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Product Packaging Design and Buying Behavior of Shoe Retail Consumers

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Abstract. Product packaging design is an important element of product presentation that may influence consumers' perceptions and purchasing decisions. However, limited research has examined the relationship between product packaging design and buying behavior among shoe retail consumers in the Philippine retail context, particularly in Davao City. This study examined the level of product packaging design and buying behavior among shoe retail consumers, determined whether significant differences existed in these variables when grouped according to monthly income, and assessed the relationship between product packaging design and buying behavior. A quantitative, non-experimental, descriptive-correlational-comparative research design was employed. The study involved 200 shoe retail consumers selected through convenience-quota sampling, with 50 participants assigned to each of four monthly income groups. Data were collected using a validated structured questionnaire and analyzed using mean, standard deviation, analysis of variance, and Pearson correlation. Results showed that product packaging design was at a very high level (m=3.71), while buying behavior was likewise at a very high level (m=3.70). No significant difference was found in product packaging design across income groups (p=.150). Similarly, buying behavior did not significantly differ across income groups (p=.075). However, a strong positive and statistically significant relationship was found between product packaging design and buying behavior, with a correlation coefficient of r=.822 and a probability value of p<.001. The findings indicate that consumers generally perceive shoe packaging favorably and demonstrate strong buying behavior regardless of income group. The strong association between packaging design and buying behavior further suggests that shoe companies should give attention to innovative, functional, informative, and visually appealing packaging as part of their product development and marketing strategies.

Keywords: Buying Behavior; Product Packaging Design; Davao City, Philippines

Introduction

Buyer behavior remains a central priority in retail marketing, as consumers consistently evaluate product attributes, pricing, and packaging prior to completing a purchase (Zhao et al., 2021). Within the footwear industry, purchasing decisions are typically shaped by factors such as price, product quality, physical appearance, perceived social status, and overall customer experience (Vizcarra, 2024). Driven by the expansion of integrated digital and physical storefronts, consumers now navigate, compare, and purchase goods across multiple touchpoints; in turn, retailers increasingly adopt multichannel strategies to enhance their market offerings (Aw et al., 2020). In the Philippines, apparel, footwear, sporting goods, and accessories emerged as the most frequently purchased online product categories in 2024, highlighting the commercial prominence of footwear in modern consumer transactions (Philippine Statistics Authority [PSA], 2026).

A critical element of the retail offer is product packaging design, which serves as an immediate visual interface that can alter consumer perception and decision-making (Shukla et al., 2022). Packaging design has evolved beyond its primary protective function to become an active strategic channel for brand communication and information provision (Schifferstein et al., 2021). Empirical studies consistently demonstrate that specific structural and graphic packaging elements—such as visual imagery, typography, and color schemes—capture consumer attention and influence purchasing actions (Hallez et al., 2022). In footwear retail specifically, packaging serves dual roles: providing essential structural protection during

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storage and transit while delivering information and fostering a positive sensory brand experience (SGS, 2021).

The relationship between packaging design and consumer behavior is particularly salient in highly saturated retail environments, where consumers face numerous competing alternatives. Recent literature suggests that strategic packaging design positively influences product evaluations and purchase intentions, though these effects vary substantially across packaging dimensions and product categories (Liu et al., 2025; Mabalay, 2024). However, conflicting evidence indicates that packaging may play a diminished or negligible role in footwear purchases. Notably, industry research by the Footwear Distributors and Retailers of America revealed that a majority of surveyed consumers cited packaging as having little to no bearing on their footwear buying decisions (Footwear Distributors and Retailers of America [FDRA], 2024). This empirical divergence underlines the necessity of rigorously investigating under what conditions packaging design influences consumer choice, rather than assuming aesthetic packaging universally drives sales.

The Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) framework provides a robust theoretical foundation for conceptualizing these dynamic interactions. Under this framework, specific visual and informational elements of packaging design function as external environmental Stimuli (S). These stimuli trigger internal cognitive evaluations (e.g., perceived quality, utility, and brand credibility) and affective states (e.g., emotional appeal and visual pleasure) within the consumer, who acts as the Organism (O). In turn, these combined internal states dictate the ultimate Response (R), manifested as purchase intention or actual buying behavior (Naseri et al., 2024). Applying the S-O-R model allows researchers to examine not merely whether packaging drives purchases, but how distinct packaging dimensions mediate internal consumer evaluations to produce positive purchase responses across specific retail environments (Martinez et al., 2020).

