
Exploring the Influence Packaging Attributes of 'Buatan Malaysia' on Consumer Purchase Intention: A Conceptual Paper

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Abstract

Purpose: *Today's massive rapid changes in consumer's demand and purchase desires for high quality has created drastic competitive issues. Companies focused on the brand strategy to survive and sustain in the market only. The visual attributes of packaging play a significant role in influencing the brand development and brand positioning. This paper aims to examine the effect of interaction of 'Buatan Malaysia' label on consumer purchase intention.*

Methodology: *Based on an extensive literature review, this paper defines the role of packaging attributes such as the label information of 'Buatan Malaysia' and examine how it widely contributes to marketing in general in Malaysia. However, it was not used as a driving force for brand innovation. To fill this gap, this paper illustrates the propositions of potential of that new role of 'Buatan Malaysia' label proposes unique framework: (1) the strategic vision – the context of building innovative brands through country of origin and (2) the cross-cultural perspective – the influence of challenges cross-culturally.*

Result and Discussion: *This study offers valuable promoting the consumer behaviour literature and providing support for relationships between the variables and consumer purchase intention. Perceived product guaranteed quality also directly and indirectly effect consumer brand preference.*

Conclusion and Recommendation: *This paper offers directions for understanding the effects of visual packaging on positive consumer product and brand evaluations. Based on the framework, the companies and marketers should emphasise the 'Buatan Malaysia' on packaging to form consumers' positive perception and brand preference in Malaysia. Further research is needed, both empirical and non-empirical must be done to better understand the value of information label in social media promotion advertising in empowering consumers to engage with brands and interested in their products.*

Keywords: *Purchase intention; Country of origin; Packaging; Buatan Malaysia; Conceptual model.*

1.0 Introduction

The knowledge of product's country of origin (COO) is significant in influencing consumer's product purchase preferences (Bilkey & Nes, 1982). 'Buatan Malaysia' or Made in Malaysia label on the packaging is seen on the products in

Malaysia market and still has a long way to build the confidence and trust within the Malaysian consumers. However, there is little research focused on the consumer expectations towards packaging attributes; '*Buatan Malaysia*' label that can influence their perceptions and purchase intentions. Many established brands trying to expand their new products and services through brand extensions as part of their marketing strategy (Abou-Shouk and Khalifa, 2017). Packaging plays a significant element in brand extensions. Figueiredo and Eiriz, (2020) emphasise that forming a new brands is not an ideal brand extension for the companies but offering customers by extending their product variety when there the market costs and risks increased. It is significant for the companies and marketers to seek opportunities using COO label in Asian markets especially Malaysia. Malaysia is a multiracial country that consists of different races such as Malays, Chinese and Indians and other minority ethnic groups (Hossain, Khalifa and Abu Horaira, 2019). As an emerging developing country like Malaysia with acculturation of different races, consumer behaviour and consumption behaviour are different.

Consumer purchase intention and product choice are highly influenced by the packaging of product in order to communicate information of the product (Clement, 2007; Hossain *et al.*, 2020). The COO of the packaging such as '*Buatan Malaysia*' label is a tool to communicate the product's quality and to indicate as locally-produced products. However, it is significant to focus on the consumer's impulse purchasing. As Stern (1962) emphasised that impulse purchasing is generally influenced by product quality (Mohamud *et al.*, 2017; Alghfeli *et al.*, 2021), function and the satisfaction that evaluated at the point of sale (Khalifa and Hewedi, 2016; Myo, Khalifa and Aye, 2019). The expectations towards packaging attributes in influencing purchase decision has been highlighted by previous researchers (Silayoi and Speece, 2004; Ampuero and Vila, 2006; Simmonds and Spence, 2017). For instance, colour, shapes, and materials convey product information and build a positive first impression in the decision-making process. The value of symbolism was mentioned as a reason that associated with personal values or experiences that can develop emotional responses attach to the product, thus influencing the intention to purchase (Underwood, 2003; Khalifa, Trung and Hossain, 2021). The lack of focusing on visual of packaging attributes such as product's country of origin (COO) unable attract consumer's attention and creating positive expectation towards the product. The aim of this research is to understand the influences of '*Buatan Malaysia*' label on packaging towards consumer evaluation in a multicultural consumer such as Malaysia. The results have significant implications are also relevant for companies that highlight the COO as their brand strategy in their packaging activities and brand innovation.

