

**UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA**

**PACKAGING DESIGN IN THE MARKETING MIX: PERSPECTIVES OF  
ADVERTISING AGENCY MANAGERS**



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**A DISSERTATION IN THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION AND  
MEDIA STUDIES, FACULTY OF LANGUAGES EDUCATION SUBMITTED  
TO THE SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES, UNIVERSITY OF  
EDUCATION, WINNEBA, IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE  
REQUIREMENTS FOR AWARD OF THE MASTER OF ARTS DEGREE.**

**AUGUST, 2014**

## DECLARATION

### STUDENT'S DECLARATION

I, Nat Kofi Aggrey declare that this dissertation, with the exception of quotations and references contained in published works which have all been identified and duly acknowledged, is entirely my own original work, and it has not been submitted, either in part or whole, for another degree elsewhere.

SIGNATURE : .....

DATE : .....

### SUPERVISOR'S DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of this work was supervised in accordance with the guidelines for supervision of Dissertation as laid down by the University of Education, Winneba.

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DATE : .....

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am eternally grateful to God for His grace and favor that carried me through this academic journey successfully.

My sincerest gratitude goes to my supervisor and great instructor Dr. Andy Ofori-Birikorang for his immense and generous support, guidance and inspiration. Doc., thank you for all your great contributions toward the successful completion of my higher education and final academic work. God bless you mightily and continue to grant you immense fulfillment.

I am also very grateful for my mother, Otilia Akaba for being my greatest supporter and shoulder to lean on throughout my life. God bless you immeasurably mom. Many thanks to my family especially close cousins, Aunties and Uncles for all their support, prayers and encouragement.

My heartfelt gratitude to my girlfriend, Roselyn Happy Nukunu for all the great support, love, encouragement and help. I love and appreciate you.

Last but not least, my special thanks also go to Dorcas Anima Donkor, Isaac Norris Ainooson, A sare Okai-Anti and all the amazing lecturers in the Department of Communication and Media Studies.

## DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my mother, Otilia Akaba for the motherly love, prayers and generous sponsorship throughout my life. I love you mom and God bless you.



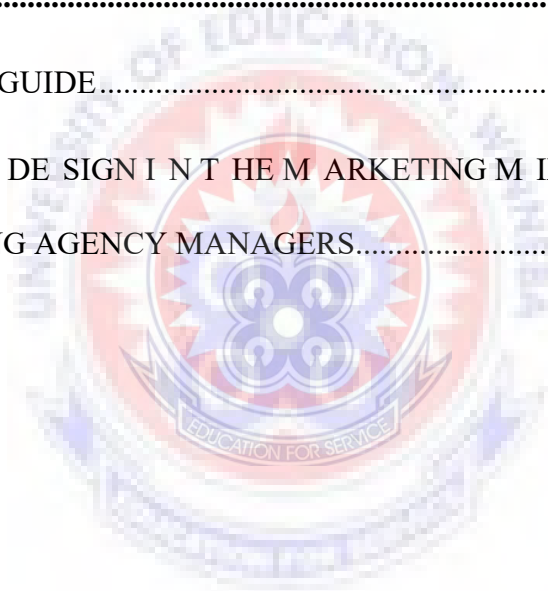
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## ABSTRACT

The study examines the perspectives of advertising agency managers about packaging design in the marketing mix. Packaging design is an important component of the marketing mix with potential to contribute significantly to the marketing process. Using the qualitative research approach, in-depth interviews were conducted on purposively sampled advertising agency managers in Ghana especially involved in creative work, and the result was subjected to thematic analysis. It was found out that packaging design contributes to the marketing process as part of product branding; it also enhances 'sellability', and communicates pertinent product information about product to its target. The main factors considered in packaging design are the target market for the product, and need to ensure originality and innovation. From the perspective of creative advertising agency managers, the brand owners make the major packaging design decisions, hence, receiving a good brief from brand owners is a prerequisite for effective packaging. Meanwhile, effective packaging design must be informative and instructive. The study concludes that packaging design is an indispensable promotional activity in the marketing mix with strategic and functional roles. However, creating effective packaging design requires a close collaboration between brand owners and their agencies.

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.0 Background

Today's consumers find themselves in the post-modern market place within which technology is increasingly mediating their market place transactions because of the ever saturation of — products and services — information (Underwood & Ozanne, 1998). Bombarded on all fronts — print, radio, television, internet, mobile devices and in-store — the contemporary consumer must maneuver through this new labyrinth of a market-place, ironically making the task of reaching the consumer increasingly and ever more challenging for businesses.

"The consumer is a skeptical listener and more elusive than ever, resulting in increased pressure on the communications capabilities of marketers" (Underwood & Ozanne, 1998, p. 208). In order for firms to survive in the longer term in this intensely competitive market-place, it is highly important to develop innovative solutions that are backed by creative entrepreneurial and marketing initiatives (Rundh, 2013). One other critical factor is consumers' perceptions of value on their products (Topoyan & Bulut, 2008).

One of the dominant thoughts in modern marketing is the marketing mix (Kotler, Armstrong, Saunders & Wong, 1999) which presents the marketer with an arsenal of tactical tools to creatively compete in the new market-place. The concept of the marketing mix as we know today is credited to Jerome McCarthy (1960) who condensed Bordeu's (1953) twelve elements and conceptualized them as the 4P's; Product, Price, Place and Promotion (Anderson & Taylor, 1995; Constantinides, 2006; Fitzgerald, 2014; Goh, 2009; van Waterschoot & van den Bulte, 1992).

McCarthy then discussed these composite elements within the marketing manager's framework with the consumer at the center of the whole process (Anderson & Taylor, 1995).

The marketing mix refers to these set of controllable tactical marketing tools (product, price, place and promotion) at the disposal of a firm to blend in order to produce the right response it desires in its target markets (Kotler et al., 1999) and drive demand for its offerings. Within the marketing mix framework is the packaging element, subsumed in the product 'P' element, thus positioning packaging as a product-related element, a point supported by Underwood (2003). However, Jonathan Asher (1987) as cited in Anderson & Taylor (1995) referred to packaging as the "Interactive fifth 'P' of marketing" and illustrated how vitally important packaging was in all the other 'Ps' of the marketing mix decisions. This assertion is affirmed by Hellstrom & Nilson (2011) who note that, Nickels and Jolson (1976) originally proposed packaging as a fifth "P" to stress the importance of packaging within the marketing mix of firms.

### **1.1 Background to the Study**

At the proceedings of the Royal Society of Arts in 1936, Milner Gray a notable designer who called himself an 'aesthete' presented a seminal paper on the "History and Development of Packaging" where he said that "to the designer, to the advertising agent and to the packing industry the word "Packaging" has come to denote the art and science of packing merchandise to increase its sales" (Gray, 1939, p. 634). This definition unequivocally positions packaging in the realm of marketing and promotion, years before others conceptualized it within the marketing mix. So it is not a feat of fate that Underwood (2003) notes that packaging is an element of mass-communication in the marketplace, a point strongly supported by several authors of packaging research including Ampuero & Vila (2006), Kotler, et al. (1999),

Prendergast and Pitt (1996), Rundh (2013) and Simmons (1949) but "unlike advertising, packaging is a marketing communication vehicle that is tangible in nature" (Underwood, 2003, p. 68).

Current studies have gone further to posit packaging and packaging design as a marketing communications tool (Gutierrez, 2001; Underwood, Klein & Burke, 2001), for creating or gaining competitive advantage (Rundh, 2009; Simmons 1949), contributing to the construction of brand (Underwood & Klein, 2002; Underwood, 2003) and self-identity (Underwood, 2003). Packaging is also a key function in the creation and/or enhancement of consumer/brand relationship and 'visual equity'; a term used to describe durable brands that build equity in their visual image as a result of image continuity in their packaging design (Underwood, 2003), for instance the coca cola brand.

However, there is some disagreement among several scholars as to how much academic interest has been devoted to research in the area of packaging and packaging design. Rundh (2005; 2009; 2013), for instance argues that although packaging and packaging design is ubiquitous, its importance is yet to be fully acknowledged since it has gained little academic interest in the marketing literature and also from a managerial standpoint. Underwood & Klein (2002) also argue that in the past few decades that packaging was gaining industry emphasis as a strategic tool, interest from the academic field was more limited over that period as compared to other marketing elements such as advertising and pricing. Nonetheless in the past decade, academic interest in the area of packaging has become more evident (Orth & Malkewitz, 2006).

POPAI (2001), cited in Underwood (2003) asserts that brand loyalties are decreasing, hence, increasing the frequency of buying decisions made at the store shelf, the aesthetic appeal of the package arguably increases in importance. The importance of packaging and packaging design cannot be over emphasized as it has been time and time again proven in the existing literature as a powerful marketing tool at the point of sale or point of purchase (Abdalkrim & AL-Hrezat, 2013; Rundh, 2009; Underwood & Klein, 2002; Underwood, Klein & Burke, 2001) and thus earned its name, the "silent salesman" (Hollywood, Wells, Armstrong & Farley, 2013). Hollywood et al. (2013) notes that, Pilditch (1957) first associated packs (i.e. package) to a 'silent' salesman and this has received wide spread acceptance by several authors. Nonetheless, some authors have preferred the term in a rather more generic form and therefore use "silent salesperson" instead (Abdalkrim, & AL-Hrezat, 2013; Bone & France, 2001; Rundh, 2009). Yet still other researchers including Prendergast and Pitt (1996), Hellstrom and Nilsson (2011), Rundh (2005) Vernuccio, Cuzzolino and Micheli (2010) and Wells (2011) refer to especially the primary package as 'sales packaging' or 'consumer packaging'.

Schollmeyer (1965) postulated that demand for cheap and better packaging will heighten, placing greater emphasis on it as an advertising medium to merchandise products. He continues that, analysts prime interest will be whether packaging achieves "two basic goals: (a) the retention and expansion of existing markets; and (b) the penetration of new markets" (p. 78). Underwood (2003) highlights this conspicuous point by stating that "packaging certainly represents a discrete outcome of strategic marketing mix decisions, an outcome that is tangible and continuous in its behavior" (p. 69).

Underwood (2003) goes further to establish the fact that multiple market factors and consumer trends point to a heightened role of packaging in the marketing mix. Dobson and Yadav (2012) state that two-thirds of purchase decisions are possibly made at the point-of-sale and again Schoomans and Robben (1997) as cited in Holmes and Paswan (2012) closes this argument estimating that about 70% of purchase decisions of prepackaged goods at the supermarket are made at the point of purchase, hence the package is plausibly the only marketing communication the consumer may receive when evaluating the product, supported by P OPAI (2001) in Underwood (2003). Dickson (1994), as cited in Goncalves (2008) also postulates that packaging is the most distinguished marketing effort and receives more money spend from firms than advertising.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

The literature on packaging is quite varied and wide, however according to Underwood & Ozanne (1998) it is comparatively a less researched area to other sources of marketing information such as advertising, pricing (which has received more extensive and systematic studies (Underwood & Klein, 2002)) and personal selling.

