

Unveiling the Power of Packaging: Exploring Consumer Perception and Preferences of the Youngsters in the Lip Balm Market

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Abstract

The available marketing research studies put a strong emphasis on packaging in shaping the consumer behaviour. Given the importance of packaging, it is imperative to comprehend how packaging affects consumers' perception towards products and their judgments about what to buy, especially when it comes to lip balms. Convenience sampling and descriptive research methodologies were used in this exploratory study to look at consumer preferences and perceptions of lip balm packaging. An online survey form was used to gather data from the respondents. A sample of 160 students who frequently use lip balm from Hyderabad area took part in this study. The study concentrated on examining the ways in which different packaging components—such as colour, design, material, and size—affect consumer decisions. One of the main trends found is consumers' preference for eco-friendly, simple packaging with legible and understandable labeling. The results show that consumers are becoming increasingly interested in environmentally friendly packaging alternatives, and manufacturers ought to give these features top priority in order to meet consumer demands and improve their chances of success in the marketplace

Keywords: Consumer Behaviour, Consumer Perception, Eco-Friendly, Labelling, Lip Balm, Packaging, Sustainability.

Introduction

In the everchanging world of consumer products, one the key product features i.e. packaging adds a significant value in shaping the consumer perception and buying behavior towards the product. It can be seen in the lip balm market where a tiny tube can make or break a customer's choice between brands. Sure, lip balm packaging's main job is to keep the product safe, but it does way a more than that. The packaging acts like a quiet salesperson telling the consumer about the brand, what's good about the product, and in the end, has an impact on what people think and buy. The first spark towards any product typically occurs through its appearance before anyone thinks about a single ingredient. Packaging acts as a visual lure pulling customers with its look. A smooth simple tube might give off an air of class, while a colorful

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box with fun pictures might make people think of youth and excitement. This first impression though, is the beginning of how shoppers make their choice. After the initial eye-catching appeal, the types of materials used, how well it works and a better grasp of what the brand stands for all become important factors.

Today's shoppers are very choosy. How well a product works isn't their only concern. They also care about whether it's eco-friendly, where it comes from and if it matches what they believe in. The way a product is packaged can show what a brand stands for. A company that cares about the planet might use boxes made from recycled cardboard. One that wants to appeal to health-nuts might go for see-through packaging to show off the natural thing inside. Being open like this helps brands gain trust and connect with customers who think the same way.

This study delves deep into the interesting segment of lip balm packaging and how it affects the way people buy them by considering the area of Hyderabad, which is the geography chosen for the study. By taking a close look at what consumers think and like, this paper aims to show how powerful packaging can be in shaping buying choices in the lip balm market. The research looks at how visual design elements, concerns about being eco-friendly and brand messages work together in shaping the consumer's perception and subsequent buying behavior. It tries to give brands useful information to make their packaging better and build stronger ties with their existing and prospective consumers.

Research Problem

Lip balm packaging has an influence on attracting buyers and showing brand identity, but there's a possible gap between what catches someone's eye on the shelf and what they think about when deciding to buy. Do bright colors and fun designs make people think the product is good quality and works well? Does eco-friendly packaging matter to customers as much as eye-catching graphics? This unclear situation makes it hard for brands to figure out how to make packaging that looks good at first glance but also convey the deeper things people care while buying. This study wants to look into this problem by checking out the interplay between how packaging works as a marketing tool and what customers want in terms of efficacy of the product, what's in it and what the brand stands for.

Review of Literature

Packaging size refers to how big or small the package is. It impacts the ease at which people use, carry around, and the way they think about the value associated with it. Research shows that people often think bigger packages give them more for their money. But smaller packages that are easy to carry might be better for using while out and about (Underwood, R.L. 2003). This study looks at packaging size as a key element of how convenient something is for consumers and how much value they think it has. The study conducted by Butler, P. (2008) also lays an emphasis on small packaging size for women beauty products, especially when women presenting themselves in public places. Small packages of beauty products are hand-bag friendly and easy to carry.

Packaging design involves the look and use of a product's wrapping. It includes pictures, words, and overall style. Studies show good packaging can change how people buy things by catching

their attention and sharing the brand's message well (Silayoi & Speece, 2004). A great design can make a product seem worth more, so people want it more. This study sees packaging design as a mix of looking good, working well and sharing brand values clearly. Srivastava, P., Ramakanth, D., Akhila, K., & Gaikwad, K. K. (2022) found that a good design positions a brand different and superior from other brands where product packaging plays a key role in communicating a strong brand message when it comes to cosmetic products.