Despite extensive research on product packaging, existing literature reveals a critical conceptual and theoretical gap regarding how packaging attributes function in durable, high-involvement product categories like footwear. Most existing empirical studies focus primarily on fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) or consumable retail items, where packaging is intrinsically linked to product consumption. Consequently, current models fail to account for how consumers process packaging cues when buying items where the package is immediately discarded or treated as auxiliary to the product itself. In the Philippine context, packaging studies remain confined to food, personal care, and general merchandise, while footwear literature focuses almost exclusively on product-centric variables like price, durability, aesthetics, and prior brand experience (Claudel et al., 2026). Prior research has therefore neglected the potential mediating role of internal consumer states (O) between specific packaging stimuli (S) and footwear purchasing behavior (R) in regional urban centers like Davao City. By examining these structural and psychological mechanisms within a distinct regional retail ecosystem, this study advances beyond geographical re-investigation to clarify the boundary conditions of packaging influence in durable retail categories. The insights generated offer actionable guidance for footwear manufacturers, retail marketers, and strategic brand managers aiming to optimize packaging investments.

Research Questions

This study aimed to determine the significant relationship between product packaging design and buying behavior among shoe retail consumers in Davao City. Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the level of product packaging design among shoe retail consumers?
2. What is the level of buying behavior among shoe retail consumers?
3. Is there a significant difference in product packaging design among shoe retail consumers when grouped according to income?
4. Is there a significant difference in buying behavior among shoe retail consumers when grouped according to income?
5. Is there a significant relationship between product packaging design and buying behavior among shoe retail consumers?

Scope and Delimitation of the Study

The present research centered on the relationship between product packaging design and buying behavior of shoe retail consumers in Davao City. It looked into the level of product packaging design and buying behavior, and if there is significant difference between these two constructs based on the income level of consumers. It also investigated if there is any significant relationship between product packaging design and buying behavior. This study was confined to only the consumers buying shoes from retail shops within the selected study location, without including the factors that may affect buying behavior, such as brand

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https://ijroms.com
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loyalty, price consciousness, quality of product, fashion trend, social influence, advertisement, Internet review, and store ambiance, except if incorporated in the research instrument used.

Literature Review

Product Packaging Design

Product packaging design represents a multi-faceted construct encompassing visual, structural, functional, and informational elements that collectively shape consumer perceptions and purchase decisions. Rather than serving purely as a protective barrier during transport and handling (Spence & Velasco, 2018), packaging functions as a strategic marketing and communication vehicle that conveys brand identity, value propositions, and essential product information (Wandosell et al., 2021). A convergent finding across empirical literature is that sensory and aesthetic features—specifically visual cues like color and shape—directly manipulate consumer preferences and elevate perceived product quality (Chitturi et al., 2021). Furthermore, recent scholarship highlights a growing convergence between traditional aesthetic-functional roles and broader macro-trends, such as circular economy practices through biodegradable, reusable, and recyclable materials (Stark & Matuana, 2021), as well as digital technology integration via data-driven smart packaging and supply-chain tracking (Gan et al., 2022; Kabadurmus et al., 2022). For micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) operating in both physical and online channels, well-executed packaging design serves as a primary driver of market competitiveness, heightening perceived product value and escalating consumer purchase intentions (Tassawa & Khumhome, 2023).

Despite general agreement regarding the communicative power of packaging, existing empirical findings diverge significantly when evaluating the relative impact of specific packaging attributes across different retail environments. While studies in fast-moving and consumable product categories demonstrate that visual aesthetics strongly dictate immediate purchase actions, evidence in general retail settings reveals conflicting results regarding whether structural functionality, digital integration, or aesthetic appeal exerts the primary influence on buyer choice (Gan et al., 2022; Spence & Velasco, 2018). Furthermore, methodological variations across previous studies often relying on isolated laboratory experiments or single-attribute evaluations (e.g., testing color in isolation) leaving unresolved questions regarding how these combined packaging dimensions interact in real-world retail contexts. In the Philippine retail landscape, empirical investigations have predominantly focused on packaging within food and basic consumer goods, leaving the specific behavioral effects of multi-dimensional packaging design in non-consumable retail sectors largely unexamined.

Buying Behavior

Buying behavior encompasses a complex, multi-stage decision-making process through which consumers recognize needs, search for information, evaluate alternatives, execute purchase decisions, and form post-purchase evaluations (Sharma et al., 2023). Synthesis of existing literature demonstrates that consumer decision-making is driven by an interplay of internal psychological states, social dynamics, economic constraints, and technological interfaces. On a personal and social level, consumer knowledge, attitudes, perceived value, and social influences interact to shape underlying purchase intentions (Tuñacao, 2022). Specifically, social norms and peer recommendations act as influential social cues that govern product evaluation, social acceptance, and ultimate purchase approval (Jia et al., 2023; Wang & Chu, 2021). Concurrently, cognitive evaluations of perceived value, service quality, and overall customer satisfaction serve as pivotal determinants in driving repurchase intentions and long-term brand loyalty (Wiryana & Erdiansyah, 2020).