Several studies have concentrated on consumer perceptions; at the point of purchase Abdalkrim & AL-Hrezat, (2013), in evaluating product quality (Goncalves, 2008), communicative function (Underwood, 2003; Underwood & Ozanne, 2001), beliefs, attitudes, response and even reaction to (new) packaging (Bone & France, 2001; Hollywood, et. al., 2013; Holmes & Paswan, 2012). Other studies have integrated packaging with branding (Underwood & Klein, 2002), product positioning (Ampuero & Vila, 2006), marketing (Simmons, 1949) and purchase decisions (Silayoi & Speece, 2004). Additional research related to packaging have looked at ethical issues in



packaging (Bone, & Corey, 2000; Underwood, & Ozanne, 1998), visual impact of product packaging (Underwood, Klein & Burke, 2001), visual attention during brand choice (Pieters & Warlop, 1999) and visual influence on in-store purchasing decisions (Clement, 2007)

Akabogu (2013) for instance looked at the 'VIEW' model of packaging, advanced by Twedt (1968), to evaluate promotional effectiveness of sachets of Peak Milk products in Nigeria. Akabogu (2014) again applied the 'VIEW' model to 7Up product's packaging to determine consumers' satisfaction with the products. Both works were done from a quantitative stance and proved the relevance and significance of the 'VIEW' model in both instances. Twedt (1968) suggested the 'VIEW' model to show "how the marketing executive (who is not a packaging expert) might profitably approach such questions as "Which of several package designs is best?" or "How does my new package rate against its competitors?" or even "When should I change my present package?" (p. 59). He adds that, answers to these questions are rarely quick and easy, but they are most certainly answerable.

Some packaging studies done in Ghana have also looked at "Packaging as a vehicle for promoting made-in-Ghana products" (Obeesi, 2010), "Packaging as a brand communication vehicle; case study of fun milk limited, Tamale" (Ampong, 2011) and "Packaging in Ghana; Challenges in the packaging design and production chain" (Ismaila, 2010).

A significant gap therefore exists in the literature as no attempt, have been made to look at packaging design, its multi-dimensional roles within the marketing mix framework, specifically, the promotion mix, from the viewpoint of advertising agency managers. The purpose of this study therefore is to fill this gap in the literature by adding a new viewpoint to the packaging/marketing phenomenon by looking at the

perspectives of advertising agency managers of the roles packaging (specifically its visual component) play in their marketing communications. This study will however employ the Signaling theory and also apply the 'AIDA' model to extend a highly overlooked conceptualization of packaging design decisions. Moreover, this work will be situated in the Ghanaian context.

The direction of this study is also backed by a recommendation made by Underwood & Kleine (2002) who notes that research exploring the multiple roles of packaging in the marketing mix and the communication processes used in its application will be an invaluable addition to literature.

### **1.3 Objectives**

1. To examine the roles of packaging design in the marketing mix.
2. To explain the communication processes and factors employed by advertising agencies in the use of packaging design.
3. To analyze the perspectives of agency managers on packaging design.

### **1.4 Research Questions**

1. What are the roles of packaging design in the marketing mix?
2. What are the communication processes and factors employed by advertising agencies in the use of packaging design?
3. What are the perspectives of agency managers on packaging design?

### **1.5 Significance of the Study**

Although several researches have demonstrated the incredulous importance of packaging and packaging design, not only as a logistics tool but as a marketing tool (Gray, 1936; Orth & Malkewitz, 2008; Prendergast and Pitt, 1996; Rundh, 2005, 2013; Underwood & Ozanne, 1998), scant guidance has been provided in assisting

managers in creating desired response measurable to their marketing objectives through their package design selection (Orth & Malkewitz, 2008). It is therefore important to get a balanced view of the roles packaging play for different actors in the supply chain as presented by Rundh (2009) including the advertising agency.

This study will therefore be filling a significant gap in the packaging and marketing literature especially that of Ghana. The study will also gain provide managerial implications to help curtail the level of package related issues and increase sustained long-term consumer relationships with product brands. Taking the cue from Underwood (2003), brands who learn from the findings of this study will benefit from a tremendous level of 'visual equity', "a term used to describe durable brands that build equity in their visual image as a result of continuity of imagery in packaging design" (p. 66) such as Coca Cola.

### **1.6 Scope or Delimitation**

The scope of this study is focused on the visual appearance of packaging and the point of view advertising agency managers have on its application within the marketing mix framework as a communication tool. The study is also delimited to only advertising agency managers in Accra-Ghana, and thus will not include other participants in the agency, neither agency managers from other parts of the country.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.0 Introduction

The literature review forms the foundation of this research study. The primary purpose is to establish the rationale for this study and to show why the research questions are important. In order to situate this study in the current body of literature, relevant works are reviewed to identify and examine the perspectives of other researchers and to establish new perspectives on the phenomenon in the current study (Damon & Holloway, 2011).

Thus, the current state of knowledge in the field under study is illuminated in this chapter, pointing out where existing knowledge is incomplete or inadequate and how this study might either fill the gap or offer alternative perspectives that will improve understanding of the phenomenon.

#### 2.1 A Brief History of Packaging

In the age when the surrounding agrarian districts of townships were more or less isolated communities and self-sustaining, it made more sense to brand livestock rather than branding merchandise (Gray, 1939; Berger, 2006). But the origins and history of branded goods according to Gray (1939) are rooted in the story of the containers and their development; primitive man made crude pots for grain and water, dating back to the dawn of civilization.

"It is a formidable leap in time to the invention of paper in China, to the glass bottles of Egypt, of Greece and of Rome, to the cosmetic pots of Pompeii or to that very precious "alabaster box of Spikenard" of the first century A.D" (Gray, 1939, p. 634). Perhaps though, significant phenomena are the Roman ointment's lead covering

engraved with the maker's name, or the "Venice Treacle" — the poison antidote — supposedly dating to Nero's time which was sold in a blue and white Lambeth jar in 1650 (Gray, 1939).

Leather and earthenware bottles were in wide usage until about 1640 when glass bottles started to emerge as a replacement. However, glass was very expensive so a blob of glass was stamped on the shoulder of the bottle with the sign of the inn or family who owned it (Gray, 1939). Cylindrical phials were also made to contain the accumulating muster of oils and essences by the end of the seventeenth century, and were usually corked and covered with paper or parchment tied with strings. They sometimes had crude printed or written labels which were again usually covered with outer paper wrapper, and then again stringed and wax sealed (Gray, 1939).

**Figure 1**



*An English wine bottle  
dated 1690*

**Figure 2**



*Seventeenth century phials of patent medicines  
from the Wellcome Historical Medical Museum.*

*Source: Gray, Milner (1939) "The History and Development of Packaging"*

Nicholas Appert's experiments yielded results for preserving a wide range of meats, vegetables, fruits and even milk in bottles (Gray, 1939) as he found that food sealed in tin containers could be preserved for a long time when sterilized by boiling (Berger, 2006). This marked the birth of the canning industry, at the dawning of the nineteenth century. Nonetheless, Gray (1939) notes that, it was not until 1813 that Hall and

Donkin attracted favorable attention for their tin preserved foods which they later supplied admiralty on regular bases along with competitors. Most of this development took place in Europe, however, it was not until about the end of the second decade of the nineteenth century that Duggett and Kennett started canning in Boston, U.S.A.

The development of cardboard containers is said to have happened concurrently along canning in its early stages. Its first wide use was for pill-boxes and continued as the package of the chemist's trade, almost exclusively during the first half of the nineteenth century (Gray, 1939). Then in the late '60's of this period, Cadbury started marketing croquette chocolates in both circular and square rigid boxes with printed illustrations pasted on the lids including children, fruits, animals, landscapes, and even reproductions of famous paintings. However, a notable contribution to this era was when Richard Cadbury started differentiating his boxes with his own designs (Gray, 1939). "A dozen or two of these boxes on the counter or in the window, would present a gay little picture gallery, attractive in the highest degree" (The Chemist and Druggist of December, 1870, cited in Gray, 1939, p. 639). Gray opines that it is "probably one of the first references to the value of packages in mass display" (1939, p. 639).

The age of the branded product saw its real beginning at the climax of the nineteenth century when the basic principles of manufacturing containers had been established (Gray, 1939). This was marked by the transformation in America from handicraft to mechanized production methods (Twede, 2009; 2012), the emergence of "automatic can-making machines" by 1885 (Gray, 1939) revolutionizing the latter half of the nineteenth century (Twede, 2009). Kiernen's (1985) argument can then be hardly refuted, that America brought about the diversification of food products by improving food processing, preservation and packaging (cited in Twede, 2009).

Twede (2009) also notes that three key "package-converting technologies" were mechanized within a short two-decade period — 1879-1902 — practically simultaneously. These processes for making paperboard folding cartons, tinplated cans and glass bottles became the building blocks for the modern age branding and mass food marketing; the development of the self-service supermarket "symbol of modern America" (Twede, 2009; 2012). Gray (1939) concurs when he said at the proceedings of the Royal Society of Arts that "it was America that changed all this and taught us our first lessons in intensive competitive marketing... even the bottle, tin or box in which the product was packed was treated as a selling force" (p. 643). These were the breakthroughs of Robert Gray, Edwin Norton and Michael Owens, all American entrepreneurs who simply wanted to cut down their production costs (Twede, 2009); "profit through volume" (Twede, 2012; p. 246).

The movable type press of Johannes Guttenberg in 1455 and the lithographic press of Alois Senefelder had also revolutionized the printing world (Gray, 1939). Branding mass-produced packages was more than a possibility (Twede, 2012) during this time and "what the manufacturer could name he could advertise" (Tedlow, 1996 cited in Twede, 2012). The ability to market mass-produced food in mass-produced branded packages stimulated marketing strategies that exponentially increased the supply and demand of products, thus, profoundly revolutionizing the relationship between consumers, grocery stores and food producers (Twede, 2009; 2012).

According Twede (2009), "branding and advertising created new needs that could only be satisfied by a branded product in a recognizable trademarked package" (p. 267). However, Strasser (1989) as cited in Twede (2012; p. 265), noted that "consumers developed mutually dependent, but unequal, relationships with manufacturers, product packages, advertising campaigns and waste management

companies".

The package's ability to promote in-stores and also in the homes of consumers received laudable praises from advertisers and by 1920 the number of magazine advertisements featuring packages was at a record high of seventy-five percent (Franken & Larrabee, 1928 cited in Twede, 2012). Packages were now performing their most remarkable role as "silent salesmen" (Pilditch, 1961 cited in Twede, 2009) enabling manufacturers to build direct relationships with retailers and most importantly consumers, hence, bypassing the traditional wholesalers (Strasser, 1989 cited in Twede, 2009).

A new consumer culture, enabled by packages which now was considered part of the product was born, engendering new domestic habits and activities (Strasser, 1989 cited in Twede, 2009). Next, retailers dramatically cut in-store labor cost; they had discovered the self-service shopping advantage of the new packages (Twede, 2012) with their increasingly brighter, cheerful graphics (Twede, 2009) and the "democratization of consumption" (Tedlow, 1996 as cited in Twede, 2012: p. 266).

