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EVALUATING SMEs FOOD PACKAGING DESIGN CHARACTERISTIC

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Abstract:

Package design as a communication aspect and plays a significant role in marketing. In the buying context, the package design reveals the content and details of the product to the consumers. That's why package design really helps a product stand out in the market. The purpose of this paper was to investigate the style of SMEs food packaging design. A total of 67 SMEs food packaging designs in the market were selected randomly as samples in this study. This paper presents an exposition of visual research and content analysis methods. This research examined the characteristic of SMEs food packaging design such as material, visual, product information, label, and shape. The results of the study showed most of the products still used transparent plastic (75%), photography as a visual style on packaging (73%), sticker labeling technique (60%), and used the square shape of packaging design (71%). The study also found that there was more than 80% of the product showed the information on packaging design (logo, product name, brand). Findings suggested that characters used in SMEs food packaging design need to come out with a new style and image to increases consumer intention on purchasing products. It is hoped that the findings, as presented in this paper, will highlight the important characteristic of the SMEs food product in order to increase consumer comprehension of the product image base on a brand name, identity, and brand loyalty.

Keywords:

SMEs, Packaging, Labelling, Visual, Traditional Style

Introduction

In Malaysia, food industries are among the main contributors to national export which was RM16.56 billion in 2014 (MITI, 2015, 2016). Furthermore, food product constitutes a major part of consumer's consumption in many countries including Malaysia, where Malaysian households spend roughly 34 % of their income on a food product. This is because food is a needed and normally people consume three times daily in our life. Maffei and Schifferstein (2017) also said packaging has been key in the development of consumer capitalism, the industrialization of food systems and significant in the global establishment of major brands and mass consumerism. Thus, SMEs entrepreneurs on our local's product need to be serious to make an improvement or any alternatives in the guarantee of the quality of their products. However, when there is no opportunity to know the quality of the product, consumers will refer to packaging and branding (Diana-Rose, Zariyawati, Norazlina, Annuar, & Manisah, 2016). Thus, packaging influences more on decision making. A good package will reflect more positively in consumers' purchasing behavior. Therefore, there is a need to evaluate which elements of packaging design really helps SMEs food product in the market.

Literature Review

SMEs

In Malaysia, Small and medium enterprises (SMEs) is the majority amount of Commerce which contributed to the economic development of the country. In the country's economic development, the Small and medium enterprises (SMEs) have played an important role because of its trade activities help to increase competitiveness and as the backbone of economic growth in Malaysia. The various definitions are given to the SMEs have was according to an approach from the aspect of the criteria and distinct standard (Mohd Khairuddin, 2009: 2010: 2011: Rani Siaw, 2012: Plural, Ali, Ghazali, 2014). In general, SMEs in Malaysia have been according to the quantitative criteria such as the number of employees, the number of assets the enterprises possess, the amount of paid-up capital, and the sales turnover per annum. National SME Development Council (NSDC) definition of SME in Malaysia refers to the number of employees and annual sales turnover (Mohd Khairuddin, 2009: 2010: 2011: Siaw & Rani, 2012: Jamak, Ali, & Ghazali, 2014). The New Definition of SMEs effective 1 January 2014 for statistical purposes, eligibility criteria of SMEs for Government assistance and exclusions.

Packaging Characteristic

At a basic level, packages are storage containers meant for keeping and preserving objects over an extended period. However, when science, arts, and technology are together in packaging design, packages also function as communication devices when the product is presented for sale. The conception and creation of packages are the focus of this field (Hayes, 2009). Packaging is more than protection for the products; it is also to increase the value and function of a product (Ardhianto & Hardjana, 2016); protect the quality of products, make the product last longer, as a means of communication and branding products to consumers, facilitating the distribution of products from producer to consumer, made products can be mass-produced, and attract consumer to buy the product.