In parallel, economic considerations, specifically product pricing relative to a consumer's financial capacity, exert a fundamental boundary condition on how products are evaluated during the decision process (Anisa et al., 2020; Rahman & Sultana, 2022). In modern retail environments, this decision-making process is further mediated by digital touchpoints, where information quality, platform ease of use, system trust, security, online reviews, and technical reliability significantly alter consumer purchase trajectories (Alzaidi & Agag, 2022; Petcharat & Leelasantitham, 2021). Although researchers broadly agree that buying behavior is a multidimensional construct, significant empirical contradictions remain regarding which factors dominate when consumers face competing signals—such as high price versus superior aesthetic presentation, or strong social influence versus digital convenience. Moreover, previous studies have largely evaluated buying behavior in isolation, creating a substantive literature gap regarding how specific marketing stimuli—such as product packaging design—directly interact with and modify consumer buying behavior within retail environments, particularly in the Philippine market context.

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https://ijroms.com
Original Article

Theoretical Integration of the S-O-R Model

To systematically conceptualize the relationship between product packaging design and consumer buying behavior, this study adopts the Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) framework. Within this theoretical paradigm, the visual, structural, functional, and informational attributes of product packaging design serve as the environmental Stimulus (S), the external antecedent that captures consumer attention and communicates product attributes (Wandosell et al., 2021). Consumer buying behavior, manifested through information search, alternative evaluation, purchase execution, and post-purchase responses represents the ultimate behavioral Response (R) (Sharma et al., 2023).

Under the classical S-O-R model, the external stimulus (S) acts upon the internal cognitive and affective states of the consumer, conceptualized as the Organism (O), which subsequently drives the behavioral response (R). However, because the primary objective of this empirical investigation focuses on directly measuring consumer evaluations of packaging design (S) and their corresponding buying behaviors (R), the internal psychological mechanisms comprising the Organism (O) component (e.g., real-time neural activations, intermediate emotional states, or unobserved affective arousal) are not directly measured in the quantitative model. Recognizing this focus as a structural parameter of the research design, the S-O-R model serves primarily as an overarching conceptual framework explaining why external packaging stimuli elicit measurable buying responses, while acknowledging that the unmeasured internal organisms (O) are inferred through the empirical linkage between perceived packaging design attributes (S) and declared consumer buying behaviors (R).

Monthly Income as a Grouping Variable

Monthly income represents the total monetary inflow an individual or household receives from employment, business operations, or secondary financial sources within a specified period (Morrissey et al., 2020). As a fundamental socioeconomic metric, monthly income directly establishes a consumer's disposable financial capacity and budget constraints. Economic literature confirms that consumers across distinct income brackets exhibit fundamentally different purchasing behaviors and spending priorities, particularly when evaluating non-essential, discretionary, or differentiated retail products (Malika et al., 2021). Financial resource limitations force lower-income consumers to prioritize price sensitivity and functional utility, whereas higher-income consumers possess greater flexibility to prioritize premium aesthetics, brand prestige, and packaging sophistication (Anisa et al., 2020; Malika et al., 2021).

In this study, monthly income is operationalized as a key demographic grouping variable to examine whether significant statistical differences exist in how retail consumers perceive product packaging design (S) and demonstrate buying behavior (R) across different income tiers. Integrating monthly income as a grouping variable addresses a critical empirical gap: while general literature establishes that income affects overall purchasing power (Rahman & Sultana, 2022), it remains unclear whether financial capacity alters consumer sensitivity to packaging design cues specifically. By testing for significant differences across income groups, the study establishes whether packaging design strategies operate uniformly across the consumer spectrum or if packaging perception varies as a function of financial capacity. This provides actionable empirical insights for retail marketers seeking to segment market offerings effectively.

Methodology

Research Design

In this study, the use of the quantitative, non-experimental, descriptive-correlational-comparative research design was appropriate in the investigation of the product packaging design and consumer buying behaviors. Quantitative research is defined as the process of the systematic collection and analysis of numerical data to describe phenomena and relationships between variables (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). It was an appropriate method in this case since the variables were measured as they naturally occurred and were not manipulated or controlled by the researcher (Saunders et al., 2019). The descriptive-correlational-comparative research design was employed to describe the levels of product packaging design and consumer buying behaviors, establish the existence of significant relationship, and compare between different income categories.

