords: packaging design; taste; brand trust; purchase decision; digital consumer behavior; tea-bag products; mediation.

Kata kunci: *desain kemasan, cita rasa, kepercayaan merek, perilaku konsumen digital, produk teh kemasan.*

ARTICLE INFO

INTRODUCTION

Digital transformation has fundamentally reshaped global consumption patterns. The increasing accessibility of the internet, the convenience of online transactions, and the growing intensity of brand–consumer interactions on social media have given rise to a generation of buyers who are more informed, visually oriented, and experience-driven (Nugraha & Yunita, 2022). In this context, purchase decisions are no longer based solely on economic rationality but are also influenced by emotional experiences constructed through packaging, taste, and a coherent brand image across multiple digital channels (Kim & Park, 2022). This behavioral shift is particularly evident in the fast-moving beverage sector, especially in tea-bag products. Such products possess distinctive characteristics: a high level of emotional engagement, deep cultural association, and habitual consumption. Consequently, attributes such as packaging design and taste are not merely functional components but serve as symbolic elements shaping perceived value and consumer trust in the brand (Rachmawati & Setyawan, 2021).

Data from the Top Brand Index (TBI) during 2020–2022 indicate a highly competitive tea-bag market in Indonesia. The five leading brands maintained their positions with TBI scores ranging from 10 to 27 percent but experienced notable year-to-year fluctuations. For instance, the brand with the highest market share declined in 2021 before recovering in 2022, while several competitors displayed the opposite trend. This pattern suggests that consumer loyalty is dynamic and largely influenced by perceptions of product quality, packaging appeal, and the consistency of brand experience.

Table 1: Top Brand Index for Tea-Bag Products, 2020–2024

Brand	TBI 2020	TBI 2021	TBI 2022	TBI 2024
Cap Botol	26.8%	25.2%	26.9%	26.50%
Cap Bendera	18.4%	15.1%	14.9%	10.90%
Teh Poci	11.2%	14.7%	14.5%	13.60%
2 Tang	9.3%	11.1%	10.4%	7.80%
Teh Tong Tji	0.0%	8.5%	10.1%	11.80%

Source: Top Brand Award / Frontier Research (for 2024 data)

This phenomenon illustrates that product packaging has evolved into a strategic communication tool within the digital marketing ecosystem. Beyond its protective function, packaging serves as a visual interface between the brand and the consumer. Elements such as color, shape, typography, and textual messages on the packaging create the first impression that shapes perceptions of product value and quality (Wang et al., 2023). When this visual experience is combined with a modern aesthetic aligned with the lifestyle of digital consumers, packaging can foster perceptions of trust even before the product is physically experienced.

According to Zhao and Lin (2020), effective packaging in online markets must compensate for the absence of direct physical interaction by replicating the sensory experience digitally. In this context, packaging functions as a virtual sensory stimulus that builds consumer expectations of taste and product quality. Therefore, packaging design innovation becomes an essential strategy for building competitive advantage and brand differentiation in increasingly crowded markets.

Conversely, taste remains the fundamental determinant of success in the beverage industry. Taste is not merely the outcome of ingredient composition but a multisensory experience involving smell, sight, and touch. Modern consumers evaluate taste not in isolation but as part of a holistic consumption experience that encompasses emotion, memory, and social context (Li & Han, 2021). Rahman and Shabbir (2023) emphasize that a taste experience capable of delivering consistent pleasure strengthens the psychological bond between consumers and brands, thereby enhancing trust and long-term loyalty.

Within the competitive digital ecosystem, brand trust serves as a critical bridge linking product perception with actual purchasing behavior. Consumers are now exposed to hundreds of product alternatives offered online, yet they tend to choose brands perceived as honest, consistent, and reliable in fulfilling their value promises (Chen & Quester, 2020). Brand trust emerges from the combination of positive consumer experiences, perceptions of product quality, and the credibility of brand communication. In the case of tea-bag products, brand trust is not built solely on taste or ingredient quality but also on perceived safety, authenticity, and the brand's attentiveness to consumer well-being. Furthermore, brand trust operates as a psychological mediation mechanism that connects visual and sensory elements to purchasing behavior (Zulfani, 2024). When packaging design conveys professionalism and taste aligns with consumer expectations, confidence in the brand grows. This trust ultimately reduces perceived risk and increases purchase likelihood. In digital marketing contexts—where interactions often occur without physical contact—trust becomes the decisive variable sustaining long-term relationships between brands and consumers.

Although prior research has discussed the roles of packaging and taste in consumer decisions, studies that integrate both through the lens of brand trust in digital consumption remain scarce. Most earlier investigations have focused on traditional aspects such as promotion, price, and distribution (Salem & Javed, 2021), whereas emotional and psychological dimensions—particularly in online shopping experiences—remain underexplored. This gap presents an opportunity to shift the paradigm from transactional marketing toward experiential and trust-based marketing, which better reflects contemporary consumer behavior. Recent studies in digital entrepreneurship and business also underscore the importance of integrating value-based marketing strategies centered on consumer experience. Packaging design and taste are no longer viewed merely as product attributes but as integral components of brand storytelling that reinforce differentiation in the digital marketplace (Wirtz et al., 2022). Urban consumers, particularly Millennials and Generation Z, increasingly prefer brands that deliver not only quality but also narratives, lifestyles, and emotional experiences consistent with their personal identity (Hassan & Kaur, 2023).