Packaging color refers to the different shades and tones used in how a product's package looks. Colors have a big impact on getting people to notice products and can make them feel certain ways (Singh. S. 2006). Ampuero, O., & Vila, N. (2006) found that color, along with other packaging features like images, typography and graphical forms play a key role in shaping up the consumer perception about a product. For example, bold bright colors might make people think of excitement and fun, but soft light colors could make them feel calm and fancy. This study thinks of packaging color as strong influencer on how people see products.

Packaging is what wraps up the product. It could be plastic, metal, paper, or a fragile or delicate thing that breaks down. The wrapping choice affects how long the product lasts and how safe it is. It also changes how people see how green and good the product is. Earlier studies showed that more and more people like eco-friendly wrapping because they care about the environment more now (Magnier, L., & Cri e, D., 2015). This study says packaging is super important in how people see products. It also observes that how different wrappings change what people like if they want to buy. Oh, Y. J., & Oh, Y. J. (2020) observed that eco-friendly initiatives of the cosmetic companies play a positive role in shaping the consumer perception and buying of cosmetic products. The study of Resimovi c, Lea; Brozovi c, Maja; and Kova evi c, Dorotea (2022) observed that the consumer perception towards environmental friendliness of a product is influenced majorly by the material used for packaging rather than the color and graphics that appear on the packaging material or product. The study of Del Greco, A., Bani, M., Rampoldi, G., Ardenghi, S., Galli, P., Strepparava, M. G., & Russo, S. (2024) observed that the packaging material used for cosmetics turns into environmental waste and hence there is an immediate need to use sustainable materials for packaging of beauty products. The research of Kusumaningrum, W.B., Agustina, S., Sedayu, B.B., Syamani, F.A. (2024) also supported this finding and recommended the use of bio-mass as a packaging material to promote environmental-friendly packaging.

Consumer buying habits involve how people choose and purchase products. Factors like brand loyalty, price concerns, product quality, and packaging influence affect these habits. Kotler and Keller (2012) discussed these ideas. Marketers need to grasp consumer buying habits to create packaging that appeals to shoppers. This research looks at consumer buying habits as the choices people make based on packaging. It explores how the design, material, size, and color of packaging work together to sway consumer decisions when buying lip balm.

Based on the above findings, it can be understood that consumers perspectives and preferences in the lip balm market about packaging, can be looked at through five main variables: Packaging Design, Packaging Material, Packaging Size, Packaging Color, and Consumer Purchase Behavior.

This study aims to explore how packaging changes the way people see and like lip balms and then find out what parts of packaging make people buy lip balms. This information can help people who make and sell lip balms.

Objectives of the Study

Based on the literature survey conducted, the study aims to achieve the following objectives

- To identify the factors influencing consumer perception of lip balm packaging
- To examine the disconnect between initial appeal and purchase decisions
- To explore consumer preferences for functionality and sustainability in lip balm packaging

Research Questions

In line with the accomplishment of the above-mentioned objectives of this research, the following research questions would be addressed by the authors.

1. What visual design elements (color, graphics, etc.) in lip balm packaging are most effective at grabbing consumer attention and influencing brand perception?
2. To what extent does the initial visual appeal of lip balm packaging translate into perceptions of product quality and efficacy?
3. How do considerations of functionality (application method, ease of use) and ingredient transparency interact with initial visual appeal in influencing purchase decisions?
4. Do consumers prioritize sustainability features (recycled materials, refillable packaging) in lip balm packaging, and if so, how does this influence their purchasing decisions compared to other factors?
5. How can brands best leverage packaging design to bridge the gap between initial visual appeal and the deeper product considerations that drive purchasing decisions?

Research Methodology

Research Design: An exploratory descriptive research design shapes this study on lip balm packaging's influence on consumer perception and buying behavior by identifying possible association between factors that affect lip balm buying decisions. This design gives a full picture of how consumers see lip balm packaging.

Sample of the study: This study picked the respondents through convenience sampling, a method that chooses people who are easy to reach and want to join in. The target population is majorly youngsters, who are either students or employees who use lip balm.

Data Collection Procedure: The authors designed the questionnaire based on the findings from the literature survey. This questionnaire has been circulated online to the respondents. The questionnaire's main parts focus on important factors related to lip balm packaging choices. It asks about how often people use lip balm why they use it, and what they like in packaging. This includes things like colors, designs, materials, sizes, and labels. Each part has special questions to understand what people think. These use different ways to measure opinions, like scales and multiple-choice answers. For instance, one question asks people to score how much

package color and design matter when they pick a lip balm. This gives numbers that show what affects their choices. This approach yields quantitative data on decision-making factors.