Research Locale

The study took place in Davao City, Philippines. It particularly involved shoe retail stores situated in five selected shopping malls within the city. Davao City is a commercial and business hub of Mindanao. The city is home to several shopping malls and retail outlets that cater to consumers with different buying tastes and from various socioeconomic backgrounds. The selected shopping malls represent a proper environment where shoe retail consumers can be reached. Consumers who buy shoes from the retail stores in the five

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https://ijroms.com
Original Article

selected shopping malls and those who meet the predetermined inclusion criteria, especially those who have bought a shoe within the last six months, were the target of the research. This location is ideal for the study in that it directly exposes consumers to the product packaging and the decision-making process of buying a product in a real-life situation. In addition, this will help in the recruitment of the four selected groups based on monthly income level of 50 respondents per group.

Research Participants

Respondents involved in this study were 200 retail consumers in Davao City who have previously bought shoe products from retail stores. Consumers aged 18 years and above who had purchased shoes from retail stores located in the selected shopping malls in Davao City within the previous six months. Respondents should have purchased shoe products from the mentioned retail stores and be willing to provide information about their purchasing behavior and their views regarding the design of the product packaging. Six months were considered to make sure that the respondents have recently bought the shoe products which are relevant for the research. Individuals under the age of 18, consumers who have not bought shoes from the retail stores located in Davao City's shopping malls within the last six months, people who buy shoes only through online websites or other places excluding malls, and those who did not want to participate in the study were excluded from the respondents.

Research Instrument

Data for this study were gathered using a structured, three-part quantitative survey questionnaire administered to eligible shoe retail consumers. Part I of the instrument was designed to collect the respondents' demographic profiles, specifically capturing their self-reported monthly income level to categorize them into one of the four established quota groups (less than ₱15,000; ₱15,000–₱19,999; ₱20,000–₱24,999; and ₱25,000 and above). Part II evaluated consumer perceptions of product packaging design and was adapted from the packaging framework developed by Silayoi and Speece (2004). Part III measured consumer buying behavior and was adapted from the consumer decision-making scale by Rook and Fisher (1995). All items in Parts II and III were scored on a 4-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 4 (Strongly Agree) to obtain definitive responses without a neutral mid-point. The item selection, adaptation, and modification process involved contextualizing the original scales to align specifically with footwear retail packaging. Original general statements in the source instruments that referenced fast-moving consumer goods or generic products were systematically reworded to specify shoe packaging, shoe boxes, footwear labeling, and shoe purchase decisions. Items were carefully selected and refined to preserve the core theoretical constructs while ensuring linguistic clarity, contextual relevance, and cultural appropriateness for retail consumers in Davao City. To establish construct validity and internal consistency, the adapted questionnaire underwent rigorous psychometric evaluation prior to full field administration. The instrument was first submitted to a panel of research and business experts for evaluation, confirming its content and face validity. Subsequently, a pilot test was conducted with 30 non-sample retail shoe consumers possessing demographic and purchasing characteristics similar to the target population. Construct reliability and internal consistency were computed using Cronbach's alpha (α) and Composite Reliability (CR). In accordance with psychometric standards, reliability coefficients between .70 and .95 indicate strong internal consistency without redundancy (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The Product Packaging Design scale (Silayoi & Speece, 2004) yielded an overall Cronbach's alpha of $\alpha = .89$ (CR = .91). The Consumer Buying Behavior scale (Rook & Fisher, 1995) achieved an overall Cronbach's alpha of $\alpha = .86$ (CR = .88). Both scales demonstrated robust construct reliability within the acceptable .70 to .95 threshold, confirming that the modified survey items consistently measured their respective underlying variables.

Data Gathering Procedure

After the survey questionnaire was validated, the researcher sought approval from the Program Head of the College of Business Administration and the Research Committee. Upon receiving the necessary approvals, the researcher secured permission from the appropriate authorities and management of the selected retail establishments where the study would be conducted. The researcher then coordinated with the establishments regarding the schedule and manner of data collection. Before administering the questionnaire, the researcher explained the purpose of the study, their right to decline participation, and provided the respondents with informed consent. Participation was voluntary, and respondents were assured that their responses would be treated with confidentiality and used solely for academic purposes. The validated questionnaires were then administered to eligible shoe retail consumers who met the established inclusion criteria. After retrieval, the accomplished questionnaires were checked for completeness, organized, coded, and prepared for statistical analysis and interpretation.

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https://ijroms.com
Original Article

Results and Discussions

Research Question 1: What is the level of product packaging design among shoe retail consumers?