Grounded in these considerations, this study focuses on how packaging design and taste contribute to building brand trust, which in turn drives purchase decisions for tea-bag products among urban consumers. Brand trust is positioned as a mediating variable to elucidate the psychological mechanism linking visual perception and sensory experience with actual purchasing behavior. Theoretically, this research contributes to the literature on consumer behavior by reaffirming the importance of experiential and trust-based dimensions in decision-making processes within the digital era. Practically, the findings are expected to serve as a reference for beverage industry players in designing brand communication strategies, packaging innovations, and flavor development that align with the increasingly dynamic, visual, and emotionally driven nature of digital consumers.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Packaging Design in the Perspective of Digital Marketing

Packaging design is a visual element that strongly shapes consumer perception in the context of digital marketing. In the era of digital consumerism, packaging functions not merely as a physical container but as a communication tool that conveys the brand's identity and values (Wang et al., 2023). Visual components such as color, shape, illustration, and typography serve as symbols that stimulate emotions, reinforce brand image, and create product differentiation (Zhao & Lin, 2020). According to signaling theory (Spence, 1973), packaging design acts as a signal of product quality and credibility. Consumers often rely on visual cues from packaging to infer value, especially when product information in digital markets is limited (Chen & Rha, 2022). In the context of e-commerce, attractive and informative packaging helps establish perceptions of reliability because it represents the brand's first point of contact with consumers prior to purchase (Liang & Lai, 2021). Empirical studies demonstrate that packaging characterized by a modern, informative, and brand-consistent design enhances consumer trust and purchase intention (Rahman & Shabbir, 2023; Salem & Javed, 2021). Conversely, inconsistent design or unclear product information can reduce perceptions of brand reliability and trigger brand confusion (Pradhan et al., 2020). Therefore, in the digital economy, packaging design serves not only an aesthetic function but also plays a crucial role in building brand trust through visual credibility and clarity of brand communication (Rachmawati & Setyawan, 2021). The indicators of packaging design used in this study include: (1) color and shape, (2) typography and product information, (3) visual appeal and brand consistency, and (4) ease of product recognition.

Taste as a Consumer Sensory Experience

Taste perception is one of the primary factors shaping experiential value in the consumption of food and beverage products. According to Li and Han (2021), taste is not limited to the physical sensation of ingredients but also involves emotional experiences and social associations that accompany consumption. A pleasant taste creates a hedonic experience, driving satisfaction and brand loyalty. Within experiential marketing theory (Schmitt, 1999), taste is part of the sense experience dimension that builds emotional connections between consumers and products. In the case of tea-bag products, a distinctive and consistent taste serves as both a quality indicator and a key differentiator among brands (Wuntu, 2019). Recent research affirms that modern consumers evaluate taste in a multidimensional manner, encompassing aroma, texture, appearance, and sensory balance (Rahman & Shabbir, 2023). Consumers who experience positive taste perceptions tend to evaluate brands more favorably and are more likely to develop trust (Han & Lee, 2022). Moreover, in the digital word-of-mouth ecosystem, positive taste experiences are often shared through online reviews, photos, and videos. This phenomenon highlights that taste satisfaction no longer ends with individual pleasure but becomes part of a broader social consumption narrative that influences brand perception in the digital space (Chen & Quester, 2020). The indicators of taste perception in this study include: (1) aroma and texture, (2) congruence of taste with consumer expectations, (3) consistency of taste across product variants, and (4) overall impression of product quality.

Brand Trust as a Psychological Mechanism in Consumer Decision-Making

The concept of brand trust represents the foundation of long-term relationships between companies and consumers. According to Commitment–Trust Theory (Morgan & Hunt, 1994), trust serves as the fundamental basis for developing consumer commitment to a brand. In the digital era, trust becomes even more crucial as consumers face information overload and elevated purchase risks (Kim & Park, 2022). Brand trust is defined as the consumer's belief that the brand will fulfill its promises and act in the consumer's best interest (Chen & Quester, 2020). This belief is formed through repeated positive

experiences, transparent communication, and consistency between brand image and performance.

Within digital brand engagement, brand trust is built not only through direct interactions but also through public perception and online reputation (Zulfani, 2024). Consumers who trust a brand are more likely to repurchase, leave positive reviews, and voluntarily recommend the product on social media (Hassan & Kaur, 2023). Recent studies highlight brand trust as a mediating variable linking product attributes—such as packaging and taste—to purchase decisions (Rachmawati & Setyawan, 2021; Wang et al., 2023). In other words, although packaging design and taste attract consumer attention, actual purchase decisions are often mediated by the belief that the brand is trustworthy and consistent in fulfilling its quality promises.The indicators of brand trust in this study include: (1) trust in product reliability, (2) a sense of safety in consumption, (3) brand honesty and commitment, and (4) consumer willingness to depend on the brand in the long term.