## **2.2 Packaging as an Element of Marketing Communications**

Marketing communications is a management process by which organizations interact with various audiences in order to achieve their marketing and business objectives (Fill and Jamieson, 2011). This interaction refers to the form of communication and to whether the nature of the messages and media used are essentially appealing to the intellect or emotions of the target audience. They further note that organizations often mix these two elements (intellectual and emotional) to make themselves heard, understood and engage their target audience in mutually beneficial relationships.



Companies now realize the importance of meaningfully interacting and developing true relationships if they are going to leverage their brands with their customers (Mininni, 2007). Organizations develop and present messages that are significant to identified stakeholder groups by understanding the audience's communication environment and by this influence these audiences attitudinal and behavioral responses (Fill and Jamieson, 2011). In support of this, Alervall and Saied (2013) state that it is only through communication that brands can exist.

As attempts to reach and persuade consumers continue to increase, the product package continues to grow as a marketing communications tool (Underwood & Ozanne, 1998). We find in today's marketplace almost every product and service packaged (Mininni, 2007; Alervall & Saied, 2013) in various creative forms.

According to Underwood & Ozanne (1998) packaging is the communication lifeblood of a firm at the point of purchase. Everything a brand wants to say can be said through its packaging (Alervall & Saied, 2013). Thus, packaging is perhaps the most important communication medium, compared to other communication mediums (Peters, 1994 cited in Immonen, 2010; Alervall and Saied, 2013).

Packaging is a form of corporate communications (Alervall & Saied, 2013) and a core component of a company's brand communications (Mininni, 2007). Creating a brand that works is the product of communication, the overall success of the brand depends on it (Alervall and Saied, 2013), thus critical to get the packaging right (Mininni, 2007).

Packaging design is best suited to communicate product or brand values since the consumer is exposed to either the primary or secondary packages at the point-of-purchase (Alervall & Saied, 2013; Immonen, 2010; Ksenia, 2013; Rundh, 2009) in

their homes. According to Mininni (2007) packaging is very distinct in the way it communicates a brand and its values. This has strong sales implications on certain products and thus critical to marketing strategies (Ksenia, 2013).

It is perhaps packaging's ease of accessibility that heightens its importance at the point of purchase; it is inherently one of its core strengths as a marketing communications vehicle (Underwood et al., 2001; Underwood & Klein, 2002). The uniqueness of packaging in various media such as TV, magazines, shop windows, point of sale and consumers' homes is proof of its capabilities as a strong communication medium (Watzlavick & Jackson, 1967 as cited in DeLuca & Penco, 2006).

Effective communication is a valuable asset to organizations, thus, they rely on a variety of promotional tools particularly advertising, sales promotion, public relations, direct marketing, personal selling (Fill & Jamieson, 2011) publicity, sponsorships (Nancarrow et al., 1998) and added-value approaches such as packaging (Bassin, 1988; Dobson & Yadav, 2012; Fill & Jamieson, 2011; Rundh, 2009) to reach out to consumers. For instance, one of the leading snack food brands in UK, 'Walker', uses a variety of communication methods to develop its brands including advertising, point of purchase and packaging (Fill & Jamieson, 2011). Therefore, labeling packages effectively underpins these main forms of marketing communications (Nancarrow, et al., 1998).

Marketing communications provide the means by which brands and organizations can present themselves to their audiences (Fill & Jamieson, 2011). The primary objective here is to stimulate continued purchase through a complete engagement in continuous dialogue. The quality and satisfaction of this interaction will determine continuity or otherwise, termination of the interaction. It was noted in Alervall and Saied's (2013) study that a clear and concise brand communication is essential to marketing strategy

and should therefore be integral to every product's packaging.

Several managerial trends have largely contributed to the continuing growth of packaging's role as a brand communication vehicle (Dobson & Yadav, 2012; Underwood, 2003). One of such key trends is that, promotional tools such as advertising are declining in reach and efficiency, thus, contributing to packaging's outgrowth as a more effective tool producers may use to communicate with a wider target market with more information, products and brand variety (Dobson & Yadav, 2012). Packaging is a promotional tool and a powerful medium of communication for manufacturers (Nilsson & Ostrom, 2005).

Product managers and their design firms must strive to break through the clutter in the market place with creative packages that communicate positive aesthetic, experiential, functional, symbolic and/or informational benefits to consumers (Underwood & Ozanne, 1998; Garber et al., 2000). Among the symbolism generated and/or communicated by packaging are: convenience, environmental consciousness, ethnicity, family, health consciousness, national and/or regional authenticity, nostalgia, prestige, value and variations in quality (Underwood, 2003). Indeed the importance of packaging is not only functional, it is also a means by which product information and brand character is communicated (Nilsson & Ostrom, 2005).

As consumers are increasingly faced with an overwhelming range of stimuli in the modern market place, package design information may serve as an attention/identification cue within this environment, influencing consumers' consideration sets during purchase (Underwood, et. al., 2001). Shoppers have been found to frequently rely on packaging of especially food products which are usually in their unprepared state to imagine the product in its final state (Underwood & Ozanne, 1998).

Researchers such as Bone & Corey (2000) and Underwood, et al. (2001) are of the view that packaging design is inherently a multidimensional concept and a cross functional aspect of marketing which is increasingly gaining importance in consumer needs satisfaction, cost savings and substantial increase in corporate profits.

Underwood et al. (2001) and Underwood (2003) add that, the personality of a brand is communicated via multiple structural and visual elements of packages and these provide rich brand associations by incorporating texts/fonts, shapes, graphic design, size, colors, illustrations, construction, texture, brand logo, package materials, pictorials and product descriptions. Furthermore, positive brand associations are more likely to cause persuasion (Nancarrow et al. 1998).

Ksenia (2013) nonetheless argue that, packaging communication is not done through its appearance elements alone, rather, far more through a holistic experience of the package. As consumers evaluate product characteristics, they can make careful decisions through the assistance of written information on packages (Silayoi & Speece, 2004). Furthermore, consumers' needs and emotional desires for purchase can be satisfied only when the package communication delivers the right message.

Mininni (2007) is of the view that packaging communication ultimately drives product sales right at the shelf in many cases. He argues that advertising and promotions merely bring customers in to the retail outlet. He adds that, in an age where products enjoy widespread retail presence, packaging goes a long way in selling the product among the host of competition.

Even if a company deliberately chooses not to recognize the marketing potential of packaging, the package cannot escape that aspect of its functions (Silayoi & Speece, 2004). Packaging is an integral part of the decision-making process as it

communicates to consumers. The way they perceive the package is dependent on the communication elements, which for many marketing strategies, is the key to success (Silayoi & Speece, 2004).

How a package is designed affects the consumer both at the point of sale and at the point of future handling and use of the product (Ksenia, 2013). This is because packaging forms part of consumers' experience, influencing subsequent purchase decisions. Packaging can be essential in developing consumer brand relationships (Underwood, 2003).

Production and distribution efficiency, product containment and protection, consumer safety and use assistance, environmental considerations, as well as marketing communications are always affected by Packaging decisions (Bone & Corey, 2000).

Underwood (2003) proposes in his study that packaging is a product-related attribute and a powerful vehicle for meaning creation and delivery, as well as a potential cultural product itself. He again states that packaging possesses a symbolic duality and therefore communicates symbolic meanings through both mediated and lived experiences unlike advertising which only provides mediated experiences. As a product-related attribute, packaging is an aspect of a product, often critical in creating and communicating brand identity (Underwood, 2003).

Packaging communication has four viewpoints: the package first attracts attention with its design; it secondly indicates what it contains; thirdly, it educates the consumer and then finally, it contributes to the overall image of the brand (Gutierrez, 2001). Packaging therefore sells products by attracting attention and then communicating (Prendergast & Pitt, 1996; Silayoi & Speece, 2004) information and instructing consumers through the communication of messages (Rundh, 2005).

According to Fill and Jamieson (2011), there are four main roles communication can primarily play:

1. It can inform and make potential customers aware of an organization's offering
2. It may persuade current and potential customers of the desirability of entering into an exchange relationship.
3. It may also be used to reinforce, remind, convince and reassure or comfort either immediately prior to exchange or more commonly, post-purchase.
4. It can act as a differentiator, especially when competing brands have little or no difference.

It was noted in Rundh's (2005) study that, packaging is a brand's key communication tool since increasingly, shopping decisions are made at the point of purchase. Unlike advertising, packaging is a three-dimensional marketing communications vehicle that is tangible and resides in the home, forming part of consumers' lived experience (Underwood, 2003). It is this characteristic quality of packaging that it largely gains its communicative power from.

Driving sales and category leadership potential of packaging are inherent in its ability to quickly and effectively communicate product features and attributes (Mininni, 2007). He adds that, how specific packaging communications meaningfully engage target demographics also affects sales and category positioning. Packaging design evokes both public and private meanings which continuously communicates a brand's identity (Underwood, 2003).

"Marketing often involves rapid communication; for example, watching a television commercial, driving past a poster, scanning packs in a supermarket and flipping

through printed material" (Rettie & Brewer, 2000, p. 56). It is therefore important to note that packaging is the last formidable communication of a brand to the consumer in the retail shop — "it had better be our most meaningful and our best" (Mininni, 2007: p. 2).

Whereas for some, packaging is merely a safeguard measure, for others, the package design is the life and identity of the product (Alervall and Saied, 2013). "Ultimately, good packaging must communicate effectively" (Underwood & Ozanne, 1998, p. 211).

### **2.3 Functions and Roles of Packaging**

The distributions of everyday commodities have been made manageable by packaging and this is vital to today's society (Rundh, 2005). Several researchers such as Rundh (2005), Prendergast and Pitt (1996), Lockamy (1995), DeLuca and Penco (2006) and Underwood, et al. (2001) all believe that there has emerged several trends and factors in the market place, heightening the importance of packaging. Packaging is important in maintaining profitable marketing exchange relationships (Bone & Corey, 2000).

Simms and Trott (2010) note that packaging's power in marketing has been clearly stated in existing literature, thus appreciating packaging's criticality to the product offering is a crucial consideration to all aspects of marketing. It plays a strategic role in in-store purchase decisions. Alervall and Saied (2013) observe that whereas for some, packaging is just a means of protecting a product, others however view it as the life blood and identity of a product.

The role of packaging according to Dobson and Yadava (2012), are many other than just the apparent protection, preservation and presentation. These according to the authors are obvious benefits derived from packaging. According to Bassin (1988)

packaging is viewed by consumers as just for containment and preservation, however modern day complexities require more of packages. He adds that packaging must have five value-added functions for the modern consumer including Brand Identification, advertising at the point-of-purchase, product transport, at-home storage and task assistance. Meyers (1981) as cited in Gutierrez (2001) adds that the outgrowth of packaging in the marketing mix has probably surpassed advertising and sales promotion.

The functions and roles that packaging plays have been discussed in varying detail by several researchers and authors (Prendergast & Pitt, 1996; Rundh, 2005). Throughout the packaging literature, various classifications of packaging's functions and roles are suggested; some authors have compressed them into its most basic units, while others have expanded them even further. Although the differences in the various definitions of packaging are elusive, three distinct roles emerge as consistent: protection, containment and identification (Simms & Trott, 2010). Dobson and Yadav (2012) assert that packaging is used as a catchall term to epitomize the outer identity and look of products.