Table 1. Level of Product Packaging Design among Shoe Retail Consumers

	Statements The shoe consumer believes that the product packaging design...	Mean	Verbal Description	Interpretation
1.	Uses innovative design elements that visually stand out.	3.82	Very High	Strongly Agree
2.	Has a visually appealing design.	3.71	Very High	Strongly Agree
3.	Is memorable.	3.73	Very High	Strongly Agree
4.	Evokes a sense of luxury or premium quality.	3.73	Very High	Strongly Agree
5.	Creates a positive emotional response, such as excitement.	3.74	Very High	Strongly Agree
6.	Is emotionally engaging and reflects the consumers' values.	3.76	Very High	Strongly Agree
7.	Encourages careful thought when viewing the shoe packaging.	3.72	Very High	Strongly Agree
8.	Encourages consumers to explore the shoes' features or benefits.	3.76	Very High	Strongly Agree
9.	Prompts consumers to consider the product's uniqueness or innovation.	3.70	Very High	Strongly Agree
10.	Provides useful and educational product information.	3.66	Very High	Strongly Agree
11.	Protects the shoes from moisture, dust, and other external elements.	3.70	Very High	Strongly Agree
12.	Includes functional features that enhance convenience and usability.	3.70	Very High	Strongly Agree
13.	Displays brand elements, such as the company logo.	3.67	Very High	Strongly Agree
14.	Provides clear product information, including the brand and product details.	3.74	Very High	Strongly Agree
15.	Is easy to store, stack, or display.	3.69	Very High	Strongly Agree
16.	Is lightweight while remaining sturdy and durable.	3.69	Very High	Strongly Agree
17.	Includes features that indicate product quality and authenticity.	3.68	Very High	Strongly Agree
18.	Helps protect the shoes from theft, tampering, or unauthorized access.	3.68	Very High	Strongly Agree
19.	Helps maintain the shoes' quality and condition.	3.70	Very High	Strongly Agree
20.	Reflects the type, design, or style of the shoes.	3.70	Very High	Strongly Agree
	Overall Mean	**3.71**	**Very High**	**Strongly Agree**

Table 1 shows that product packaging design among shoe retail consumers obtained an overall mean of 3.71, described as very high and interpreted as always manifested. The highest-rated statement was uses innovative design elements that visually stand out (M = 3.82), followed by is emotionally engaging and reflects the consumers' values and encourages consumers to explore the shoes' features or benefits (both M = 3.76). In contrast, provides useful and educational product information obtained the lowest mean of 3.66, although it remained within the very high level. The findings indicate that shoe retail consumers consistently perceive product packaging as innovative, visually appealing, emotionally engaging, and informative. The particularly high rating for innovative design suggests that distinctive packaging elements are readily noticed by consumers, while the strong ratings for emotional engagement and product exploration indicate that packaging contributes to consumers' interaction with the product. These findings are consistent with Wulansari (2019), who found that visual and informational packaging elements can influence consumers' purchase decisions, and Gao and Astillero (2022), who demonstrated that packaging design dimensions positively influence consumers' purchasing decisions. Steenis et al. (2017) likewise demonstrated that packaging materials and graphic elements can shape consumers' perceptions, product evaluations, and attitudes toward packaged products.

Research Question 2: What is the level of buying behavior among shoe retail consumers?

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https://ijroms.com
Original Article

Table 2. Level of Buying Behavior among Shoe Retail Consumers

	Statements The shoe consumer…	Mean	Verbal Description	Interpretation
1.	Shows interest in shoes and is willing to purchase those that meet their preferences.	3.80	Very High	Strongly Agree
2.	Compares different shoe products before choosing the most suitable one.	3.76	Very High	Strongly Agree
3.	Considers the country of origin or place of manufacture when purchasing shoes.	3.70	Very High	Strongly Agree
4.	Evaluates the durability and craftmanship of shoes before purchasing.	3.72	Very High	Strongly Agree
5.	Tends to choose shoes from well-established brands.	3.71	Very High	Strongly Agree
6.	Considers previous experiences with a shoe brand before making a purchase.	3.66	Very High	Strongly Agree
7.	Is willing to pay more for shoes that offer greater durability.	3.66	Very High	Strongly Agree
8.	Prefers purchasing shoes from stores that provide a favorable shopping experience.	3.75	Very High	Strongly Agree
9.	Considers recommendations from other when choosing shoes.	3.66	Very High	Strongly Agree
10.	Is more likely to purchase shoes when the packaging makes shopping convenient and saves time.	3.65	Very High	Strongly Agree
11.	Believes that personal purchasing decisions can influence others' buying choices.	3.65	Very High	Strongly Agree
12.	Values brands that demonstrate reliability and consistency.	3.67	Very High	Strongly Agree
13.	Purchases shoes that provide premium or enhanced features.	3.70	Very High	Strongly Agree
14.	Considers personal style and needs before purchasing shoes.	3.69	Very High	Strongly Agree
15.	Enjoys purchasing newly released shoe designs.	3.63	Very High	Strongly Agree
16.	Pays attention to shoe advertisements and promotional materials.	3.66	Very High	Strongly Agree
17.	Believes that personal shoe choices are more important that others' preferences.	3.74	Very High	Strongly Agree
18.	Is willing to try new and different shoe styles.	3.79	Very High	Strongly Agree
19.	Discusses shoe brands or styles with friends.	3.71	Very High	Strongly Agree
20.	Checks shoe prices even when considering relatively low-priced items.	3.70	Very High	Strongly Agree
	Overall Mean	**3.70**	**Very High**	**Strongly Agree**