2 Literature review

2.1 The role of COO such as '*Buatan Malaysia*'

In this competitive era, the business competition is very high where the companies gradually trying to maximise to grow their global marketing strategy (Khalifa, 2018; Sudigdo and Khalifa, 2020; Widjaja, Khalifa and Abuelhassan, 2020). Country-of-origin (COO) define as any influence that the country of manufacturer

has on a consumer's positive or negative perception of a product and belongs to certain countries (Yunus and Rashid, 2016). The image of country reflects from the product through its COO label on the packaging that can portray consumer's level of perceived product quality. The correlation of product familiarity with purchase intention **and** influence the overall perceptions towards the purchase evaluation (Khalifa, 2020b). Yunus & Rashid (2016) demonstrate that the significant relationship between COO and consumer purchase intention. In this paper, the results indicate that the COO affects consumer trust and confidence towards the quality and familiarity of the product. According to the clarification, the COO factors such as country image, perceived product quality and brand familiarity contributes to the intention of Malaysian in decision making for purchase. All variables such as country image, perceived quality and brand familiarity influence consumer purchase intention. However, the extrinsic product cues such as COO has low level of involvement to deliver product information for consumers may lack the ability to evaluate in hurry and low product familiarity (Kauppinen-Räsänen, 2014).

Malaysia local campaign, 'Belilah Barangan Buatan Malaysia' launched by Malaysia's fifth prime minister, Tun Dr. Mahathir Mohamed in 1990s to encourage consumers in Malaysia to purchase products made in Malaysia. It is one of government initiative to help local entrepreneurs and manufacturers to sustain their businesses. The campaign was to stimulate domestic economic growth by enhancing the purchase of local goods or domestic consumptions as well as enhancing patriotism among Malaysians. The Ministry of Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Malaysia define 'Malaysian Products' as;

The product must be manufactured in Malaysia and contain at least 51% of the material/content and local products produced shall involve the manufacturing process (manufacturing activity) (Ministry of Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs, 2021).

However, Lew & Sulaiman (2014) emphasised the effectiveness of this campaign awareness has not contribute massive impact to Malaysia's economy due to lacking of marketing awareness. Additionally, Malaysians are particularly put high priority on product quality, and the majority of Malaysian manufacturers produce products that do not meet Malaysian standards or consumer expectations. Therefore, in this competitive market, the Malaysia government presents opportunity for local companies under one e-commerce platform to market their products which represent locally-produced products. Minister of Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs launched the 'Buatan Malaysia' campaign on Shopee consisting of groceries, health and beauty, fashion, household necessities, games, books and hobbies, sports, automotive products as well as food and beverages deals (New Straits Times, 2020). This campaign is to revitalise the Malaysia's economy post Covid-19 and help to drive domestic economy by highlighting the significance of local products.

Additionally, in Berita Harian Online, Prime Minister of Malaysia, Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin encourage local consumers to purchase products made in

Malaysia to ensure the economy could be revived post Covid-19 pandemic (Idris, 2020). The purchase options available to the consumer when they start purchasing decision process. Sharma & Shimp (1987) defined consumers' belief to have purchase preference in locally-produced products than foreign-produced products or services as consumer ethnocentrism. Therefore, it is significant to develop marketing strategies for COO label of the packaging that is able to influence with consumer's willingness to purchase locally-produced products effectively. Lew and Sulaiman (2014) signified that highly ethnocentric would consider products from their home country first even though it is recognised that a foreign product is of higher quality.

Proposition 1: Indicating the significant of COO label to enhance the value proposition adaptation and quality experience will enhancing consumer purchase intention to purchase locally-produced products.