According to Kotler et al. (1999), packages function was to primarily contain and protect its content, however packaging is currently a significant tool for marketing due to evolving trends. Packaging gives shape and identity to the content it contains (Dobson & Yadav, 2012). The contribution of packaging is continuously expanding due to increasing logistics cost, enhanced packaging technology and tightening environmental regulations (Lockamy, 1995). Packaging is therefore considered a socio-economic discipline which has three major functions: protection, utility and communication, (Bix et al., 2009; Lockhart, 1997) on which success is dependent.



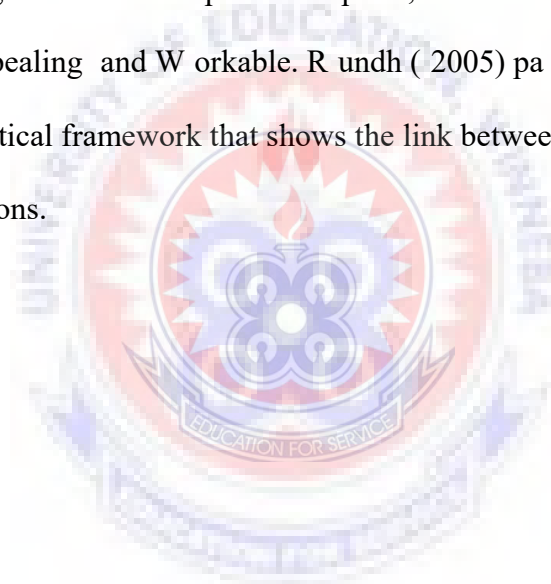
Essentially, the preservation and quality maintenance of the product contained in a package rests on the package. Ease of use, storage, handling and transporting are all logistical benefits derived from packaging, what Lockhart (1997) refer to as the utility function of packaging. Ensuring that the product is safe and secured from damage and environmental impact as well as the safety of the environment from the product is primarily packages responsibility (Dobson & Yadav, 2012; Lockamy, 1995; Lokhart, 1997).

Bovee and Arens (1989) for instance present five functions of packaging which are containment and protection, identification, convenience, consumer appeal and economy. Robertson (1990) also, points out six different functions of packaging: Containment; Protection; Apportionment; Utilization; Convenience; and Communication. Chaudhary (2014) also points out four packaging functions including protection of product and shopper; facilitation of storage, convenience and use of product; and reduction of environmental damage.

All these functions can be essentially collapsed into three core functions: the first function being essentially logistical, the second function being marketing related and the third function, being both logistical and marketing combined (Prendergast & Pitt, 1996). To a large extent, the basic functions that packaging perform are differentiated between roles that serve logistic needs and those that serve marketing needs, nonetheless these practically intertwine since they are strongly connected to the end-users of a product (Dabson & Yadav, 2012; Kotler et al., 1999; Ksenia, 2013; Prendergast & Pitt, 1996; Rundh, 2005). Further, packaging is always present at the point of sale, during storage and also during consumption and therefore uniquely suited to perform certain marketing functions (Immonen, 2010).

Klooster (2008) also conceptualizes packaging functions into a model which has two basic aspects, strategic based functions and tactical based functions. The strategic based functions involve design related, business management and social factors, whereas the tactical based functions involve ability to use product, conserving/protecting, distributing and informing. Of course, he suggests that the tactical based functions are the basic packaging functions.

Twedt (1968) also suggest a point of view, or a model with which marketing executives might profitably evaluate a packaging system. According to Twedt, an effective package has four important aspects, it must be: Visible, Informative, Emotionally appealing and Workable. Rundh (2005) particularly strives hard to presents a theoretical framework that shows the link between packaging functions and marketing functions.



**Table 1. Theoretical framework of packaging as a marketing tool**

<b>Functions of packaging</b>	<b>Functions of marketing</b>
<p><b>Packaging protects</b></p> <p>Packaging must be able to withstand robust physical handling during distribution so that the goods are received by consumers in the same function they left the factory.</p>	<p>Physical distribution and storage.</p> <p>Product quality.</p>
<p><b>Packaging preserves</b></p> <p>There is a form of packaging that will preserve each product from deterioration.</p>	<p>Physical distribution and storage.</p> <p>Product quality.</p>
<p><b>Packaging facilitates distribution</b></p> <p>Well designed packaging and effective packaging methods are key elements in ensuring that goods reach their destination in optimum condition.</p>	<p>Physical distribution and storage.</p> <p>Supply chain management.</p>
<p><b>Packaging promotes customer choice</b></p> <p>Packaging enables and promotes brand identification and competition.</p>	<p>Promotion and selling.</p> <p>Marketing communication.</p>
<p><b>Packaging sells</b></p> <p>Packaging is industry's silent salesman. It displays and describes the product it contains; leaving the consumer to choose which product is best suited his or her taste. This, together with the visual appeal of the package, is often a decisive feature in the purchasing situation.</p>	<p>Promotion and selling Marketing communication. Design.</p>
<p><b>Packaging informs and instructs</b></p> <p>Packaging communicates additional messages to the consumer.</p>	<p>Marketing communication.</p>
<p><b>Packaging provides consumer convenience</b></p> <p>Changing lifestyles have created a demand for packages that offer time-saving features and easy efficient handling.</p>	<p>Standardization/differentiation and distribution. Customization.</p>
<p><b>Packaging help contain prices</b></p> <p>Consumer goods would be more expensive if it were not for cost-effective packaging. The packaging of products in packs of various sizes allows the consumer to purchase the most convenient quantity.</p>	<p>Pricing.</p>
<p><b>Packaging promotes hygiene and safety</b></p> <p>Improvements in standards of hygiene and medical care in hospitals are in large a measure due to the use of pre-packed medical products for usage and disposal. The same goes for food products.</p>	<p>Physical distribution and storage.</p> <p>Promotion.</p>

Functions of packaging	Functions of marketing
<p><b>Packaging is innovative</b></p> <p>In many cases, the packaging industry responds to new demands which arise for specifically packaged foodstuff products.</p>	<p>Packaging/package development Customization Package design in relation to relevant market demand/need.</p>

*Adopted from Rundh, Bo (2005). "The multi-faceted dimension of packaging: Marketing logistic or marketing tool?"*

Bone and Corey (2000) posit that packaging decisions impact production and distribution efficiency, product containment and protection, consumer safety, and use assistance and environmental considerations as well as marketing communications. The functions that packages perform have the capacity to affect product marketing heavily (Bovee & Arens, 1989). There are many appearance and protection needs to be met including protection, promotion, communication, logistical needs in transportation, storage and distribution, and environmental and legal needs (Kirwan, 2013). Thus, packaging is a critical consideration for both marketing and logistics (Prendergast and Pitt, 1996; Rundh, 2005).

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Packages are frequently expected to play two fields, ensuring utmost protection at an easy and cheap transportation while offering effective communication at the point of sale (Immonen, 2010). In order to communicate with consumers, packages need to first capture attention since consumers spend very little time deciding and choosing a product. Again, today's world market is ever increasing in competition and it is crucial to effectively promote products (Chandhury, 2014).

Thus, the primary objective at the point of purchase is for packaging to garner attention just as other communication vehicles but by breaking through the competitive clutter (Garber et al., 2000). Gutierrez (2001) assert that there are four factors involved in packaging communication: the package first attracts attention with its design elements, then secondly, indicate its content, thirdly, educates the consumer and then finally contributes to the overall image of the brand. The package attract attention and communicate in order to fulfill its complete marketing aim of selling the product, whereas containing, apportioning, unitizing and communicating in order to achieve its logistical role (Prendergast & Pitt, 1996).

Consumers are put off by packagings that do not meet expected utility (Bix, et al, 2009). The ability to generate satisfaction, attract sales and encourage repeat purchase are all a function of a well designed product package system (Bix, et al, 2009). Rundh (2009) found in his study that packaging does not only protect a product but enhance retail performance when done right. When consumers find packaging so much attractive, they tend to keep them for other purposes, (Rundh, 2009) decorating or containing other things. "The complete function of the container includes the capacity to attract, to interest and to differentiate" (Gray, 1939: p. 646). Finally today's world market's ever increasing competition has made it crucial to effectively promote products, and packaging has emerged to play a lot of essential roles as a "complete

communication vehicle" (Chaudhury, 2014: p.17).

## **2.4 Packaging and Branding**

As consumers are confronted in today's marketplace with an overwhelmingly wide range of products to choose from, brands need to find ways of breaking through the visual clutter of a retail store shelf and acquire the means to persuade consumers to reach for their products (Kok & Nguyen, 2014). Producers in early times have achieved this by differentiating their goods through branding (Murphy, 1988) and packaging has grown to become one of the most important tools for branding and brand communication (Gray, 1959; Nilsson & Ostrom, 2005; Underwood, 2003; Underwood & Klein, 2002). Several considerations are involved in the design of packaging, ranging from content protection to articulating and communicating desired brand impressions (Orth & Malkewitz, 2008).

According to Garber, et al. (2000), packaging's role in recent years has expanded in brand marketing. Several managerial trends have largely contributed to this continuing growth of packaging's role as a brand communication vehicle (Dobson & Yadav, 2012; Underwood, 2003; Underwood et al., 2001). Thus, manufacturers now rely on vivid packaging design to make their brands more noticeable and to differentiate themselves from their competitors (Pieters & Warlop, 1999).

The personality of a brand is communicated via multiple structural and visual elements of packages through distinctive designs and on-pack communication providing rich brand associations by incorporating texts/fonts, shapes, graphic design, size, colors, illustrations, construction, layout, texture, brand logo, package materials, pictorials and product descriptions (Dobson & Yadava, 2012; Underwood, 2003; Underwood et al., 2001). Further, positive brand associations are more likely to cause

persuasion (Nancarrow, et al. 1998).

The importance of packaging is heightened over other forms of marketing communications because of its ease of accessibility at the point of purchase during decision making (Underwood & Klein, 2002). Another factor is that, consumers have a tendency to make bulk purchases at one stop shopping which largely reduces purchase decision making time and consequently making packaging the most important communication medium (Rettie & Brewer, 2000).

According to Murphy, "the ingredients of a brand are the product itself, the packaging, the brand name, the promotion, the advertising and the overall presentation" (1988: p. 4). Kotler et al. (1999) defines a brand as the name, term, sign, symbol, design or a combination of these, which is used to identify the goods or services of one seller or group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of competitors. Field, Bergiel, Giesen, & Fields (2012) also define a brand as a product, service, or concept that is publicly distinguished from other products, services, or concepts so that it can be easily communicated and usually marketed. Thus, "a brand identifies the maker or supplier of a product" (Kotler et al., 1999: p. 571).

Branding in modern day is sophisticated and increasingly concerned with the gestalt of a brand, with assembling and maintaining a set of values, both tangible and intangible, deemed relevant by consumers and a meaningful in appropriately differentiating one brand from other brands (Murphy, 1988). Various verbal, auditory and non-verbal images which can meaningfully relate to the brand identity or may be unrelated are the essence of brand communications, used to capture and hold consumers' attention as well as serve as retrieval cues for later recall (Orth & Malkewitz, 2006).