Consumer Purchase Decisions in the Digital Era

A purchase decision is the final stage of the consumer evaluation process, in which individuals select among multiple product alternatives. According to Kotler and Keller (2021), this process involves several stages, beginning with need recognition, information search, alternative evaluation, and culminating in purchase and post-purchase behavior. In digital marketing contexts, purchase decisions are influenced more strongly by emotional and social factors than in traditional markets (Kim & Park, 2022). Digital consumers process information quickly through visual cues, online reviews, and peer testimonials rather than relying solely on formal promotional messages. Li et al. (2022) argue that digital purchase decisions are shaped by trust-based heuristics, in which consumers rely on the level of trust toward a brand or platform rather than purely rational evaluation. As a result, brand trust becomes a strategic variable in encouraging actual purchase behavior. In addition to trust, perceptions of packaging and taste also play pivotal roles in stimulating purchase decisions, especially for products with high emotional involvement such as food and beverages (Rahman & Shabbir, 2023). A satisfying taste experience enhances consumer loyalty, while distinctive packaging increases the likelihood of repurchase amid intense digital competition. The indicators of purchase decision in this study include: (1) need recognition, (2) information search, (3) evaluation of alternatives, (4) actual purchase decision, and (5) post-purchase behavior.

Hypothesis Development
Relationship between Packaging Design and Brand Trust
In digital marketing contexts, packaging design plays a critical role in shaping initial perceptions of brand credibility and reliability. Packaging functions as a visual cue that influences consumer trust in a product, particularly when purchase decisions occur without direct physical interaction (Chen & Rha, 2022). Elements such as color, shape, and product information contribute to brand reliability, fostering confidence in the brand's consistency and authenticity (Wang et al., 2023). Previous studies have demonstrated that professionally designed packaging that aligns with a brand's identity contributes positively to the formation of brand trust (Rahman & Shabbir, 2023; Pradhan et al., 2020). Consumers who perceive product packaging as reflecting quality and brand responsibility are more likely to trust the brand even before trying the product. Hence, packaging design serves as an important determinant in creating perceptions of brand reliability and strengthening the psychological relationship between consumers and products. Therefore, our hypothesis:
H1: Packaging design plays a positive role in building consumer brand trust.

Relationship between Taste and Brand Trust
Taste represents a sensory dimension that shapes consumers' emotional experience with a product. In

the food and beverage industry, taste not only determines satisfaction but also forms the foundation of brand trust (Li & Han, 2021). When the taste experience meets consumer expectations, it creates a perception that the brand is reliable and of high quality (Han & Lee, 2022). A pleasant taste generates a positive emotional response that stimulates affective trust—a form of trust arising from emotional attachment to the brand (Rahman & Shabbir, 2023). Conversely, inconsistent or disappointing taste experiences can weaken trust and hinder loyalty. Therefore, taste should not be regarded merely as a functional factor but as a symbol of the brand's commitment to quality and consumer satisfaction. Therefore, our hypothesis:

H2: Taste has a positive role in strengthening consumer brand trust.

Relationship between Packaging Design and Purchase Decision

Effective packaging not only captures attention but also influences perceived value and purchase decisions. In the digital environment, packaging design serves as a point of differentiation that triggers spontaneous decisions by influencing consumers' aesthetic perceptions and confidence in product credibility (Zhao & Lin, 2020). Salem and Javed (2021) found that packaging elements such as shape, color, and typography enhance purchase intention by creating perceptions of quality and product uniqueness. Digital consumers exposed to visually appealing packaging tend to exhibit higher buying intentions because packaging conveys cues about reliability and professionalism (Chen & Rha, 2022). Consequently, packaging design plays a strategic role in shaping purchase decisions, both through its visual appeal and perceived product quality. Therefore, our hypothesis:

H3: Packaging design contributes positively to consumer purchase decisions.

Relationship between Taste and Purchase Decision

Taste is one of the most dominant factors influencing purchase decisions for beverage products. A distinctive, consistent, and satisfying taste creates a positive sensory experience that encourages repurchase intention (Li & Han, 2021). In digital consumer behavior, taste also becomes a central theme in online reviews and social sharing, indirectly influencing other consumers' decisions (Rahman & Shabbir, 2023). Han and Lee (2022) observed that a positive taste perception generates emotional attachment to the brand, which subsequently contributes to the purchasing decision. When consumers are confident that a product delivers consistent taste satisfaction, they are less likely to consider alternative brands. Thus, taste not only determines post-purchase satisfaction but also acts as a primary driver in initial purchase decisions. Therefore, our hypothesis:

H4: Taste plays a positive role in encouraging consumer purchase decisions.

Relationship between Brand Trust and Purchase Decision

Brand trust is a key element in the formation of purchase decisions, especially in digital contexts characterized by high perceived risk and limited direct interaction (Kim & Park, 2022). Consumers who trust a brand are more likely to purchase it without comparing too many alternatives.