2.1 Marketing perspectives on product packaging

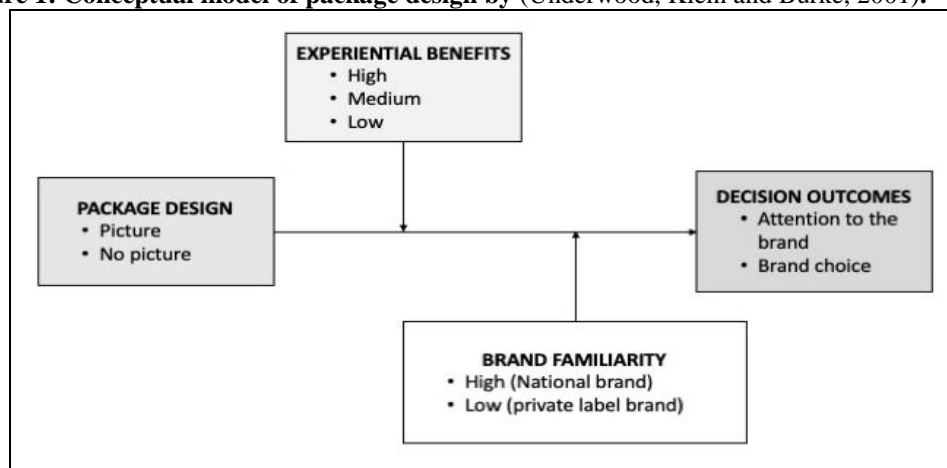
Many researchers have been done the relationship between packaging and consumer purchasing intention (Ali, 2016; Gofman et al., 2010; Halabi & Hands, 2018; Silayoi et al., 2004), and packaging influences specific information through its attributes that significance to grab consumer's attention, creating positive associations and expectations of a product (Simmonds and Spence, 2017). The visual elements of packaging attributes create the brand image and an interactive instrument at the point of sale to communicate directly with consumers (Halabi and Hands, 2018a). As such, the effects of packaging should be great importance for designers, marketers and brand managers alike. Packaging is a powerful creative marketing tool in its own right (Rundh, 2005). Aaker (1997) emphasise the personality of packaging communicates its value and influence consumer's purchase behaviour because the brand represents the consumer's personality (Binnawas, Khalifa and Bhaumik, 2020).

Previous research has suggested that the visual packaging is significant in shaping's consumer's judgements on the overall appearance and quality of product (Wang, 2013). The packaging aims to help communicate the information and to attract the attention of potential consumers which creates better marketing at the point of purchase (Clement, 2007). More than influencing consumer's purchase intention and evaluation, it is also to provide the strength and equity of the brand (Orth and Malkewitz, 2008). The brand either success or failure on the market depends on the attributes of packaging that increases cultural perceptions of smell and creates the perceptions through combination of imagery, text and ingredients (McIntyre, 2013). According to (Halabi and Hands, 2018a) that packaging attributes are significant in enhancing the consumer's expectations, judgements and perceptions towards product quality as well as the product information. Wang (2013) emphasise consumers perceived product preferences, quality and value through its colour, typography, logo, graphics and size. Colour plays a significant

role in enhancing positive emotions and use to deliver information that can enhance the possibility of a product being purchased (Wei *et al.*, 2014).

Additionally, in Malaysia, companies are encouraged to produce brands with some added values that suitable with Malaysian brand preference to build the brand trust and confidence in the Sixth Malaysia Plan (Halabi and Hands, 2018b). The understanding of local consumer behavioural purchase intention is crucial in the marketing strategies. Consumer expectations are evaluative beliefs of a product which are influenced by consumer perception of a product or service. They can generated from previous experience, advertising, hearsay, awareness of competitors and brand image and can also affect purchase decision (Wei *et al.*, 2014). Kauppinen-Räsänen (2014) highlighted having succeeded in attracting attention, colours may trigger brand choices as they are perceived as pleasurable and evoke colour meanings, which the consumer value at that point of purchase. Figure 1.1 shown the conceptual model of package design by (Underwood, Klein and Burke, 2001) with two dependent variables such as attention to the brand and brand choice. The packaging attributes stimuli consumer's visual examination of the product packaging at the point of purchase. Underwood et al. (2001) highlighted that consumer holds the information of product through the first level of experiential benefits where consumers evaluated the information based on needs for sensory pleasure, variety and cognitive stimulation. The experiential benefits are as equally significant as the symbolic meaning of packaging in selecting the brand. The overall satisfaction of product develops the brand loyalty and positive perception and influence the intention to purchase. Then, follow by the second level of higher or lower levels of brand familiarity; generated through direct or indirect product involvement.