Packaging is perhaps one of the growing phenomena playing a big part in the communication process of brands since it brings the physical elements of a product together and allows for a creative construction of how the product is presented (Alervall & Saied, 2013).

Brands also play vital strategic roles (Murphy, 1988), therefore, the design of a package must be such that it fulfills the brand's promise while it sells the product (Alervall & Saied, 2013). From product identification to brand creation and the communication of imagery in powerful and interesting ways; well-designed packages build brands and drive sales (Rundh, 2013). Packaging's ability to drive sales is particularly important considering its ability to easily identify products and attract consumers (Bix et al., 2009).

The most important role that product packaging plays as a brand communication vehicle is perhaps attracting and persuading consumers at the point of purchase and continuously communicating to consumers even in their homes (Underwood, 2003; Agariya et al., 2012). Product packaging more specifically is a silent sales representative and a brand builder which has the potential to influence consumers' purchase-decision process (Kok & Nguyen, 2014). Kenia (2013) goes further to assert that packaging is crucial in influencing purchasing decisions.

Alverall and Saied (2013), again note that packaging can mean all the difference in the world as it represents the brand and is an integral part of the marketing strategy. Thus, packaging is a highly valuable marketing communications vehicle capable of delivering brand messages and attracting consumer attention when fully explored at the point of purchase (Cahyorini & Rusfian, 2011). Brand owners now have the power through their brands to protect their products from becoming mere commodities whose success are dependent on the market forces at any given time



(Murphy, 1988).

The importance of brands is experienced when they become valuable assets over time by appealing to consumers and pushing sales. As long as brands are maintained and continue to deliver to consumers the required values, they become enduring assets (Murphy, 1988). Furthermore, the positioning and overall brand experience is dependent on the packaging. "It is life or death to a product" (Alverall & Saied, 2013; p.46).

According to Underwood (2003), consumers realize direct functional, experiential and/or symbolic brand benefits from product packaging via mediated and lived experiences with the product. He adds that, the continuity of package imagery and the social meaning attached to design elements such as color and shape are critical mechanisms in the shared social understanding of the brand, a phenomenon that represents a mediated experience. Furthermore, the benefits communicated and contributed to the brand identity, also serve as a medium for the expression of the self via purchase and consumption, a phenomenon that represents a type of lived experience.

In conclusion, it can be said that consumers' perception of a brand is influenced by their interaction with the product. Therefore, product packaging affects both purchase decision and brand image (Kok & Nguyen, 2014).

## **2.5 Packaging and the Marketing Mix**

One of the dominant thoughts in modern marketing is the marketing mix (Kotler, Armstrong, Saunders & Wong, 1999) which presents the marketer with an arsenal of tactical tools to creatively compete in the new market-place. The concept of the marketing mix is credited to Jerome McCarthy (1960) who conceptualized Borden's

(1953) twelve elements as the 4Ps; Product, Price, Place and Promotion (Anderson & Taylor, 1995; Constantinides, 2006; Fitzgerald, 2014; Goi, 2009; van Waterschoot & van den Bulte, 1992). McCarthy then discussed these composite elements within a marketing manager's framework while placing the consumer at the center of the whole process (Anderson & Taylor, 1995).

The marketing mix refers to those set of controllable tactical marketing tools at the disposal of a firm to blend in order to produce the right response it desires from its target markets (Kotler et al., 1999) to drive demand for its offerings. Within the marketing mix framework is the packaging element, subsumed in the product 'P' element, thus positioning packaging as a product-related element, a point supported by Underwood (2003).

According to Bone & Corey (2000), all other elements in the marketing mix could be potentially affected by packaging, since it is a controllable variable. Thus, Jonathan Asher (1987) as cited in Anderson & Taylor (1995), refer to packaging as the "Interactive fifth 'P' of marketing" and notes that packaging is vitally important in all the other 'Ps' of the marketing mix concept. Packaging is believed to have always been a core element in the marketing mix (Liao et al., 2014).

Packaging decisions impact production and distribution efficiency, product containment and protection, consumer safety and use assistance, and environmental considerations, as well as marketing communications. Further, packaging is important in maintaining profitable marketing exchange relationships (Bone & Corey, 2000). Although packaging can be a key element of the marketing mix, and as such one of the key marketing levers that firms can control, packaging design itself is subject to a complex set of influences from the business environment (Dobson & Yadav, 2012).

In the development of a marketing strategy, marketing managers devise strategies and tactics aimed at providing satisfaction by adding value for customers. This must be carried out in relation to the existing competitive situation and the various variables, or elements, blended into a suitable marketing mix (controllable variables) (Rundh, 2013).

However, to deliver on its value proposition, a firm must first create a need-satisfying market offering (product). It must decide how much it will charge for the offering (price) and how it will make the offering available to target consumers (place). Finally, it must communicate with target customers about the offering and persuade them of its merits (promotion). The firm must blend each marketing mix tool into a comprehensive integrated marketing program that communicates and delivers the intended value to target customers (Kotler & Armstrong, 2012).

Further, intrinsic features of the product (nutritional content) and extrinsic features of the product (brand name, packaging), have a potential importance in distinguishing the product. So, the integration of these two factors into the product's marketing mix could enhance image differentiation (Abdalkrim & AL-Hrezat, 2013).

Meanwhile, as part of the marketing mix, product design also carries societal responsibilities. Stylistic and aesthetic objectives may need to be compromised to fulfill these responsibilities (Bloch, 1995). Packaging is without doubt, specifically related to the strategic decisions of the marketing mix and, therefore, to positioning decisions and consumer behaviors (Ampuero & Vila, 2006).

Underwood (2003) observes that strategic marketing mix decisions are considered to represent sets of behaviors on behalf of the brand, for which trait inferences about the brand are made and through which the brand's personality is actualized. In the light of

this, packaging certainly represents a discrete outcome of strategic marketing mix decisions, an outcome that is tangible and continuous in its behavior.

The multi-functionality of packaging is therefore not only a device for protecting the content throughout the distribution system, but also an important tool in the marketing mix (Rundh, 2005). However, packaging must harmonize with other functions in the marketing mix such as pricing, advertising and other aspects of marketing strategy. In a traditional marketing program, packaging can be treated together with labeling as a function of the product strategy (Rundh, 2013).

Packaging is an important tool in the marketing mix, but it is too often disregarded by senior executives and marketing people. Frequently, they pass on responsibility for the packaging decision and choice of supplier to purchasing people, and concentrate their energies on advertising and promotions (Sara, 1990). The marketer wants to create a perception of value in the consumer's mind, and this translates into developing a product's image so that consumers are prepared to pay for just what they see, and showing them what they expect to gain from buying it. Consumers have a vision of the good life, and the product must display how it can assist them towards this goal (Sara, 1990). Thus, marketing mix elements such as packaging, advertising, and warranties not only provide direct product information but also convey indirect information on product attributes about which consumers are imperfectly informed. Therefore, mix elements may serve effectively as signals (Erdem & Swait, 1998).

It is the consumer's subjective perception of the product that counts in his or her purchasing decision, not the product's objective reality, and this fact highlights the importance of packaging in the marketing mix. Consumers assess all the benefits of a product or supplier before making that final choice. The fact is that ninety-five per cent (95%) of all retail purchases are made at prices higher than the lowest possible

(Sara, 1990).

## **2.6 Packaging, Promotion and Advertising**

Packaging is no doubt an important element in the marketing mix. Packaging and advertising are a great source of product information; consumers rely on this information to make purchasing decisions. As Reti and Brewer, (2000) observe, consumer perception is very rapid during shopping especially when people have to quickly make a decision among competing brands whilst they do not seem to have enough information. In the light of this, packaging becomes another form of communication that rapidly moves and persuades the consumer to make a purchasing decision just like advertisement does.

Positioning is a subjective and relative concept as it exists sometimes sub-consciously in the minds of consumers taking into consideration the rest of the market offers. Therefore, in order to obtain a desirable position, consumer product perceptions must be analysed in great detail. A product's position or product positioning can be described as the measured-up standpoint of a product in comparison with the other products on the market in consumers' minds. Product positioning takes into consideration the shape, size, price and other attributes of the product in comparison with the competition. Positioning starts with the product and continues with the promotion or communication campaign which is also dependent on the packaging. The position of a product induces its marketing mix (Ampuero & Vila, 2006).

Kauppinen-Raisanen and Luomala, (2010) contend that, for the purposes of getting the attention of customers, one precondition is to have a form of stimuli and usually this is the package of the product. This is true for the product regardless of whether its claims are functional or emotional.

Advertisement is also aimed at directing appeal towards a product or service in order to influence purchase (Dewe, Ogden & Coyle, 2013). Packaging and advertisement together contribute significantly to the marketing process. However at the point of sale, packaging becomes the most important element and attracts the consumer to make a final purchase. Packaging design may influence consumers by increasing visibility and shelf impact, offering greater functionality and also improving the perception of the brand image (Young, 2008). As posited by Hine (1995) cited in Twede (2009), advertisements lead consumers into temptation, but packaging is the temptation.

In one study to ascertain the use of the cigarette box as an advertising vehicle, the authors (Dewe, Ogden & Coyle, 2013) indicated that tobacco companies relied greatly on the use of the cigarette box as a form of advertisement. Specifically, the results of the study showed that the cigarette packaging (box colour, size and in prints) was a form of advertisement in its own right. Dewe, Ogden and Coyle (2013) employed content analysis to examine a sample of two-hundred and four (204) tobacco advertisements and concluded that, the differences in advertising and the meanings evoked did not correspond with changes in smoking behavior. Meanwhile, the cigarette box has become an effective vehicle for advertising as it absorbed the meanings associated with smoking. In effect, packaging as a form of advertisement worked for the tobacco industry over the past decades and hence it was argued that a reduction in cigarette purchase can be induced with plain packaging.

The various studies examined in this section indicate that packaging is a form of advertisement. Gorn, Chattopadhyay, Yi and Dalhl (1997) particularly assert that the colour of the package also plays an important role in the purchase decision process. Packaging is also a branding effort and has become an essential part of the

selling process which is responsible for many forms of impulse buying (Rettie & Brewer, 2000). Packaging complements marketing efforts as advertisements could be swallowed amid the enormous amount of communication messages consumers' receive each day. Leading from this, consumers may ignore any product advertisement especially under the circumstance of many competing brands targeting their messages at the same consumers. In many such instances, the packaging design serves as a reminder of the product attributes that might have already been communicated through advertisements (Mooy & Robben, 2002).

## **2.7 Managerial Perspective on Packaging**

Packaging serves a number of functions such as containment which refers to the packaging size and product-package compatibility and preservation which is also focused on extending the product's shelf life with acceptable product quality for a period of time under specific storage conditions. The package must as well protect its content from environmental elements such as water, moisture (water vapour), gases, odors, microorganisms, and dust (Jinkarn & Suwannaporn 2014).