Table 2 shows that the buying behavior of shoe retail consumers was rated very high, with an overall mean of 3.70, interpreted as always manifested. The items in this variable although encompass distinct cognitive, social, economic, and sensory evaluations, they collectively operationalize a single composite unidimensional construct: consumer buying behavior. The highest-rated statement was shows interest in shoes and is willing to purchase those that meet their preferences (M = 3.80), followed by is willing to try new and different shoe styles (M = 3.79) and compares different shoe products before choosing the most suitable one (M = 3.76). Meanwhile, the lowest-rated statements were enjoys purchasing newly released shoe designs (M = 3.63) and is more likely to purchase shoes when the packaging makes shopping convenient and saves time and believes that personal purchasing decisions can influence others' buying choices (both M = 3.65). Despite these differences, all items were assessed as very high and always manifested. The findings indicate that shoe retail consumers demonstrate active and deliberate buying behavior, particularly through product interest, preference-based selection, willingness to explore different styles, and product comparison. The high rating for comparing products suggests that consumers consider alternatives before making purchasing decisions, while their willingness to try new styles indicates openness to product variety and changing preferences. This finding is consistent with Solomon (2022), who explains that consumer buying behavior involves evaluating available alternatives and selecting products based on relevant criteria, needs, and preferences. Similarly, Kotler et al. (2022) emphasize that consumers evaluate alternatives and form preferences by considering the benefits, needs, and value associated with available products before making purchase decisions.

Research Question 3: Is there a significant difference in product packaging design among shoe retail consumers when grouped according to income?

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https://ijroms.com
Original Article

Table 3. Difference in Product Packaging Design among Shoe Retail Consumers when grouped according to Income

Variable	Group	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F-value	*p-value*	Effect Size (η^2)	Decision on H_o
1. Product Packaging Design	Between Groups	0.246	3	.082	1.812	.150	.027	Failed to Reject
	Within Groups	8.820	196	.045				
	Total	**9.066**	**199**					
Significant @ .05 Level of Significance								

Table 3 presents the one-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) assessing whether significant differences exist in consumer perceptions of product packaging design across the four monthly income categories (< ₱15,000; ₱15,000–₱19,999; ₱20,000–₱24,999; and ₱25,000 and above). The test yielded an *F*-statistic of F(3, 196) = 1.812 with a *p*-value of .150, which exceeds the standard significance threshold of $\alpha = .05$. Consequently, the null hypothesis (H_o) failed to be rejected, confirming no statistically significant difference in product packaging design evaluations across income tiers.

To complement the hypothesis testing, the calculated effect size yielded an Eta-squared of $\eta^2 = .027$, indicating that income level accounts for only 2.7% of the total variance in packaging design perceptions—representing a small, non-meaningful effect size. The 95% confidence interval for the difference between group means spanned zero across all post-hoc pairwise comparisons (95% CI [-0.08, 0.19]) between the lowest and highest income tiers). This demonstrates that shoe retail consumers possess consistent evaluations of visual, functional, structural, and informational packaging elements regardless of their personal financial capacity. This finding aligns with Wulansari (2019), who noted that visual packaging attributes universally capture consumer attention across socioeconomic strata. Similarly, Wandosell et al. (2021) emphasized that packaging's strategic communication and marketing functions resonate consistently across broader consumer groups.

Research Question 4: Is there a significant difference in buying behavior among shoe retail consumers when grouped according to income?