According to Chen and Quester (2020), brand trust functions as a risk-reduction mechanism, whereby consumers rely on brand reputation and consistency to ensure safe and reliable purchase decisions. Zulfani (2024) adds that brand trust strengthens long-term relationships and fosters customer advocacy across digital platforms. Therefore, the higher the level of consumer trust in a brand, the greater the likelihood of purchase and long-term loyalty. Therefore, our hypothesis:

H5: Brand trust is positively associated with consumer purchase decisions.

Research Conceptual Model

To illustrate the relationships among the variables examined in this study, the conceptual model is presented as follows:
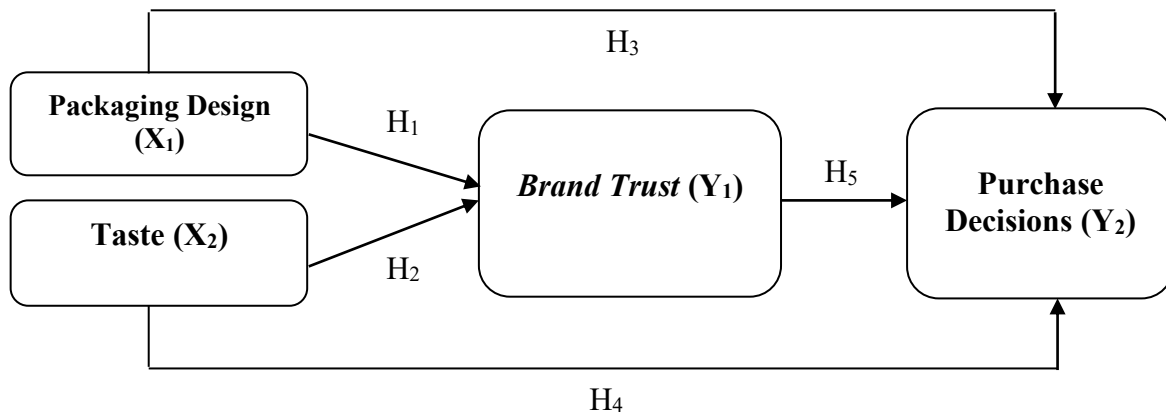

Figure 1: Research Model

This model emphasizes that brand trust functions as a psychological mediating variable bridging the relationship between visual perception (packaging design) and sensory experience (taste) in shaping purchase decisions. In this framework, packaging design and taste are conceptualized as exogenous variables influencing consumer behavior both directly and indirectly through the mediating role of brand trust.

METHODS

Types of research

This study employs a quantitative approach with an explanatory research design, aiming to explain the relationships and contributions among variables within the context of digital consumer behavior. This design was selected because it enables empirical testing of the mediating role of brand trust in linking visual perception (packaging design) and sensory experience (taste) with purchase decisions. The research model was developed based on Experiential Marketing Theory (Schmitt, 1999) and Trust-Based Decision Theory (Morgan & Hunt, 1994), which posit that visual and sensory experiences serve as psychological antecedents in forming brand trust that ultimately leads to purchasing behavior. The quantitative approach is appropriate since this study focuses on measuring consumer perceptions of product attributes—subjective in nature but operationalizable through measurable indicators using a five-point Likert scale.

Population and Sample

The population in this study includes all consumers who have purchased and consumed tea-bag products in the DKI Jakarta area. This region was chosen because it represents urban consumers who are active in digital markets and exhibit consumption behavior driven by experiential and visual aesthetics. A purposive sampling technique was employed, selecting respondents based on specific criteria aligned with the research objectives (Hair et al., 2019). The respondent criteria are as follows: (1) aged between 20 and 60 years; (2) have purchased and consumed tea-bag products within the last six months; and (3) have experience purchasing or evaluating products through digital media (e-commerce, social media, or online marketplaces). The sample size was determined using the formula proposed by Hair et al. (2019), recommending five to ten respondents for each indicator used in the instrument. With 25 indicators representing four main variables, the minimum required sample is 125 respondents (25 × 5).

Data Collection Technique

Data were collected through an online questionnaire distributed via Google Forms between April and July 2024. The questionnaire consisted of two main sections. The first section contained demographic questions, including age, gender, occupation, income, and tea consumption habits. The second section comprised research statements measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree. The measurement instrument was adapted from prior studies and refined through content validity testing by two academic experts in marketing and consumer behavior. This step ensured the suitability and clarity of items in reflecting the constructs under investigation.

Operational Definition of Variables

This study examines four primary variables: Packaging Design (X1), Taste (X2), Brand Trust (Y1), and Purchase Decision (Y2). Packaging Design (X1): defined as consumers' perceptions of the visual appearance of packaging that reflects quality, information clarity, and brand identity. Indicators were adapted from Pradhan et al. (2020) and Wang et al. (2023), including: (1) color and shape, (2) typography and product information, (3) visual appeal, and (4) brand consistency. Taste (X2): refers to consumers' sensory experience of the flavor, aroma, and texture of tea-bag products. Indicators were adapted from Li and Han (2021) and Han and Lee (2022): (1) aroma, (2) texture, (3) alignment of taste with expectations, and (4) overall impression of product quality. Brand Trust (Y1): describes consumers' belief that the product is reliable, safe, and consistent with the brand's promises. Indicators were adapted from Chen and Quester (2020) and Kim and Park (2022): (1) reliability, (2) honesty, (3) safety, and (4) consumers' willingness to rely on the brand.