Research Technique: The authors plan to use Descriptive statistics to present the research findings of the exploratory study. This approach gives insights into how people feel about lip balm packaging, what they like, and how they act which helps to spot patterns.

Results and Discussion

A total of 156 respondents filled the questionnaire online out of which 94 are women and the rest 62 are men. Since the research considered the youngsters as respondents, the respondents volunteered are in the age group of 17-24 years, who are primarily students (~87%).

Usage Frequency

The figures in the table-1 shows how often people use lip balm. It reveals different usage patterns among those surveyed. The biggest group, 38.6% (61 people), applies lip balm several times, 24.1% (38 people) use it once a day, 10.1% (16 people) use it a few times weekly, and another 10.1% (16 people) use it now and then i.e. occasionally, 9.5% (15 people) rarely use lip balm. The smallest group, 6.4% (10 people), never touches the products. These numbers point out that most respondents in the survey are regular lip balm users

Table-1: Lip balm usage frequency by the participants

Usage frequency	Number of Respondents
Multiple times a day	61
Once a day	38
Few times a week	16
Occasionally	16
Rarely	15
Never	10

Source: Authors' calculations

Reasons for Lip balm usage

The figures in the table-2 show why people use lip balm and it was revealed that hydration is the top reason for applying lip balm. Most respondents i.e. 135 of them, grab lip balm to moist their dry lips. Next up, 64 people use it to ease chapped lips, while 57 apply it to guard against sunlight. A smaller bunch, 42 users, go for the shiny look. Just one person uses it to plump their lips, and 10 users doesn't bother with lip balm at all. This information highlights that keeping lips moist is the main goal for lip balm users in the group.

Table-2: Reasons for lip balm usage

Reason	Number of Respondents
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Moist dry lips	135
Guard against sunlight	64
Ease chapped lips	57
Shiny Look	42
Plumping the lips	1
Never use lip balm	10

Source: Authors' calculations

Packaging Preferences

Table-3, illustrating preferences for lip balm packaging shows a dominant preference for natural and eco-friendly packaging, with 44.9% of participants (70 respondents) favoring this option. This is followed by 41.0% who prefer simple and minimalist packaging (64 respondents). A smaller segment, 12.8%, prefers bold and eye-catching packaging (20 respondents). Notably, only one participant prefers luxurious packaging, and another group indicated they are no interested in using lip balm at all. This distribution highlights a strong inclination towards environmentally friendly and minimalist packaging among the participants.

Table-3: Packaging Preferences

Reason	Number of Respondents
Natural and Eco-friendly Packaging	70
Simple and Minimalist Packaging	64
Bold and Eye-catching Packaging	20
Luxurious Packaging	1
Not interested to use lip balm	1

Source: Authors' calculations

Preferences for color scheme of packaging

The Table-4 given below, shows what people like for lip balm packaging colors. Most consumers go for soft pastels, with 68.6% (107 people) digging this look. Next up, 17.9% (28 people) prefer neutral shades such as black, white, and gray. A smaller group, 10.9% (17 people), likes bright and lively colors. Just one person each picked no color option and golden, or said they are not interested to use lip balm packaging making up 0.6% each. This info points out that soft pastel colors have the biggest appeal for lip balm packaging to most people.

Table-4: Preference for Packaging Color

Color scheme	Number of Respondents
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Soft pastels	107
Neutral Shades	28
Bright and lively	17
No color	1
Not interested to use lip balm	1

Source: Authors' calculations

Impact of Visual appeal on Lip balm purchase

The observations in the Table-5 show how people answered when asked if they've ever bought lip balm just because of how it looked. A big chunk, 47.1% (75 people), said they have. This means packaging can sway consumers when they're shopping. On the flip side, 52.9% (81 people) said they haven't bought lip balm just for its looks. These numbers give us a peek into how much packaging impacts the way people shop for lip balm. It's pretty split, with some consumers caring a lot about looks and others not so much.