Table 4. Difference in Buying Behavior among Shoe Retail Consumers when grouped according to Income

Variable	Group	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F-value	*p-value*	Effect Size (η^2)	Decision on H_o
1. Buying Behavior	Between Groups	0.306	3	.102	2.372	.075	.035	Failed to Reject
	Within Groups	8.428	196	.043				
	Total	**8.734**	**199**					
Significant @ .05 Level of Significance								

Table 4 displays the ANOVA results examining differences in consumer buying behavior across the monthly income groups. The statistical analysis produced an F-statistic of $F(3,196) = 2.372$ and a p-value of $.075$. Because the p-value is greater than the chosen significance level of $\alpha = .05$, the null hypothesis (H_0) failed to be rejected. This result indicates that overall buying behavior patterns—encompassing alternative evaluation, brand reliance, and store experience—do not differ significantly based on income bracket.

The estimated effect size was $\eta^2 = .035$, demonstrating that income level explains only 3.5% of the total variance in consumer buying behavior. Mean differences between income brackets yielded 95% confidence intervals that cross zero (95% CI $[-0.04, 0.22]$), confirming the absence of substantial group divergence. These statistical metrics indicate that financial capacity does not serve as a primary differentiator of buying decisions in retail shoe purchases. This outcome is consistent with Solomon (2022), who posits that consumer buying behavior is heavily influenced by internal preferences and personal product evaluations. Likewise, Kotler et al. (2022) emphasize that marketing stimuli, brand loyalty, and social dynamics often override pure income constraints during product selection.

Research Question 5: Is there a significant relationship between product packaging design and buying behavior among shoe retail consumers?

Table 5. Significant Relationship between Product Packaging Design and Buying Behavior among Shoe Retail Consumers

Variable	Buying Behavior					
	N	r-value	*95% CI*	r^2	*p-value*	Decision on H_o
1. Product Packaging Design	200	.822	[.771, .863]	.676	.000	Rejected
Significant @.05 Level of Significance						

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Table 5 shows the bivariate Pearson correlation analysis evaluating the relationship between product packaging design and consumer buying behavior. The test revealed a strong, positive, and statistically significant correlation ($r = .822, p < .001$), leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis (H_0).

The bias-corrected 95% confidence interval for the correlation coefficient ranges from $[.771, .863]$. Because this interval is narrow and remains strictly positive well above zero, it provides strong statistical precision regarding the robust strength of the relationship in the target population.

The calculated effect size is $r^2 = .676$, meaning that 67.6% of the variance in consumer buying behavior is shared with or explained by perceptions of product packaging design. This represents a large effect size ($r^2 > .25$).

These findings demonstrate that higher consumer evaluations of packaging aesthetics, structural functionality, clarity of information, and convenience strongly co-occur with heightened purchase execution and brand engagement. This empirical evidence supports Gao and Astillero (2022) and Wulansari (2019), who demonstrated that visual and informational packaging dimensions positively drive consumer decision-making. However, while the coefficient of determination ($r^2 = .676$) establishes a powerful empirical association, correlation does not infer direct causality; unmeasured intermediate variables such as brand equity and store atmosphere may also contribute to overall buying behavior.

Ethical Considerations

The execution of this study strictly adhered to established ethical principles governing research involving human subjects, specifically upholding respect for persons, beneficence, non-maleficence, justice, and data confidentiality. Administrative permission to conduct field data collection within the five selected retail establishments was formally granted by the Program Head of the College of Business Administration at St. John Paul II College of Davao. Independent ethical clearance for the research protocol, instrument design, and participant protection procedures was officially granted by the St. John Paul II College of Davao Ethics Review Committee. The researcher worked under the continuous supervision of the research adviser and thesis panel to ensure strict compliance with institutional ethics policies and national standards. Eligible participants provided signed informed consent prior to completing the survey and retained the absolute right to withdraw from the study at any point without penalty or prejudice. Data collection posed minimal risk to participants, as the survey items evaluated non-sensitive consumer perceptions of packaging and buying behavior. To safeguard participant anonymity and fulfill the requirements of the Data Privacy Act of 2012 (Republic Act No. 10173), no personally identifiable information (such as full names or contact details) was collected. Survey responses were anonymized, stored in encrypted digital files accessible exclusively to the primary researcher, and processed strictly in aggregated statistical form for academic purposes. Potential selection bias inherent in convenience-quota sampling was constrained by strictly enforcing the inclusion criteria and target quota limits ($n = 50$ per income tier) across all five retail locales. Furthermore, potential response bias was minimized by providing standardized, neutral administration instructions and reassuring respondents of complete anonymity, thereby encouraging objective responses. All empirical findings are presented transparently and accurately based on actual statistical outputs, without selective reporting or manipulation, preserving the scientific integrity and trustworthiness of the research.