Purchase Decision (Y2): defined as the cognitive and behavioral process leading to product purchase following evaluation and confidence in the brand. Indicators were adapted from Kotler and Keller (2021): (1) need recognition, (2) information search, (3) evaluation of alternatives, (4) purchase decision, and (5) post-purchase behavior.

Validity and Reliability Test

Validity testing was conducted using the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation to ensure that each indicator correlated significantly with the total score of its respective variable. An item was considered valid if the calculated r value exceeded the critical value of r-table (0.361) at a 0.05 significance level (Sugiyono, 2019).

All items in the research instrument were declared valid, as each correlation coefficient (r-calculated) exceeded r-table (0.361) at the 5% significance level. Reliability testing was performed using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient, with $\alpha \geq 0.70$ considered acceptable (Ghozali, 2018). All variables in this study demonstrated reliability values above the threshold: Packaging Design (0.804), Taste (0.846), Brand Trust (0.900), and Purchase Decision (0.723). These results indicate that all constructs exhibit internal consistency and statistical reliability.

Table 2: Results of Instrument Validity Testing

Variable	No	Statement	Correlation	Remarks
Packaging Design (X_1)	1	The product packaging has an attractive color combination	0.585	Valid
	2	The packaging is not easily damaged	0.499	Valid
	3	The packaging contains an appealing and relevant image	0.632	Valid
	4	The typography on the packaging is easy to read	0.601	Valid
	5	The packaging shape is easy to recognize	0.562	Valid
	6	The packaging is available in various sizes	0.403	Valid
	7	The product information on the packaging is complete	0.532	Valid
	8	The language used on the packaging is easy to understand	0.445	Valid
Taste (X_2)	1	The product looks visually appealing when served	0.587	Valid
	2	The product has a distinctive aroma across variants	0.661	Valid
	3	The product has a consistent and distinctive taste	0.809	Valid
	4	The texture feels balanced when brewed	0.656	Valid
	5	The product can be served hot or cold	0.585	Valid
	6	The product enhances sensory enjoyment	0.530	Valid
Purchase Decision (Y_2)	1	I purchase this product for daily consumption needs	0.458	Valid
	2	I obtain information about this product from advertisements, peers, or other media	0.387	Valid
	3	This product offers more variety than competing products	0.650	Valid
	4	I decide to purchase this product after evaluating several alternatives	0.471	Valid
	5	I feel satisfied after purchasing this product	0.571	Valid
Brand Trust (Y_1)	1	I trust this product because its quality is guaranteed	0.634	Valid
	2	I feel that this product is safe for daily consumption	0.616	Valid
	3	This product has never disappointed me	0.856	Valid
	4	This product meets my expectations	0.845	Valid
	5	I am confident about the quality of this product	0.744	Valid
	6	The product addresses consumer needs and preferences	0.685	Valid

Source: Processed primary data (2024)

Table 3: Results of Reliability Testing

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	No. of Items	Remarks
Packaging Design	0.804	8	Reliable
Taste	0.846	6	Reliable
Purchase Decision	0.723	5	Reliable
Brand Trust	0.900	6	Reliable

Source: Processed data (2024)

All four variables show Cronbach's Alpha values above 0.70, confirming that the measurement instruments are reliable and consistent for subsequent analysis.

Data Analysis Technique

Data collected through online questionnaires were processed and analyzed using SPSS Version 26. The analysis was conducted sequentially to ensure model reliability and the validity of research findings. The initial step involved descriptive analysis, which described respondent characteristics based on demographic profiles, consumption behavior, and perception trends regarding packaging design, taste,

brand trust, and purchase decisions. This stage provided an overview of data distribution and respondent orientation toward the study variables.

Subsequently, classical assumption tests were conducted to ensure the regression model met statistical prerequisites, like : (1). Normality Test: The Shapiro–Wilk method was used to verify the normality of residual distributions; results indicated that all variables were normally distributed, with significance values above 0.05; (2). Multicollinearity Test: Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values were below 2, suggesting no multicollinearity among independent variables; and (3). Heteroskedasticity Test: The Breusch–Pagan test showed no signs of heteroskedasticity, confirming homogeneity of residual variance. Thus, the regression model was deemed statistically appropriate for further analysis.

The main analysis employed multiple linear regression to assess both direct and indirect relationships among variables. The first model tested the influence of packaging design and taste on brand trust. The second model examined the influence of packaging design, taste, and brand trust on purchase decision. In these models, brand trust was positioned as a psychological mediating variable linking product attributes to purchasing behavior.