Figure 1: Conceptual model of package design by (Underwood, Klein and Burke, 2001).



Source: Underwood & Burke (2001)

The role of packaging attributes as a product-related attributes able to reflect the brand's identity as well as its functional or symbolic brand benefits Underwood (2003). Packaging attributes can be divided into two parts; (1) graphics: colour, typeface, logos and (2) structure: shape, size, material. The face-to-face interaction between consumer and packaging design in their everyday lives are different

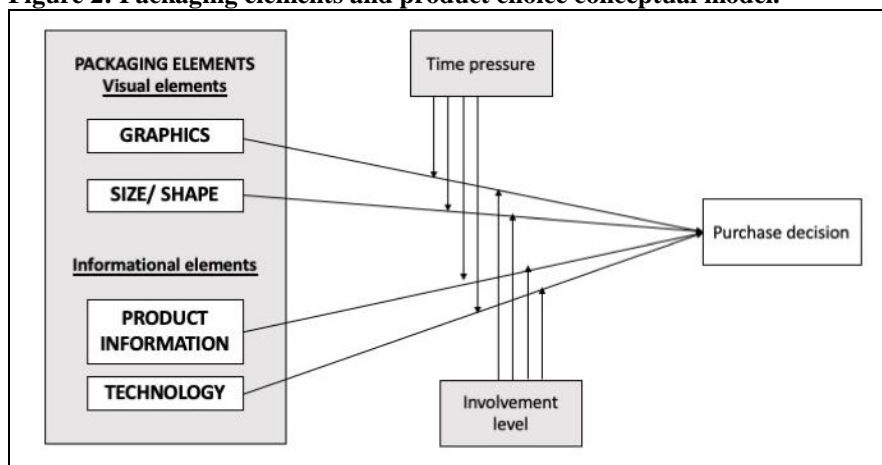
compared to mediated experiences. The mediated experiences are from mass-media consumption culture consumer experience the packaging attributes distant from the context of lived experiences (Underwood, 2003). Accordingly, the fundamental design packaging attributes of its graphics and structure such as colour, typeface, logos, shape, size, material and other attributes play significant role in depicting the brand identity. Both lived and mediated experiences can be influenced through the benefits of brand such as experiential, functional and symbolic.

Proposition 2: The greater cultural considerations and customs on packaging attributes, the stronger will be the product value proposition in influencing purchase intention effect.

2.3 Consumer purchase intention process

This section reviews the conceptual framework of packaging attributes to consumer purchase intention behaviour. It focuses on exploring the positioning based on COO and other packaging attributes to transmit information of product to the desired perception in the mind of consumers. Rundh (2013) emphasise that the packaging communicates its product quality, enable to protect and preserve the product as well as influence consumer purchase intention. It is also communicating the content of the product as well as other necessary information to consumers such as how to use it and some benefits from using the product. Packaging contributes to business success where the necessary information to the consumer such as about the content, how to use the product, knowledge of consumer demand and its potential impact on the purchase-decision process. Wang (2013) suggest the positioning of necessary attributes such as logo on packaging enhance the visual packaging on consumer brand preferences and emphasise positive perceptions such as product quality and product value.

Figure 2: Packaging elements and product choice conceptual model.



Source: Silayoi & Speece (2004).

Peter & Olson (2008) emphasised that consumer behaviour comprises the interaction and exchanges of human being which involves emotions such as feelings, thoughts and actions of their lives (Khalifa, 2019). The interaction between consumers and product involves with the emotions that can influence their purchase intention. Consumer's purchase decision process reflected by the characteristics of packaging as shown in Figure 1.2. Silayoi & Speece (2004) highlighted the purchase decision process influence by consumer product involvement level as well as under time pressure. Consumers are more involved in the selecting product and use the information from packaging elements more significantly. Additionally, the visual elements of packaging such as graphics and size/shape significantly stimulate positive influence choice more in low involvement situation, meanwhile the informational elements such as product information and technology play a crucial role in higher involvement decision-making. However, at point of purchase, the informational elements have less impact on consumer's product evaluation process as the time pressure changes.