In the packaging design development process, packaging materials as a basic carrier (Zhang & Zhang, 2011). Traditional packaging use nature materials like leaf, wood, vine, grass, bamboo, shell and et al that have natural friendly character and can be decayed. In the market today the usage of tin cans and plastic on the products shows the packaging as one of the elements

forming the image of the products follows the development of technology and culture. Package material influenced expectations and evaluations of the product. The material in packaging design refers to use, appearance, properties, temperature, and cost. At present, the most popular material for packaging design can be classified into paper, plastic, metal, and glass. Another characteristic of packaging is visual. Visual is one of a key element in packaging design and highlighting the information of the product. Currently, there are numerous food products on the market used visual with their unique artistic techniques, style and vibrant visual effects, are closely integrated with the packaging, and become significant means as a medium of visual communication (He, Liu, & Li, 2017). Label designs can be categorized into three genres such as traditional, contemporary, or novelty (Sherman & Tuten, 2011). The difference of appearance using visual style includes photography, painting, vector and icon on packaging can be driving factors for enhancing brand competitiveness, product image, and personality. Clement, Kristensen, and Gronhaug (2013) found that when consumers searching for a particular product, brand or flavor in a grocery store with time pressure, visual attention is very important. For example, when a strawberry image is presented on a milk bottle labeling, people may know that's strawberry flavor.

In routine, when we buy a product from the grocery store, product information is very important as the main source of information to consumers. The information normally covers a few things about a product. The description may cover on the name of manufacturing, distributor, the place of the production run, the period the product was made, contents and ingredients, steps and guidelines in using or consuming the product safely. Product label falls under the marketing-controlled information source which it acts as the product information source that originates with marketers promoting the product. Furthermore, the shape is also one of the most basic characteristics of packaging. The simplest geometric shapes are circles, ellipses, triangles, squares, rectangles, and polygons. These basic forms can then be altered, combined, and rearranged to make more intricate and elaborate shapes. A design is considered good when the taste of the food content of a package matches the packaging shape (Wang, Chou, & Sun, 2010). The shape of the packaging has a direct impact on the viewers' perception. Labeling a piece of information placed on product packages to be noticed by consumers. This information is product name, brand name, manufacturing, weight, expire date, nutrition, how to open, how to prepare, prise and flavor can be easily found on the label as product information (Wasowicz-kirylo & Stysko-kunkowska, 2011).

Research Methodology

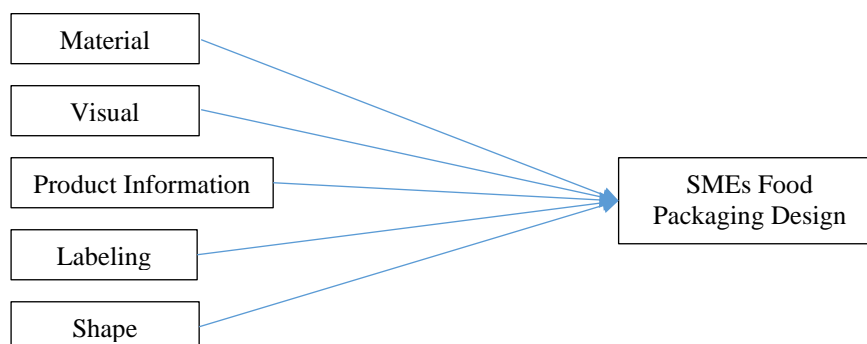


Figure 1: Theoretical Framework

This research aims to analyze five characteristics of packaging design for SMEs food packaging. The research variables in the theoretical framework (Figure 1) consist of; material, visual, product information, labeling, and shape. This paper presents an exposition of visual research by the researcher as a research methodology. Research Design is divided into 3 steps (Figure 2:). First, doing visual research in a market survey on SMEs food packaging sold in grocery as a data collection. Second, content analysis and lastly discuss the finding.