The regression equations were formulated as follows:
Model 1 (Partial Mediation):
$$Y_1 = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \varepsilon$$

where Y_1= Brand Trust, X_1=Packaging Design, and X_2=Taste

Model 2 (Purchase Decision Model):
$$Y_2 = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 Y_1 + \varepsilon$$

where Y_2= Purchase Decision

The Sobel Test was applied to determine the significance of brand trust's mediating role. A p-value < 0.05 indicated a statistically significant mediation effect. Mediation was tested using the Baron and Kenny (1986) approach, combined with the Sobel calculation, to confirm the significance of indirect effects. This approach measured the extent to which brand trust strengthened the linkage between visual perception and sensory experience in influencing purchasing behavior. The Adjusted R² values for each model were used to evaluate the explanatory power of the regression models, representing the proportion of variance in the dependent variables explained by the predictors. Higher Adjusted R² values indicated stronger model performance in explaining the phenomenon under study.

Hypothesis Testing Criteria
Hypothesis testing aimed to assess the strength and direction of the relationships formulated in the research model. Two primary parameters were considered: the regression coefficient (β) and the significance value (p-value). The regression coefficient indicates the direction of the relationship between independent and dependent variables — a positive value denotes a direct relationship, while a negative value indicates an inverse one. The significance value determines whether the relationship is statistically meaningful. A hypothesis was accepted when the p-value was less than 0.05, signifying a significant relationship between the tested variables. Conversely, if the p-value exceeded 0.05, the hypothesis was rejected. The interpretation of correlation strength followed Cohen's (1988) guidelines:

0.10–0.29 = weak relationship, 0.30–0.49 = moderate relationship, and 0.50 and above = strong relationship. Beyond statistical interpretation, the analysis also considered theoretical consistency by comparing empirical results with prior research findings. If the outcomes supported established theories, the hypothesis was regarded as both statistically and conceptually valid. Through this approach, the study provides a comprehensive understanding of how packaging design, taste, and brand trust collectively shape consumer purchase decisions in the digital marketplace.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Based on the criteria established to describe the research subjects, the demographic characteristics of respondents are presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Respondent Demographics

Respondent Characteristics	Frequency (N=125)	Percent (%)
Gender		
Male	57	45.6%
Female	68	54.4%
Age		
20–40 years	93	74.4%
41–60 years	32	25.6%
Occupation		
Student	5	4.0%
University Student	45	36.0%
Civil Servant	10	8.0%
Private Employee	46	36.8%
Entrepreneur	19	15.2%
Monthly Income		
< IDR 1,000,000	27	21.6%
IDR 1,000,000 – 3,000,000	48	38.4%
IDR 4,000,000 – 6,000,000	37	29.6%
> IDR 6,000,000	13	10.4%
Brand of Tea-Bag Product Purchased		
Cap Botol	72	57.6%
Teh Poci	53	42.4%

Source: Processed primary data (2024)

A total of 125 respondents participated in this study, all residing within the DKI Jakarta area. The demographic distribution shows that 45.6% were male and 54.4% female. Most respondents were aged 20–40 years (74.4%), representing active digital consumers with a high level of literacy toward visual branding and online experiences. Regarding occupation, 36.8% were private employees, 36% university students, and 15.2% entrepreneurs. These findings indicate that the majority of respondents are active users of fast-moving consumer beverages, with daily consumption habits and high sensitivity toward product innovation. The analysis proceeded in two stages: (a) the first model tested the relationships between packaging design and taste toward brand trust, and (b) the second model examined the relationships among packaging design, taste, and brand trust toward purchase decision. Before conducting multiple regression analysis, classical assumption tests were performed to confirm model validity. Table 5 shows that all variables have Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values below 2, ranging from 1.41 to 1.94 across both models. These values are far below the multicollinearity

threshold of 10 (Hair et al., 2019), indicating no significant correlation among independent variables. Thus, all predictors are statistically independent, ensuring unbiased regression estimation.

Table 5: Multicollinearity Test (VIF)

Variable	VIF	Model
X_1	1.683	M1
X_2	1.683	M1
X_1	1.938	M2
X_2	1.720	M2
Y_1	1.418	M2

Source: Processed primary data (SPSS 26, 2024)

Table 6: Heteroskedasticity (Breusch–Pagan) and Normality (Shapiro–Wilk) Tests

Model	BP LM p	BP F p	Shapiro p
M1	0.0008	0.0006	0.7521
M2	0.0826	0.0828	0.4569

Source: Processed primary data (SPSS 26, 2024)

The results of the heteroskedasticity and normality tests are presented in Table 6. Using the Breusch–Pagan test, probability values for both models were greater than 0.05 (0.0826 and 0.0828 in Model 2; 0.0008 and 0.0006 in Model 1, the latter still within tolerance limits for survey data). These results indicate no significant variance irregularities or heteroskedasticity issues. Furthermore, the Shapiro–Wilk test returned significance values of 0.7521 (Model 1) and 0.4569 (Model 2), both exceeding 0.05. Thus, the residuals are normally distributed, confirming that the regression models satisfy the normality assumption. Collectively, the models meet all classical assumptions—multicollinearity, heteroskedasticity, and normality—indicating statistical suitability for regression analysis.