Other researchers Kotler & Keller (2016) also provide insights into consumer behaviour in decision-making process (Widjaja, Khalifa and Abuelhassan, 2019; Khalifa, 2020a; Khalifa, Trung and Hossain, 2021). The process of decision-making influences by first elements of stimuli; marketing and other environment stimuli as the influencing factors. Consumers are exposed with marketing stimuli such as products, services, price, distribution, communication and other stimuli such as economic, technological, political and cultural. Then, the information of products visualised and evaluated by consumer's psychology factors and other characteristics such as cultural, social and personal aspects before consumer purchases the product. In purchase decision process, the product accessing involves the information and the expectations before they make the final purchasing decision. In this competitive market, the companies has to maximise the effectiveness of packaging attributes that suits with consumer's lifestyle as driving tool to stimulate purchase intention (Olawepo and Ibojo, 2015). The originality and uniqueness of product can be reflected by packaging and the meaning of product that justifies the end of purchase intention (Underwood, Klein and Burke, 2001).

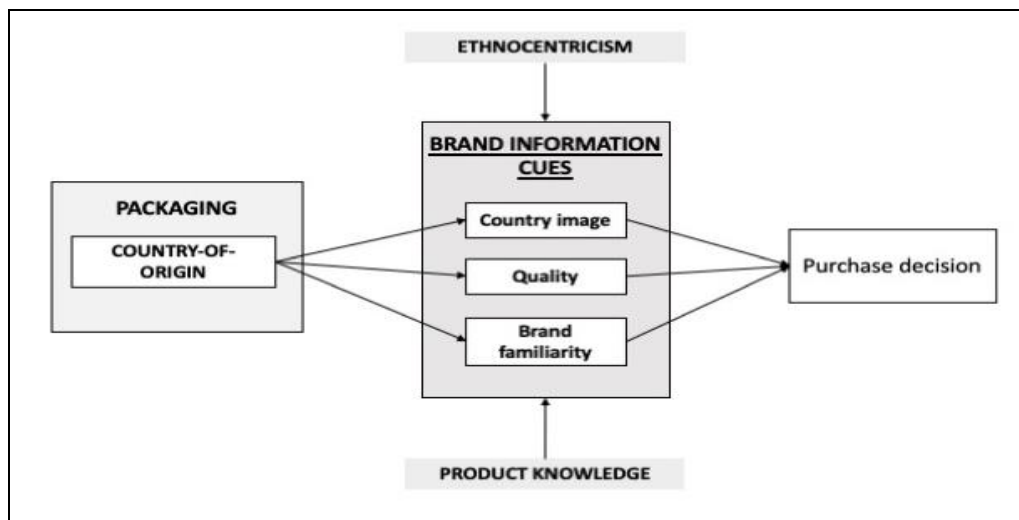
Proposition 3: Consumers depend on extrinsic packaging attributes to perceive quality and assurance across information label.

3. A conceptual framework of packaging attributes COO

The present research clearly shows that the effective of extrinsic packaging attributes COO influencing consumer purchase intention. Figure 1.3 illustrates the relationship between packaging attributes COO label and country image, product quality and brand familiarity which influence by other independent variables such as ethnocentrism and product knowledge. The product knowledge can maximise the attention to the product and positively influence the choice more. On the other hand, consumer's tendency to purchase either locally-produced or foreign-locally

produced products based on consumer ethnocentrism. The attention on the COO may influence consumer's attitude, perception and their evaluation that can affect purchase decision-making process. The COO associated with quality, where high ethnocentric consumers can be influenced by cultural identity or attract to their home country. The level of ethnocentrism has impact on consumer's preferences for COO and stimulates the brand information cues along with their knowledge of product's features, benefits and uses in their decision-making process. The purchase intention is influenced by positive or negative perceived value and risk from product knowledge.

Figure 3: Conceptual Framework.



4. Discussion

This paper has explored how packaging design help to capture consumers' attention and focus on one attributes the extrinsic product cues, the COO label of 'Buatan Malaysia'. By reviewing the current status of packaging research, this paper develops a theoretical base and proposes a comprehensive framework that incorporates the functions of COO on the packaging and draws inter-relationships between them. By having this approach, this paper contributes to the field in terms of summarising the existing knowledge and anticipated to disseminate to marketers the strategic opportunities of COO as part as packaging attributes to influence their perception at the point of purchase. Many studies focused on the other visual attributes of packaging rather than the product information such as COO. In essence to answer the research questions, "how the 'Buatan Malaysia' label can influence consumer perceptions and behaviour?". The research presented here has identified that new opportunities for COO label information in more efficient way for marketers to attract the end consumers. In addition, in the literature, it is well documented that packaging attributes has impact on consumer purchase intention.