Table-5: Impact of Visual appeal on Lip balm purchase

Reason	Number of Respondents
Looks as a main reason of purchase	75
Factors beyond looks	81

Source: Authors' calculations

Factors influencing lip balm purchase

The figures in the Table- 6 shows what people think matters most when buying new lip balm. Here respondents were asked to choose all the factors that mattered them. It's interesting to see how different things matter to different consumers. Brand reputation tops the list, with 107 people (23.8%) saying it's super important. Price isn't far behind mattering a lot to 103 people (22.9%). Ingredients are a big deal for 90 people (20.0%), and SPF protection is key for 87 consumers (19.3%). The way it's packaged has an impact on 63 people's choices (14.0%). What others say about it matters to 56 people (12.4%), but special deals don't sway many, with only 21 people (4.7%) caring about that. This mix of numbers shows us that people think about lots of things before picking a lip balm. They care about the brand, what's in it, and other things too. It's not just one thing but a bunch of factors influence consumer perception and buying.

Table- 6: Factors influencing lip balm purchase

Reason	Number of Respondents
Brand reputation	107
Price	103

Ingredients of the Lip balm	90
SPF protection	87
Packaging	63
Opinion of other customers	56
Special deals (promotional offers)	21

Source: Authors' calculations

Price orientation towards quality and uniqueness

The table-7 illustrating responses to the question "Are you willing to pay extra for a lip balm with high-quality or unique packaging?" demonstrates varied attitudes among participants. The majority, comprising 41.3% (65 respondents), are open to considering an additional cost for lip balm with high-quality or unique packaging. Meanwhile, 37.8% (59 respondents) express a definite willingness to pay extra for such packaging, indicating a strong consumer interest in premium product presentation. Conversely, 20.5% (32 respondents) are not inclined to pay extra for packaging, suggesting a segment of consumers who prioritize other factors over packaging aesthetics in their purchasing decisions. This distribution underscores the nuanced preferences consumers have regarding the value they place on packaging quality when buying lip balm.

Table- 7: Price orientation towards quality and uniqueness

Reason	Number of Respondents
Willing to pay but in line with quality and uniqueness	65
Willing to pay for extra packaging	59
Not inclined to pay extra for packaging	32

Source: Authors' calculations

Impact of Packaging elements

The observations in Table-8 shows how people ranked different parts of lip balm packaging when picking one.

Table- 8: Impact of Packaging elements

Reason	Number of Respondents
Colour	59
Labelling	62
Material used	53
Size	58

Designs	45
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Source: Authors’ calculations

Color stood out as the big deal, with 59 consumers putting it at the top. This hints that buyers care about how the lip balm looks thinking color makes it pretty or matches what they like. Right behind that, 62 people said labeling was super important showing they want clear info and claims on the package. The material mattered a lot too, with 53 people saying it's key, which points to worries about being eco-friendly, tough, and not harming the environment. Size was also a big thing, with 58 people rating it as most important suggesting they prefer lip balms that are easy to carry or use. , 45 people thought design was kind of important, which means that while looks matter, they might not beat out other stuff like how it works or what it says. These findings show that people think about lots of different things and have varied reasons for choosing their lip balms.

Likelihood of trying new lip balm

The figures in the Table-9 show different opinions on trying new lip balm just because of its packaging. Most people 40 of them, said they'd give it a shot if the packaging looked good. This means packaging can sway a lot of consumers when they're buying things. On the flip side, 25 people said they wouldn't try new lip balm just because of how it looks. These guys care more about things like how well-known the brand is or what's in it. A big chunk, 49 people, were on the fence about it. For them, packaging matters but it's not the only thing they think about. Then there were 45 people who said they'd likely try something new if the packaging caught their eye. , 8 consumers were super into it saying they'd definitely give it a go. All this shows that in the tough lip balm market, making your product look good and work well can really grab people's attention and get them to try it out.

Table- 9: Likelihood of trying new lip balm

Reason	Number of Respondents
Will try if packaging looks good	40
Looks alone doesn’t matter	25
Emphasis on brand	49
Likely to try something new if the packaging is good	45
Definitely try if the packaging looks good	8

Source: Authors’ calculations

Responses from open-ended questions

Consumers strongly prefer simple and eco-friendly lip balm packaging designs. They like soft pastel colors or earthy tones. These colors feel calm and natural to them. People want packaging that's easy to use carry around, and lasts long. Many consumers suggested using paper- based materials to help the environment. They don't want packaging that's too big, breaks , or doesn't

protect the lip balm well. This shows a bigger trend where people care about nature more. The packaging should work well and look good without being too fancy. Customers value practicality and simplicity in their lip balm containers. They want something that fits their lifestyle and values. The feedback highlights a shift towards more thoughtful consumer choices. People are thinking about how their purchases affect the world around them. This insight has an influence on how companies might design future lip balm packaging.