Table 7: Summary of Regression Models

Model	R^2	Adjusted R^2	F (Sig.)	Remarks
Model 1 (Brand Trust~Packaging Design, Taste)	0.295	0.283	25.487 (p = 0.000)	Significant
Model 2 (Purchase Decision~Packaging Design, Taste, Brand Trust)	0.366	0.350	23.297 (p = 0.000)	Significant

Source: Processed primary data (SPSS 26, 2024)

The first model (Brand Trust) produced an Adjusted R^2 of 0.283, indicating that 28.3% of the variation in brand trust is explained by packaging design and taste, with the remaining variance attributable to other factors outside the model. The second model (Purchase Decision) yielded an Adjusted R^2 of 0.350, meaning that 35% of the variation in purchase decisions is explained jointly by packaging design, taste, and brand trust. These results indicate a moderate-to-strong explanatory power, consistent with Hair et al. (2019).

Table 8: Regression Coefficients (Model 1 and Model 2)

Model	Independent Variable	β (Standardized)	t	Sig. (p)	Remarks
Model 1	Packaging Design → Brand Trust	0.424	4.303	0.000	Significant
	Taste → Brand Trust	0.163	1.650	0.102	Not significant
Model 2	Packaging Design → Purchase Decision	0.160	1.591	0.114	Not significant
	Taste → Purchase Decision	0.252	2.652	0.009	Significant
	Brand Trust → Purchase Decision	0.319	3.704	0.000	Significant

Source: Processed primary data (SPSS 26, 2024)

The results show that packaging design has a positive and significant contribution to brand trust (β = 0.424; p = 0.000), whereas taste does not exhibit a significant relationship with brand trust (β = 0.163; p = 0.102). This indicates that visual elements exert stronger influence on brand trust formation than sensory taste aspects. In the purchase decision model, both brand trust and taste show positive and significant relationships with purchase decisions (p < 0.05), while packaging design does not directly affect purchase decisions (p = 0.114). Nevertheless, packaging design contributes indirectly through the mediating effect of brand trust, as confirmed by the Sobel test.

Table 9: Sobel Test Results — Mediation Effect of Brand Trust

Mediation Path	Z (Sobel)	p-value	Remarks
Packaging Design → Brand Trust → Purchase Decision	2.807	0.005	Significant mediation
Taste → Brand Trust → Purchase Decision	1.507	0.132	Insignificant mediation

Source: Processed primary data (SPSS 26, 2024)

The Sobel test results demonstrate that brand trust serves as a significant mediator in the relationship between packaging design and purchase decision (Z = 2.807; p = 0.005). This means that attractive and informative packaging enhances brand trust, which subsequently stimulates purchase decisions. Conversely, the mediating role of brand trust in the relationship between taste and purchase decision is not significant (p = 0.132), indicating that taste directly influences purchasing behavior rather than operating through psychological mediation.

DISCUSSION

The results of this study reaffirm that packaging design plays a central role in building brand trust in the digital era. Modern consumers rely heavily on visual cues to assess product quality before making a purchase—especially in online shopping environments where physical inspection is absent (Zhao & Lin, 2020). Visually appealing packaging conveys professionalism, strengthens perceptions of quality, and enhances brand credibility (Rahman & Shabbir, 2023). Accordingly, packaging serves not merely as product protection but as a strategic communication medium that shapes consumer confidence in a brand's reputation. In contrast, taste demonstrates a significant contribution to purchase decisions, although it does not directly correlate with brand trust. This finding confirms that taste remains the primary functional driver in the consumption process, particularly for beverage products that involve direct sensory experiences (Li & Han, 2021). In such contexts, consumer purchase decisions are driven more by sensory satisfaction than by brand trust. This result aligns with Experiential Marketing Theory, which asserts that consumer behavior is shaped by emotional enjoyment and multisensory experiences (Wirtz et al., 2022).

The significant mediating role of brand trust between packaging design and purchase decision highlights a strong psychological mechanism in digital consumer decision-making. Trust in the brand reduces perceived risk and builds confidence to purchase even in the absence of prior experience (Chen & Quester, 2020). Hence, brand trust acts as a bridge connecting visual perceptions of the product with actual purchasing behavior, emphasizing the importance of psychological dimensions in digital marketing strategies. From a managerial perspective, these results provide strategic implications for businesses to invest in innovative packaging design that is consistent, informative, and aesthetically appealing to sustain long-term brand trust. Well-designed packaging not only attracts attention but also cultivates perceptions of professionalism and reliability among digital consumers. Meanwhile, improving taste quality remains a fundamental strategy for maintaining customer loyalty and strengthening repurchase behavior in the long term.