Conclusion

This study demonstrates that product packaging design plays a vital, multi-dimensional role in shaping consumer decision-making within the footwear retail sector. Rather than functioning solely as structural protection, packaging serves as an active visual, functional, and informational interface that resonates strongly across consumer segments. Crucially, the non-significant differences across income categories reveal that consumer sensitivity to packaging attributes and the resulting buying behaviors operate uniformly regardless of financial capacity. In a competitive retail ecosystem, packaging design acts as an egalitarian marketing driver that influences product evaluation and brand engagement across all socioeconomic strata. These empirical insights offer direct strategic implications for footwear manufacturers, retail marketers, and brand managers. Because packaging design shares a strong, positive association with buying behavior across all income tiers, investment in visual aesthetics, clear labeling, and functional convenience should not be limited to premium or luxury product lines. Instead, optimizing packaging design presents a scalable opportunity for mass-market brands to elevate perceived product value, streamline the consumer's in-store decision process, and differentiate their offerings in crowded retail environments.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations are proposed: To enhance packaging clarity and informational value, shoe manufacturers and packaging designers may prioritize legibility and functional product communication during scheduled design updates. Given that

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informational packaging attributes received the lowest mean evaluation score, packaging designers may incorporate clear typography, bilingual sizing charts, material composition labels, QR codes linking to digital authenticity checks, and step-by-step product-care instructions directly onto inner shoe box flaps or structural inserts. Furthermore, prior to mass production, footwear brands may implement pre-market packaging prototype testing such as consumer focus groups or drop-resistance audits to evaluate visual appeal, ease of opening, and structural durability during transit, ensuring that the packaging consistently preserves the product's premium presentation without driving up production complexity or manufacturing costs. To support consumer decision-making and preference-based shopping in retail environments, footwear retailers and merchandisers may optimize in-store visual presentation and product displays. Because consumers demonstrated high mean levels of product comparison and preference-driven selection store managers may organize retail displays to facilitate seamless side-by-side comparisons of footwear styles, features, and available sizes. Retailers may ensure that transparent pricing, material specifications, and product care guidelines are presented clearly alongside display units, while maintaining pristine, undamaged footwear box stacks. Given the strong empirical link between packaging perception and buying behavior treating physical packaging as an active visual merchandising tool can streamline the consumer's evaluation process and enhance overall point-of-sale engagement. To address the findings regarding income categories in a nuanced manner, footwear companies may maintain consistent baseline standards for visual appeal, structural durability, and informational clarity across all product packaging tiers rather than developing inferior packaging solely for lower-priced lines. The statistical analysis revealed no statistically significant differences in packaging perceptions or buying behaviors across monthly income brackets within this specific sample of mall-intercept retail consumers. While these empirical results indicate that packaging sensitivity operates uniformly across income groups in urban mall settings, practitioners may avoid interpreting this as a mandate to disregard socioeconomic factors in all business operations; broader marketing decisions, macro-pricing models, and overall market segmentation strategies may still require tailored approaches when targeting consumer populations outside urban mall ecosystems. To capitalize on the strong, positive, and statistically significant relationship between product packaging design and consumer buying behavior, footwear manufacturers and marketing strategists may formally integrate packaging design into their core brand development and product marketing strategies. Because packaging perceptions account for 67.6% of the variance in consumer purchasing behavior, management may recognize packaging not as a passive post-production expense, but as an active, high-return marketing investment that directly drives purchase execution. Shoe brands may conduct periodic packaging audits and consumer feedback surveys to evaluate how visual aesthetics, structural functionality, and informational cues perform at the point of sale. Concurrently, retail marketers may align packaging presentation with broader promotional campaigns, ensuring that in-store displays, digital marketing visuals, and unboxing experiences deliver a cohesive sensory brand message that reinforces consumer trust, elevates perceived value, and maximizes purchase conversion. To build upon the empirical contributions of this study, future researchers may expand the methodological, psychometric, and conceptual boundaries of the current framework. Future investigations may adopt probability-based sampling strategies (such as stratified random sampling) across multi-regional urban and rural markets, encompassing both physical retail stores and e-commerce platforms to improve external generalizability. Additionally, researchers may conduct advanced psychometric testing including Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) and convergent/discriminant validity evaluations to further validate the measurement scales. Future research models may also integrate key confounding and mediating variables, such as brand equity, price sensitivity, and store atmosphere, while utilizing lab-based experimental designs, visual eye-tracking metrics, or longitudinal point-of-sale (POS) tracking to move beyond cross-sectional correlation and rigorously assess temporal and causal linkages between packaging design and consumer buying behavior.

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