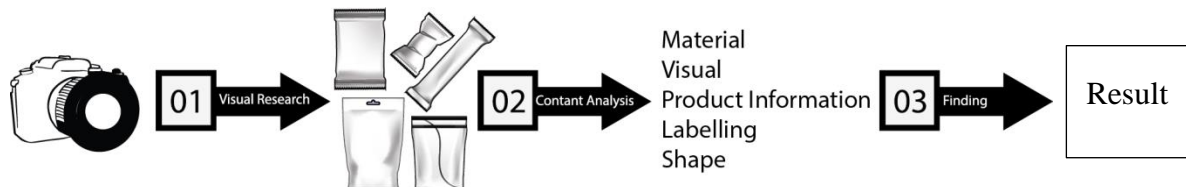



Figure 2: Research Design

As Figure 2 shows visual research of the 67 SMEs food package products was used in this study. Through the collection, observation, and recording; material, visual, product information, labeling, and shape are used as a part of content analysis that has been analyzing in this study. According to Patel, Vila-López, and Kuster-Boluda, (2013), content analysis was a reputable and widely used technique within international marketing research and communication. Content analysis was used here to see the style of SMEs food packaging characteristics as Table I shows.



Figure 3: Sample of The SMEs Food Product Was Used in This Study

Table 1: SMEs Food Packaging Characteristics

Elemen	Characteristic		Characteristic	Element
printed label sticker Label No visual printed	Labeling		Material	Plastic Glass bottle Aluminium (tin) Paper box Transparent plastic
square cylinder Circle triangle	Shape		Visual	Photography Vector Painting Icon
			Product Information	Logo product name Brand Name

Finding And Discussion

Table 2 presents the results of the content analysis of 67 SMEs food packaging used in this study, with the percentage survey on the material, visual, labeling, product information, and shape. The results of the study indicated that the majority of the product used transparent plastic (75%). This is the most common packaging material and, at the same time, one of the most difficult to dispose of. The factors common to all plastics are that they are light, strong and cheap to manufacture. That is the reason they are used so much compare to other packaging material. Almost all the product highlights the product name rather than a brand name (96%) for the product information. Product name and the brand name was another package component that can contribute to consumer confusion. However, other information such as product name and logo still appear on the labeling. In this study, 40 (60%) products still used a sticker for labeling on the packaging rather than printed labeling.

The findings of this study also found that 71% of the packaging shape is square base on the type of material. Regarding visual analysis, visual style using photography shows the highest percentage (73%). Follow by a vector (18%), Icon (8%) and painting (1%). According to Seo (2010), the goal of using photography is to make the product look as attractive and fresh as possible. The examples of 67 SMEs food packaging show variation in the visual hierarchy. For example, *Pak Lah 'Tepung Goreng' Serbaguna* package design has a straightforward hierarchy. The brand, product name, and fried chicken on a plate all come across as dominant elements. The small size of the tagline and weights of the product description at the bottom make them secondary components. To ensure that the audience fully understands the content, it is important to clarify which items to emphasize and which to de-emphasize.







Characteristic		<i>n</i>	Percentage	Illustration	
material	Plastic	5	8%		
	Glass bottle	1	1%		
	Aluminium (tin)	1	1%		
	Paper box	10	15%		
	Transparent plastic	50	75%		
visual	Photography	49	73%		
	Vector	12	18%		
	Painting	1	1%		
	Icon	5	8%		
product information	Logo	56	83%		
	product name	64	96%		
	Brand Name	61	91%		
labeling	printed label	25	37%		Straightforward Hierarchy
	sticker Label	40	60%		
	No visual printed	2	3%		
Shape (base on material)	cylinder	15	22%		
	Circle	4	6%		
	square	48	71%		
	triangle	1	1%		

Table 2: Table Of Content Analysis For 67 SMEs Packaging Of Food Products

Conclusion

The optimization of the positioning of elements of pack design is consequently very important to operational marketing. A successful packaging design not only gives a good appearance for the product but also benefit to SMEs food product to create a good brand image, enhance the packaging emotional experience, brand loyalty, thus affecting the packaging and the spread of brand promotion, enterprises to bring more economic value. Hence, through excellence in food packaging design, SMEs will be more prominent in marketing their products.

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