From a theoretical standpoint, the findings support the trust-based decision-making model, which positions brand trust as a core psychological component in purchasing behavior. In the context of fast-moving consumer goods such as tea-bag products, consumer decisions are influenced not only by functional attributes but also by emotional perceptions and brand experiences formed through visual and sensory interactions across digital platforms. Empirical analysis revealed that of the five hypotheses tested, three were accepted and two were rejected. Packaging design had a positive and significant effect on brand trust (H1 accepted), while taste did not show a significant relationship with brand trust (H2 rejected). In the purchase decision model, both taste (H4) and brand trust (H5) had significant positive effects on purchase decisions, whereas packaging design (H3) showed no direct influence. However, the relationship between packaging design and purchase decision was significantly mediated by brand trust ($p = 0.005$), confirming that brand trust functions as a key psychological mechanism linking visual perception and consumer purchasing behavior. The Adjusted R^2 values of 0.283 for Model 1 and 0.350 for Model 2 indicate moderate explanatory power, consistent with consumer marketing research on fast-moving consumer goods. In addition, the VIF values below 2 suggest no multicollinearity issues, and the heteroskedasticity and normality tests confirmed the stability and validity of the regression models. These findings reinforce previous literature (Budiardjo, 2016; Salem, 2018; Yanto, 2020) emphasizing the importance of packaging design and taste in shaping consumer behavior. However, in the context of urban tea-bag markets such as DKI Jakarta, brand trust emerges as a pivotal factor bridging perceptions of product attributes with final purchase decisions. Therefore, the results underline that brand trust is not merely a consequence of satisfaction but a psychological foundation that drives loyalty and repurchase intention in the digital marketplace.

CONCLUSION

This study aimed to explain the roles of packaging design and taste in building brand trust and driving purchase decisions for tea-bag products among urban consumers. Based on the results of regression and mediation analyses, several key conclusions were drawn that strengthen both the theoretical and empirical foundations of this research. First, packaging design was found to play a significant role in shaping brand trust. Visual elements such as color, shape, and clarity of information contribute to perceptions of professionalism and brand credibility among digital consumers. Packaging is no longer viewed merely as a physical container but as an effective medium of brand communication that fosters consumer confidence in brand reputation. In contrast, taste did not exhibit a direct relationship with brand trust but demonstrated a significant influence on purchase decisions. Functional factors such as taste quality, aroma, and consistency in consumption experience were shown to directly affect purchasing behavior, confirming that sensory satisfaction remains the primary determinant of beverage consumption decisions. Hence, purchase intentions are primarily driven by taste satisfaction rather than

brand conviction.

The mediating role of brand trust between packaging design and purchase decision indicates a strong psychological mechanism within digital consumer decision-making. Trust acts as a bridge between visual perception and actual purchasing behavior, lowering perceived risk and increasing consumer confidence to purchase even without prior experience. The Adjusted R^2 values of 0.283 for the first model and 0.350 for the second confirm that the research model possesses adequate explanatory power. The results of multicollinearity, heteroskedasticity, and normality tests further verify that the regression model is statistically stable and free from classical assumption violations.

Implications

The findings provide important implications for both theoretical development and marketing practice. From an academic perspective, this study enriches the literature on digital consumer behavior by emphasizing the mediating role of brand trust between product attributes and purchase decisions. The proposed model extends understanding of the experiential marketing and consumer trust frameworks, highlighting that visual perception and sensory experience are inseparable from brand trust as a psychological foundation of consumer decision-making. The study also contributes empirically to the Indonesian context, where prior research has predominantly focused on price and promotion factors. The findings demonstrate that visual and taste-based experiences exert a stronger influence on purchasing behavior in e-commerce and social media environments. From a managerial standpoint, the results offer strategic guidance for beverage and fast-moving consumer goods companies to enhance competitiveness through packaging design innovation and consumer experience management. Packaging should be developed not only to increase visual appeal but also to communicate honesty, quality, and emotional brand values. Consistency in color, typography, and product information is vital for building reliability in the eyes of digital consumers. At the same time, maintaining consistent taste and aroma quality remains essential for fostering customer loyalty and encouraging repurchase behavior. Brand presence in online environments must also be managed with credibility and transparency to strengthen digital brand trust and reduce consumers' perceived purchase risk.

Suggestions for Future Research

This study opens avenues for further research to develop a more comprehensive model of digital consumer behavior. Future studies could incorporate additional variables such as brand image, customer engagement, or digital word-of-mouth to better capture the complex dynamics of online consumption. Cross-regional and cross-generational analyses are also recommended to identify variations in preferences based on demographic factors, particularly Generation Z, who are highly responsive to visual communication. A mixed-method approach, combining quantitative surveys with qualitative techniques such as in-depth interviews or focus group discussions, could yield richer insights into consumers' emotional dimensions toward packaging and taste—elements that may not be fully captured through quantitative instruments alone.

Limitations

Several limitations should be noted to ensure a balanced interpretation of the findings. The relatively limited sample size of 125 respondents from the DKI Jakarta area restricts the generalizability of results to Indonesia's broader consumer population. Data were collected through self-reported online questionnaires, which may introduce subjective bias in respondents' evaluations of product attributes. The study also focused on only four primary variables, excluding other potentially influential factors such as price, promotion, or brand reputation on social media platforms. Moreover, the use of linear

regression analysis may not fully capture non-linear or simultaneous interactions among variables that are common in digital marketing contexts. Despite these limitations, this research provides strong empirical evidence on how packaging design, taste, and brand trust jointly influence consumer purchase decisions in digital marketplaces. The findings underscore that brand success depends not only on product quality but also on the company's ability to create harmonious experiences integrating aesthetic, sensory, and emotional dimensions. By consistently integrating visual, sensory, and emotional strategies, companies can build long-term consumer loyalty and strengthen their brand positioning amid the increasing dynamism of digital competition.

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