Product or brand managers are concerned about maximizing the functionality of their packaging design because the packaging of consumer goods have become very critical for driving marketing communications strategies. The various components of packaging design can be disaggregated from a managerial or corporate perspective in order to holistically examine the contribution of packaging to marketing activities but consumers consider the entire package; size, colour and shape as part of the product. There are varieties of packaging materials. Managers and packaging designers have to decide on which material is the most suitable for their product, this could be paper, plastic or starch among others. However responsible businesses are concerned about packaging waste and are hence environmentally conscious in their packaging

decisions. In addition to this, the package must be convenient and it should also communicate to the consumer (Jinkarn & Suwannaporn, 2014; Lye, Lee & Chew, 1998). In the food industry packaging must efficiently preserve and protect the contents of the product on offer (Ahmed, Ahmed & Salman, 2005).

The choice of packaging design from a managerial perspective is also influenced by context specific regulation. For instance in Germany the first Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR), large-scale EPR initiative was the German packaging ordinance, which mandated packagers to take back their packaging. Under this ordinance, consumers could simply return the packaging to retailers after use (Nakajima & Vanderburg, 2006). The EPR makes producers responsible for disposing of their own packaging and this emerged over the past two decades as a way of handling (packaging) waste. This demonstrates that managers are obliged to make packaging decisions that conform to the law. In other words, managers face latent restriction in their packaging decisions.

Furthermore, package designers and product managers are concerned about the safety of product handlers. This is especially important for products that have primary packages that are usually heavy and large. The storage and distribution of some products for that matter are associated with some level of risk or injury to handlers. Leading from this, managers rely on packaging to maximize the safety of their products (Arndt, 2000). In the pharmaceutical industry, special packaging innovations have been introduced in order to protect children who may come into contact with medicine containers accidentally. Other breakable products and large equipment also have special handles and features that protect the package and its handlers from harm (Arndt, 2000).



Ampuero and Vila (2006) observe that managers are increasingly recognizing that packaging can create differentiation and identity, in relatively fast moving and homogenous perishable consumer goods market. Leading from this, product managers rely on packaging to create a unique identity for their products in order for them to be easily identified by the consumer. Sufficient to say managers expect to have a competitive advantage through efficient packaging. This advantage further strengthens the product's position in the market and it is also a form of external relations (Rundh, 2005).

Packaging from a managerial perspective serves two general purposes which are logistic and commercial purposes. The logistic function is concerned with how the product is stored and transferred safely from the producer to the end user whilst the commercial function refers to packaging as marketing communication effort and how the entire package design improves contributes to brand building efforts and drives sales (Rundh, 2012). This implies that although packaging is a marketing activity, it also serves another purpose of keeping products wholesome until they get to the final consumer. Rundh (2012) used the multiple case study approach to establish efficient packaging design can be both the advertising tool for achieving marketing objectives and satisfying consumer needs. Rundh (2012) concluded that packaging is multifunctional and each of its functions is inherently advantageous. For instance an investment in changing the packaging of a product can occasion significant gain in brand sales compared to other forms of marketing communication such as advertising and promotion activities.

It can be deduced from the materials reviewed in this section that packaging serves multiple purposes from a managerial perspective. These functions can broadly be classified as logistic (material), marketing (commercial) and social (environmental)

and social). However, the decision to balance the functions of the packaging design rests with the product manager and package designer depending on the kind of product.

## **2.8 Summary**

The chapter reviewed relevant literature on packaging design as an element within the marketing mix, its various roles and functions and the strategic and technical considerations essential to its effective development and success. Worth noting is the fact that packaging is a complex phenomenon involving different strategic and technical components that need careful analysis and consideration for its effectiveness.

The relevance of packaging as a key element in the marketing mix is also evidenced by the diverse yet affirmative views shared and confirmed by the various studies reviewed. Packaging is also seen as a branding effort by manufacturers or brand/product managers to position their products competitively in the market place in a unique and distinct manner. It is therefore evident how important the perspectives of advertising agency managers are in developing and executing packaging as a promotional device.

## CHAPTER THREE

### METHODOLOGY

#### 3.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the methodological approach used to gather and analyze data in order to understand the perspectives of advertising agency managers in Ghana about the use of packaging design in the marketing mix. The chapter describes the research design, sampling technique, data collection instrument design and data analysis procedure among others.

#### 3.1 Research Approach

The basic differentiation of research approaches is the procedure used in the collection and analysis of the data. Leading from this, research approach is either quantitative (numerical and statistical in nature) or qualitative (textual in nature) or both qualitative and quantitative which is known as the mixed method (Kok & Nguyen, 2014). A qualitative approach was chosen for this study. This approach is appropriate as it offered a framework for the researcher to obtain the required information for the study and to analyze these to address the research questions. The qualitative research approach offers powerful means to better understand communication relationships and the social world (Damon & Holloway, 2011).

Furthermore the qualitative approach is more appropriate for exploring the meanings human subjects ascribe to their experiences. Qualitative approach is constructivist in function and seeks to examine and understand the complexities of the phenomenon understudied from the perspective of respondents in their natural setting (Creswell, 2013). In addition, qualitative studies are more concerned with social practices and meanings of people in a specific historical or cultural context (Lindlof & Taylor,

2004).

The qualitative approach is used in this study to investigate the perspectives of advertising agency managers with regard to the functionality of packaging design in the marketing mix. Sufficient to say, this thesis aims at gaining a deeper understanding of the contribution of packaging design to strategic communication activities of advertising agency managers.

Damon and Holloway (2011) state that, qualitative research methods are powerful means of gaining in-depth and holistic understanding of cultural relationships and communication from the perspective of the social actors. To add on, qualitative researchers are interested in understanding how people make sense of their world and their experiences of the world.

### **3.2 Research design**

Phenomenology was chosen as the design for this study. According to Damon and Holloway (2011), phenomenology is both a philosophy and a methodological approach, with its origins in nineteenth-century philosophy and psychology. They add that, some writers imply that all qualitative research is – at least in a general way – phenomenological as it is rooted in the ‘lived experience’ (and consciousness) of participants and focuses on phenomena of experience unique to an individual as well as those shared with others on the basis of common humanity.

Phenomenology involves exploring issues from the perspective of individuals or respondents who are directly involved with the issue at stake. Phenomenological enquiry entails in-depth interviews which help the researcher to gather enough information and to understand the issue from the perspective of those that have lived the experience (Creswell, 2013).

Phenomenological researchers are interested in how participants make sense of the world around them. They describe the ‘essential structures’ of experience and what these mean for the participants (Damon & Holloway, 2011).

Phenomenology, as applied to this study involves interviewing advertising agency managers in order to interrogate their perspectives on packaging and packaging design as an element within the marketing mix and how they use it as a communications medium. The interviews were face to face and helped the researcher to obtain rich qualitative data to address the research questions.

### **3.3 Population**

The population for this study was advertising agency managers. Advertising agencies are categorized into creative agencies, outdoor agencies and media buying agencies. However, only creative agencies were considered for this study because they mostly handled packaging design decisions. In the light of this, the target population of the study was creative advertising agency managers.

### **3.4 Sampling Technique and Size**

Sampling involves decisions about what data to collect and analyze, and where these can be accessed. However, since it is not always practicable to collect data from an entire population, it is necessary to select a sample size that is representative of the study population. Moreover, as this study is qualitative and the aim is to gain deeper insight into how packaging design functions in the marketing mix, it was necessary to select representative sample that can be studied adequately.

Kusi (2012) observes that, for studies conducted within the interpretative framework of the qualitative approach, the main influencing factor for sample selection is manageability. In other words the sampling strategy and size should be convenient or

comfortable for the researcher. In the light of this, qualitative sampling strategies are purposeful, and are strategically based on judgments directly related to the purpose of the research (Damon & Holloway, 2011).

A purposive sampling technique was adopted to select agency managers for this study. Purposive sampling involves the choice of subjects who are most advantageously placed or have the disposition to provide the information required. This type of sampling is simple to set up; it is also called judgment sampling (Creswell, 2013). This form of sampling was suitable for the study because it helped to select only respondents (creative ad agency managers) who provided important information that could not have been obtained from other sources.

In all, three (3) participants were selected for the study.

### **3.5 Data Collection**

According to Lindlof and Taylor (2002), collecting qualitative data is a process whereby one person (interviewer) encourages others to freely articulate their interest and experiences. Damon and Holloway (2011) explain that, in the field of marketing communications and public relations, qualitative research is often primarily associated with interviewing. They add that, in-depth interviews are a major source of data in qualitative research and a way of exploring informant perspectives and perceptions.

Data for this study was obtained from advertising agency managers through semi-structured interviews. Semi-structured interviews are interviews that do not have strict protocols but guides to direct the flow of the interview. Semi-structured interviews are very popular qualitative data collection tools and are useful for gathering specific information whilst giving interviewees the opportunity of free expression (Kusi, 2012).

The value of interviews is that they are very flexible because the interviewees responses inform the evolving conversation. The researcher has the freedom to prompt for more information if something interesting or novel emerges because there are no pre-planned, rigid list of questions, imposing any limitations as with the use of the quantitative questionnaire method (Damon & Holloway, 2011).

The interviews lasted for 25 minutes on average. All interviews were face to face and were held at the premises or office of the agency managers. There were nine (9) questions on the interview guide and this instrument was designed by the researcher based on the objectives of the study and relevant information obtained from examining other works in the literature review section.

### **3.6 Data Analysis**

Data gathered for this study was analyzed using the thematic analysis procedure. Creswell, (2013) asserts that data analysis in qualitative data although may begin even from the data collection stage, not all qualitative data collected can be analyzed. This is because qualitative data is rich and embedded with meanings. In the light of this, qualitative researchers engage in ‘winnowing’ or selecting the most appropriate and relevant data to be analyzed (Creswell, 2013).

Leading from this, the interviews with agency managers were recorded, transcribed and read closely. Thus the researcher got immersed in the transcribed data and the purpose of this was to identify patterns that were formulated into themes for the analysis. These themes were the revolving points of the analysis.

As cited in Damon and Holloway (2011), Colaizzi (1978) proposed a seven stage approach which has become the most popular and clear procedure for thematic analysis. Colaizzi's (1978) procedure is distinguished from other forms of qualitative

analysis in that the analysis does not interact with the data collection. This means that each interview (or written text) is analyzed separately, and individual descriptions are presented before combining all the analysis into a composite description. The aim is to be able to present a complete sense of the whole, that is, the essence of the phenomenon. Colaizzi's suggested stages are:

1. After participants are interviewed, the researcher listens to the narratives (in transcripts and/or written accounts) and familiarizes him or herself with the words used by the participants and try to become aware of the feelings and the meanings inherent in the narratives in order to obtain a 'sense of the whole'.
2. The researcher then returns to each of the participants' narratives and focuses only on the phrases and sentences that directly pertain to the phenomenon under study, scrutinize every piece of the data for statements that are considered significant to the phenomenon, isolate these 'significant statements' from the rest and list all of them.
3. The next stage is called 'formulating meanings'. Here the researcher takes each significant statement, tries to uncover its meaning and make sense of it in the participant's own terms. The researcher tries to spell out the meaning of each significant statement according to its original context. This helps to bring out meanings that initially may be hidden.
4. The above process is repeated for each interview or written account and then all the different meanings organized into clusters of themes.
5. Then a detailed analytic description of participants' feelings and perspectives contained in the themes is presented. Colaizzi calls this step 'exhaustive description'. This is where all the clusters of themes are



integrated into one account that articulates participants' views of the phenomenon.