Consumers had different gripes about lip balm packaging. Some consumers found the size or shape a pain, while others complained about flimsy materials or caps that broke too . A bunch of people felt let down when the balm didn't live up to what the packaging promised – it didn't moisturize well or felt weird on their lips. But here's the thing: quite a few people didn't have any big issues at all. This shows that while packaging is super important for keeping customers happy, you can still have a good experience if the product is well-made and does its job. Bottom line is, people want packaging that looks good, works well, and doesn't harm the environment. They're after a lip balm that delivers on all fronts.

Findings

This study shows that consumers like lip balm packaging that's simple, green, and nice to look at. Most people want packaging in soft light colors or natural shades. They say, these look calming and natural. Many respondents want packaging that's easy to use carry around, and tough. They often talk about eco-friendly features and packaging that doesn't hurt the planet. This shows more people care about green products now. Some people also say it's important for packaging to show how well the lip balm works and how clean it is. They like tubes or sticks that keep germs out. People want packaging that's basic and works well. They don't want anything fancy or complicated. The packaging should be small enough to fit in a pocket or purse. It should also be strong enough not to break if dropped. More and more, people are looking for packaging made from materials that won't harm the environment. They want to feel good about what they're buying. Some consumers think the packaging should tell you right away if the lip balm is good quality and safe to use. They prefer designs that keep the product clean and free from bacteria.

This research also shows different consumer preferences for lip balm packaging's color, design, and material. 50 people agreed and 13 agreed that packaging color matters. But bright and bold colors got mixed reactions, with 34 disagreeing and 45 disagreeing. Natural or calming colors were popular, with 55 agreeing and 37 agreeing. Package design including graphics and text has an influence on buying choices, as 54 agreed and 16 agreed. Many consumers prefer minimalist designs, with 50 agreeing and 34 agreeing. Unique and eye-catching designs got mixed responses leaning towards neutral and agreement. The packaging material was kind of important, and 42 agreed and 30 agreed about eco-friendly or sustainable materials mattering. High-quality materials, size, and easy-to-carry designs were also seen as important, with lots of agreement in each group. Bigger packaging with extra features had balanced views, with many neutral responses. Label info and clarity were important too, with many agreeing on the need for readable and informative packaging. In general, the chart shows varied preferences but leans towards practical, simple, and eco-friendly packaging.

This study also found that most people aren't let down by their lip balm packaging. But those who are unhappy point to practical problems. They complain about sizes that don't work well poor materials, and products that don't deliver what the package promises. A bunch of consumers also said they dislike packaging that's too big, heavy, or breaks. Some talked about prints that fade fast or caps that snap off. A few people mentioned they're not happy with the lip balm itself. They said it feels bad, doesn't moisturize well, or smells weird. This tells us that how good the packaging is having a big effect on how much people like their lip balms.

Respondents gave extra comments and ideas showing different likes and worries. Many stressed how important eco-friendly and sustainable packaging is. They liked simple designs and paper packaging. People also cared a lot about correct ingredient lists. Some didn't believe the "natural" claims products made. They wanted packages easy to open, carry, and last long. This shows they like designs that work well and are handy. Some specific things people liked were SPF protection, tint, and smell. This proves looks and feel matter when people choose products. In general, everyone wanted packaging that gives info, looks good, and cares for the environment. They also wanted it to match how good the product is and what it says it can do.

Conclusion

This research sought to understand how consumers view and choose lip balms, with a focus on packaging features and how they affect buying decisions. The study used a survey of 160 people to gain insights into the main factors that shape consumer preferences for lip balm packaging. The study showed customers like simple, green, and nice-looking packages. People want packages they can use, carry around, and that last a long time. They care a lot about packages that don't hurt the earth and have calm or natural colors. Clear labels and packages that give good info matter a lot when people decide what to buy. The research also found that what people expect from a product often doesn't match how it works. This is true for claims about what's in the product and how good it is overall.

This study's findings highlight how crucial it is to match packaging design with consumer expectations in order to boost product appeal and consumer satisfaction . Lip balm brands must focus on creating sustainable and aesthetic packaging that connects with consumers' eco-friendly concerns and sense of style. Also, clear and honest labeling can build trust and make consumers think the product is more valuable. In general, the study indicates that paying attention to what consumers prefer can result in more loyal customers and better product sales.

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