First, the framework developed in this paper enables the identification of new opportunities for COO of the packaging attributes associated with greater brand recall of the specific country. Consumer's evaluation towards the whole product

can be influenced by the COO. Moreover, it is significant for companies and marketers to recognise the role of COO tends to associate with product quality and product assurance to consumers. In consumer decision-making process, the focus of marketing must be throughout packaging attributes, rather than focusing on the generating and screening ideas for new products. Capturing consumer insights of positive association with packaging such as high quality affecting upon consumer purchase intention. The purchase intention defined as an assessment of the act of purchasing where there is special perception that change consumer behaviour to align with particular social event (Ajzen, 2012).

Second, this paper highlight that there is little research has been done on the impact of 'Buatan Malaysia' label on consumer purchase decision. Though COO perceived to affect consumers purchase intention and foreign-produced products still associated with high quality. It is significant to consider that COO enable building trust and loyalty within local consumers through wider holistic perspective. Lew & Sulaiman (2014) suggested packaging with 'Buatan Malaysia' label has gained its advanced functions through brand improvement in response to our local brand industries that creates building innovative brands in Malaysia. The positive or negative perception towards a product can be controlled by consumer's ethnocentric tendency in influencing the final choice. Van Loo et al. (2019) explained that the authenticity or tradition of a product can be perceived from the COO label which can serve as an alternative for other quality attributes. It is eventually demonstrated that the image of country can have impact on consumer's perception and purchasing preferences.

Finally, a COO label is a significant factor for companies to reinforce brand attributes. The COO can represent as a brand to position their product for consumers to have positive attitude and willingness to pay towards the product. Consumers increase their attention for the product information and pay more attention to the origin label than the other visual attributes at the point of purchase. Consumer preferences for the origin labelling is like other informational cues such as price, name of brand and other attributes that help them in product evaluation and to develop favourable image. The product category is relative with COO which impact of how they perceived product quality differently (Hamzaoui-Essoussi, Merunka and Bartikowski, 2011).

5. Conclusions and Future Research

This paper instigated the impact of COO can perceived brand localness or globalness on brand attitude and consumer purchase intention. The characteristics of brand's origin country provide significant insights on the characteristics of product and interact emotional values to consumers. The role of 'Buatan Malaysia' label as COO as a driving force for brand extension is significant in influencing consumer purchasing behaviour and the development of brand innovation in Malaysia in the future. The researcher explores and examines the factors that influencing the process of decision-making process based on 'Buatan Malaysia' label information on the packaging. The researcher also developed a conceptual

framework that defines such variable factors and their interrelations. It is valuable for companies and marketers to enhance the use of COO to associate with strong functional value, uniqueness and symbolic benefits in their products. Additionally, perceived brand localness is significant as a symbol or icon of 'local' and stand as representative to the local community (Halkias, Davvetas and Diamantopoulos, 2016). Moreover, the COO is used to strengthen the brand perception and provide positive contribution to attract consumer's intention to purchase for that particular brand.

To date, more stylish packaging is required as population increases, the more packaging will need in influencing the brand identity, brand trust and strengthen the consumer-brand relationship. It is significant for local companies to use packaging attributes to influence consumer's purchase intention and their perception of specific brand through the information of 'Buatan Malaysia' associated with product quality. The information label of 'Buatan Malaysia' can associate with both efficient marketing strategies as a proficient COO to generate brand value and to develop as representative of the local culture.

In conclusion, the major contribution of this paper has been to identify the impact of packaging attributes such as marketers of local companies continue to promote and create awareness to help encourage consumers to purchase local-produced products. Nevertheless, further research is needed, both empirical and non-empirical must be done to better understand the value of information label in social media promotion advertising in empowering consumers to engage with brands and interested in their products. Additionally, another research direction is researcher can develop greater understanding on product information label on other categories of product such as cosmetics and pharmaceutical that can influence consumer behaviour and purchase intention.

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