6. At this point, the researcher attempts to formulate a comprehensive description of the whole phenomenon under investigation and identify its fundamental structure, or essence.
7. The last step is the 'member check' in which the findings are sent back to participants, asking them if the description validates their original experiences. This enables the researcher to modify his or her ideas or add new ones. However, Damon and Holloway (2011) note that, purist phenomenologists dismiss this final step on the basis that their intention is to move beyond the thoughts of participants into a more theoretical realm.

### **3.7 Theoretical Framework**

Signaling theory and the AIDA model form the theoretical foundation of this study. Specifically, the Signaling theory and AIDA model which are both marketing communications concepts have been adopted to explain the role of packaging design in the marketing mix. This section presents a description of these concepts and how they apply to the current study.

### **3.8 Signaling Theory**

Signaling theory provides an opportunity to explain how symbolic marketing communication influences consumer behaviour (Bird & Smith 2005). This theory is suitable for describing how different parties (individuals or organizations) have access to information and how they use this information in a communication situation (Connelly, Certo, Ireland & Reutzel, 2007). In this case, the information sent across becomes a signal and could be a signal of quality, understanding, action or

disapproval.

Humans and even other animals rely on signals to make predictions and decisions. Signaling is particularly important because some kinds of information are not directly perceivable and hence signals become cues. Signals are relied on when direct evaluation is too difficult or dangerous. Signaling theory is concerned with the use of signals in communication, thus important to understand why certain signals are more reliable than others. The signaling theory also explains how signals function as indicators of the quality a product represents and what elements of the signal or the surrounding community makes particular signals reliable. It also examines the importance of information balance (symmetry) in communication between parties (organisations or individuals). Information is an integral part of signaling because the signal given is information and this information must be accurately decoded and acted upon by consumers (Hertendorf & Overgaard, 2001).

Consumers today are faced with the challenge of determining product quality in competitive markets with inadequate information. There is thus a problem of uncertainty regarding the quality of products, also known as asymmetry and imperfect information. This problem is more complex because consumers are faced with many alternatives of a similar perceived quality, which makes them have to decide on one without being completely sure (Dopico, Blazquez & Tudoran, 2009).

In the light of the imperfect market conditions, consumers rely on signals to determine product quality. Knowing this, producers and brand managers also send certain signals targeted at consumers. Examples of quality signals include product price, packaging, size and label among others (Dopico, Blazquez & Tudoran, 2009).

### 3.8.1 Packaging as signaling

Product packaging is a form of signaling. This is because aside from the functional purposes of packaging, packaging is also aesthetic and a form of communication to consumers. According to Immonen (2010), packaging is a product's silent salesman. It describes the product it contains; leaving the consumer to choose which product is best suited for his or her taste judging from appearance. The visual appeal of the package is also often a decisive feature in the purchasing situation. This is because the design and labeling of the package also gives an ostensible perception of quality.

Furthermore, packaging is a form of brand identification and hence may give an indication of superior or inferior brand quality. Thus, packaging becomes an extrinsic cue that speculates product quality. Meanwhile, consumers vary in their search for product information and purchase habits, as a result some consumers may seek out some intrinsic information such as the components or ingredients of the product but others may not (Immonen, 2010).

Again, product packaging has become a signal of quality as advertisements and other commercial marketing activities do not seem to offer adequate information. Marketers' claims of high quality in commercials are also unverifiable and many rational consumers are inclined to ignore such messages (Milgrom & Roberts 1986). Packaging is also considered a very important quality signal because advertisers themselves decide on the content of advertisements and unlike packaging; consumers are not given the opportunity to experience products for themselves and to draw their own conclusions (Dukes, 2008). However, consumers are able to prejudge the content of a package when they come into physical contact with the package although this is also not an absolute guarantee of quality.

There are various dimensions of packaging design such as text, shape, graphic design, logo, size, colours, illustrations, material, construction, texture. These dimensions come together to signal consumers about the quality of the product they are about to purchase. Maxwell (1991) explains that, the signaling theory when applied in marketing communication helps to predict consumers' perception of a product quality, depending on the information available on the product and how this information is presented. Applied to this research, the signaling theory helps to explain the role of packaging as a signal that attracts consumers.

### **3.9 AIDA model**

The AIDA model is one of the foremost models of advertising and marketing communication. AIDA is an acronym for A-Attention, I-Interest, D-Desire and A-Action. American advertising and sales pioneer, Elmo Lewis is credited with the introduction of the AIDA model. The main proposition of this model is that the main aim of marketing and advertisement is to move consumers through a linear purchase decision process.

The process begins with grabbing the attention of consumers. In marketing, grabbing the attention of potential customers or clients is necessary for arousing interest in the product. Once interest is established, a business must ensure that potential customers or clients desire the product enough to take action, generally by making purchases (Rawal, 2013).

Consumers' attention may be gained through offering product samples, large visual signs and other sensory techniques. After the attention of consumers has been secured, marketers may now arouse interest through product demonstrations, information and advertisement. The next stage is to build desire for the product among consumers.

Companies may build this desire through focusing on creating a want for their specific brand. The endpoint of the process is action. Consumers must be stimulated to take action or to purchase the product on offer. Consumers may be encouraged to take action through promotions, discounts and calling out of features or benefits of the product (Rawal, 2013). The AIDA model is illustrated in the diagram below:

**Figure 3. The AIDA Model**



*Adopted from Rawal, P. (2013)*

Underwood (2003) explicates that within the marketing mix framework (Product, Price, Place, and Promotion), packaging is subsumed under the 'Product' element. This is because product packaging is an integral part of the product. The position of packaging or packaging as a product-related element makes it a very important variable in the marketing process. Product packaging functions as a silent sales representative and a brand builder which has the potential to influence consumers' purchase-decision process (Kok & Nguyen, 2014).

The AIDA model however explains how the components of the various marketing elements are woven together and presented to consumers in advertisements and the process consumers undergo in making a purchase. It goes without saying that the success of advertising to an extent depends on packaging which is part of the product design. Again, packaging may also be considered as a form of brand promotion

because some packaging designs contain brand logo, and other useful information about the product and its brand. From this standpoint, the AIDA model is useful in explaining how the attention of consumers is drawn to products because of packaging and the purchasing or repurchasing decision that follow as a result of the packaging.



## CHAPTER FOUR

### FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

#### 4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings, discussions and analysis of data obtained through interviews with the selected advertising agency managers. The thematic data analysis technique was used and the findings are discussed to address the research questions.

Below are the research questions that guided the data collection:

1. What are the roles of packaging design in the marketing mix?
2. What are the communication processes and factors employed by advertising agencies in the use of packaging design?
3. What are the perspectives of agency managers on packaging design?

In answering these research questions, three managers of advertising agencies located in Accra were interviewed. For the purposes of the analysis of the data gathered, respondents have been identified with alpha-numeric codes as shown below:

**Table 2. Alpha-numeric codes**

Agency	Respondent Code
Agency 1	AGM-1
Agency 2	AGM-2
Agency 3	AGM-3

#### 4.1 RQ1 - What are the Roles of Packaging Design in the Marketing Mix?

This research question addresses the function of packaging design as an element in the marketing mix. Underwood and Ozanne (1998) observe that product package design continues to grow as a marketing communications tool and attempts to reach

and persuade consumers continues to increase. During the interviews with the advertising agency managers, some dominant themes emerged and these are illustrated in Table 3 and are subsequently explained in detail.

**Table 3. Packaging design as an intricate part of marketing.**

S/N	Theme	Frequency
	Product branding	3
	Informs purchase decisions	3
	Enhances product 'sellability'	2
	Keeps the product safe	1

Table 3 shows the various roles allocated to packaging design. It would be observed from the table that all creative advertising agency managers interviewed for this study indicated that packaging design is foremost a part of product branding and also informs customer decision to purchase the product. Additionally, two creative advertising agency managers (AGM-1 and AGM-3) indicated that packaging design enhances product 'sellability'. However, AGM-3 added one more role of packaging which is that packaging design keeps the product safe.

#### **4.1.1 Product branding**

The marketing mix can be controlled and manipulated by a company as part of strategies and activities associated with its brand(s) (Erdem & Swait, 1998). They further state that these strategies and activities convey information to consumers such as product attribute and position. Every product has a name and is positioned in the market in a certain manner to create a form of appeal as part of product branding efforts. All creative advertising agency managers indicated in their responses that



packaging design gives a product a distinct identity in the market place and this is a very important role. One respondent (AGM-2) explains;

Packaging is part of the activities involved in branding and building a brand. If someone will ask you what is branding? Branding is giving a service or a product an identity. You understand, giving a product or a service an identity, a face so that people can relate to and if packaging is seen as an item under the umbrella name branding, then of course it's a very important element in marketing communication.

The response of AGM-2 presented above captures the role played by packaging design with regard to contributing to the overall branding effort of the product or giving it an identity. However, another respondent (AGM-1) captures it succinctly; "It (packaging) tries to differentiate a product from another product that you see. Because if they all look alike how can you make your choice?" Thus, as part of packaging design's contribution to product branding, it gives the product a unique identity that differentiates it from other products in consumers' minds.

In line with these findings, Rundu (2009) and Ksenia (2013) also report that packaging design is best suited to communicate product or brand values since the consumer is exposed to either the primary or secondary packages at the point-of-purchase. Erdem and Swait (1998) suggest that the content, clarity and credibility of a brand are signals of a product's position which may increase perceived quality.

Also, Alervall and Sævi, (2013) observe that building a brand that works is the product of communication. The overall success of branding depends on communication as packaging design is a big part of this. This finding confirms the assertion of Underwood, (2003) that packaging is a brand communication vehicle which first gives a product a name and then a place in the market place.

#### 4.1.2 Informs purchase decisions

It was evident in the data that packaging design really plays an informative role and Connelly et. al., (2011) notes that individual's decision making processes are affected by the information they have available. All creative advertising agency managers interviewed for this study were very clear that packaging design offers pertinent information about the product which informs purchase decisions. This information could be the composition of the product, the benefits, description for use and the purpose among others. This assertion is confirmed by Erdem and Swait (1998) who note that information sent as signals may go beyond physical (e.g. ingredients) and functional (e.g. cleans and disinfects) attributes, but also to purely perceptual, symbolic attributes (e.g. luxurious). These are useful pieces of information that are required by consumers to facilitate final buying decisions.

One agency manager (AGM-2) explains that;

You will normally find most of the time a lot of the information about the product on the packaging. For example how do you get to know the name of the product? You heard a product being advertised on TV or radio, if you walk to a supermarket and you are looking for the product on the shelf, how do you identify the product? It's by the name, so obviously the packaging must have the name of the product.

The above illustration by AGM-2 underscores the informative role of packaging design. As the agency manager quoted above explains, even the product name is available on the package, and that is the only way a prospect can refer to the product in the supermarket or at the point of purchase. This makes packaging design very crucial.

Another creative advertising agency manager (AGM-1) makes the point as;

...when the product was being produced, you as a customer you weren't there. How do you get to know the content? That information is normally stated on the packaging, so if a customer wants to know the content, he will refer to the packaging because there may be some items or some content that might not be good for your health.

The point is that, prospects need to find out information about the content of a product or the composition in order to ascertain its safety and benefits. This is very crucial when branding food, medicine and other products that are directly related to health because the lack of information can lead to abuse or misapplication of these products.

Nancarrow, et al., (1998) agree to the pertinent role of packaging design as a communication tool. This finding also confirms the work of Fill and Jamieson, (2011) which describes packaging design as a value added approach to product promotion. The informative role of packaging is also very important to marketing communication because according to Underwood and Ozanne (1998), Nilsson and Ostrom (2005) and Underwood (2003) packaging design may include information that communicates positive aesthetic, experiential, functional, symbolic and/or informational benefits of a product to consumers.

#### **4.1.3 Enhances 'sellability'**

It was also realised during the interviews with the advertising agency managers that, product packaging improves the chances of selling a product or its 'sellability'. This is important because the goal of marketing communication is to sell whether an idea, service or product. This makes the closing sale the core of marketing, and packaging can enhance the chances of a product being purchased. One agency manager (AGM-2) hints that when packaging design is not effectively done, this can adversely affect

sales because the first point of contact between many prospects and products is the package. Following from this, once the packaging design is not effective, the entire marketing process is botched.

Sometimes we as marketing communications consulting firm can even approach a client and advise that ok, we think your packaging is not the best, if it's done this way, you know, it will enhance the, what marketers will say 'the sellability' of the product.

The above statement captures how packaging design can improve or hinder the 'sellability' of a product as the respondent puts it. In the view of Silayoi and Speece (2004), consumers evaluate product features and based on this, consumers make cautious purchase decisions through the support of written information on product packages. According to the signaling theory, information is an integral part of signaling because the signal is essentially the information and this information must be accurately decoded and acted upon by consumers (Hertzendorf & Overgaard, 2001). In addition, packaging design can also push consumers over the edge to make final purchase by sending the right message (signal) which satisfies the needs and emotional desires of consumers.

#### **4.1.4 Keeps the product safe**

Another significant role of packaging design although less reported was that, packaging design keeps a product safe. This is more of a technical function because it goes beyond sheer creativity and visual appeal to technical innovation that is required to protect the product in transit until it reaches the consumer for use. However this can also be perceived as a signal since one of the focus of signaling theory is mainly the actions consciously taken by the signaler to communicate positive, imperceptible qualities (Connelly et al., 2011). It is important to note nonetheless, that signal

'observability' is important to the signaling theory, in that if signalers actions are highly imperceptible by receivers, then it becomes difficult to use them as signals. Thus, the use of quality packaging materials can serve as good signals of safety to consumers provided they have the necessary information to know that the packaging material is highly protective. AGM-3 illustrates this point with the following example:

The packaging of OMO (a washing powder product) has gone through a lot of revolutions, it started with paper cutting in a box and overtime consumers started having problems with it because they (the package) get wet easily. And the whole product will spoil and all that. They came out with these plastic rubbers or the 'cellophane' and those ones are water-proof. When you open it there is no way water can get into it unless maybe you deliberately put it in water.

The illustration above highlights the importance of packaging design as a vehicle to transport and protect the product until it is finally used by the consumer. This finding also indicates that packaging design affects how consumers handle and use a product. Ksenia, (2013) explains that packaging design affects the consumer at the point of sale and at the point of future handling and use of the product. Bone and Corey (2000) also assert that packaging decision is influenced by production and distribution efficiency, product containment and protection, consumer safety and use assistance and also environmental considerations. The findings of the study in this regard confirm that packaging design goes beyond the aesthetic appearance of the product to include technical considerations of safety and distribution efficiency.

#### **4.2 RQ2 - What are the Main Factors Considered by Advertising Agencies in Creating Effective Packaging Design?**

The second research question sought to investigate the main factors that contribute to creating effective packaging design. This research question was addressed through the

responses obtained from managers of creative advertising agencies during the interviews. Some key themes emerged out of the interviews with respondents and these are illustrated in table 4 below.

**Table 4. Important factors considered in packaging design**

S/N	Factors of consideration	Frequency
	Client –Agency collaboration	3
	Originality and Innovation	3
	Regulation	3
	Targeting	3

Table 4 above presents 4 main factors involved in packaging design that were identified during the interviews with creative advertising agency managers. The result shows that the four main factors identified are common to all creative agency managers. Although during the interviews, the managers' referred to these factors with different words and illustration, essentially all agency managers agreed that keeping a cordial client-agency relationship, maintaining originality and innovation, adhering to industry regulations and proper targeting are important considerations for effective packaging design.

#### **4.2.1 Client-Agency collaboration**

It was found out that the creative advertising agencies maintain a close relationship with their clients or the businesses they work for throughout the packaging design process and even afterwards. This is because, as Fill and Jamieson, (2011) observe, organizations always try to develop and present messages that are significant to identified customer segments by understanding the audience's communication

environment and by this influence these audiences' attitudinal and behavioral responses.

The process of understanding the customer communication environment requires that organisations remain as close to the customer as possible. However, organisations without the expertise and tools for creating effective product promotion activities must work with creative advertising agencies to create effective packaging designs. Even for major brands that can afford these skills and expertise in house, it is important and more efficient to work with a third party (advertising agency) because agencies have the experience of working with many organisations, and they bring on board fresh and unbiased perspective that helps the packaging design process in the long run. In the light of this, organisations and advertising agencies keep a close relationship.

Advertising agencies and their clients also keep a close relationship because the finished product or package is a product of collaboration and hence advertising agencies and their clients remain together until the job is done. However the ultimate decision of the final packaging design of the product lies with the organisation that owns the product or the brand, AGM-1 explains;

The owner of the brand determines the final decision. Designers only create what is acceptable because they know everything the owners of the brand know. Example sultana took about a year and half to create because they kept changing the design from colouring to even the words you put on it to brand it. If it is jasmine rice, perfume rice etc we kept changing until it came to the market.

It would be realised from the response quoted above that the packaging design process can drag on for several months until a time that the brand owner is satisfied with the output. According to one agency manager (AGM-3), the back and forth can

cause delays but creative advertising agencies do not seem to have a choice. Furthermore, some clients would want to push all limits until their wish is granted, AGM-3 considered this as unbalanced relationship. According to AGM-3

Agency business and a agency relationship with clients sometimes appears to be slave and master relationship. Clients always want to feel good or want to feel superior.

Meanwhile, brand owners cannot be blamed because in the view of Alervall and Saied (2013), packaging is perhaps the most important communication medium, compared to other communication mediums. This means that it is the most valuable asset of the brand owner at the point of sale, thus nothing can be left to chance in the packaging design process.

#### **4.2.2 Originality and innovation**

Packaging design is a complex process with a mix of aesthetic, symbolic, functional and emotional elements. The nature of the packaging design process requires that the idea or the final product is original and innovative in order to compete favourably with other products on the market.

It was realised from the interviews that all agencies place high premium on originality. Particularly, owing to the nature of their business as creative advertising agencies, they focus more on bringing out something new or original and innovative. One agency manager stated that originality is a culture that runs through the organisation. AGM-3 remarked:

We believe in originality, we have something in this agency that when we create a concept we create a future. So if you are creating a concept, you are anticipating that you are creating a future for whichever brand that you are creating or helping build, it means your creativity must gravitate to us as originality.



In addition, originality and innovation are important factors for consideration because packaging is also a means by which product information and brand character is communicated (Garber, et al., 2000) and every brand wants to be perceived as being original and innovative. In as much as there might be similar products and offers on the market, having a creative and innovative package design can be the one thing that sets a product apart from its competition (Nilsson & Ostrom, 2005). This desire to be original drives creative agencies to spend time brainstorming and trying out ideas in order to come out with a finished design that is outstanding.

#### **4.2.3 Regulation**

The creative advertising agency managers interviewed for this study also indicated that there is a legal dimension to what they do. Regulatory authorities such as the Ghana Standards Authority (GSA) and the Food and Drugs Authority (FDA) require that certain standards are satisfied before food and drug related products come onto the market. Although it is the primary responsibility of the brand owner to ensure that all such requirements are met, the creative advertising agency managers indicated that they also enquire from clients whether the necessary permissions have been sought from the industry regulators before the product is released to come on to the market.

This is even more crucial in the case of food and beverages which are required by law to have the approval label of the FDA. Thus, brand owners must first go through the process before the requisite FDA registration number and official label can be incorporated in the artwork of the packaging design.

The FDA and GSA have taken on some brands for making false promises with their labeling. In this regard, although the advertising agency managers cannot independently confirm the claims by the brand owner, they (the agency) may advice

the client to seek the proper documentation because eventually when the brand owner is dragged to court or have had their goods confiscated, it is the brand owner that loses. Some brand owners have already gotten into trouble with the law. One manager (AGM-2) explains the dangers of launching a product without the necessary legal approval;

If you are not lucky and when they (FDA) test your product and what you have written on your product don't really tally with the content, you are in for a fight. You can see that these pharmaceutical manufacturing companies always err and they find themselves in trouble with the law and they confiscate their goods.

The creation of packaging designs is also bound by copyright laws. One Agency manager (AGM-3) remarked:

If you steal anybody's design it is intellectual theft, you have infringed on that person's intellectual right or his intellectual property and you can face the laws of Ghana with regards to breaching those laws.

Although no agency manager has a greed to have been sued or have sued for infringement on copyright, it appears that the agency managers are careful not to get into trouble with the law, knowing the huge financial implication of such offences. This kind of conflict may not be healthy, for any brand as Underwood and Ozanne (1998) observe, that packaging is a great promotional tool, a mouth piece for the organisation and hence when something goes wrong the brand can be seriously hurt. Garber, et al., (2000) also shares this point of view and encourages product managers and agency managers with their creative team to strive hard to break through the clutter in the market place with creative packages that communicate positive aesthetic, experiential, functional messages about the brands they manage.

#### 4.2.4 Targeting

Another factor that was considered important by all agency managers was targeting. Targeting is a strategic function of packaging design which requires that the product is branded in a manner that is suitable for specific market segments (Klooster, 2008). Target is important in packaging design because ultimately, the product is meant for a specific customer segment and it must be presented to such prospects in a manner that they can easily identify with. One agency manager (AGM-2) succinctly captures the significance of targeting in packaging design in the following statement: “when you are making brands, you consider all the kind of people you want to target, the market, price, the look of the product”. This implies that the target of the product determines the look and even the materials that would be used for the package because these affect the pricing of the product.

Another creative advertising agency manager (AGM-1) describes the importance of packaging design as follows:

The market is a very big place but it can become very small at the same time depending on the target group. We have market for very refined people; market for the medium people, market for the pocket, and market for lifestyle. People associate themselves with brands not because it is more expensive or cheaper but because it represents them.

The statement provided above indicates that targeting makes the packaging design process more definite and purposeful. This kind of focus is as important to preparing a packaging design as it is to overall marketing efforts. Once the picture of the end user of the product is clear it is easy to design the packaging design bearing in mind the colour, illustration and product characteristics that can attract such consumers. Chandhury (2014), further explains that packaging design should be targeted in order for it to first capture attention since consumers spend very little time deciding and

choosing a product. In view of this, the first step of the AIDA model which is attention getting is evident from the responses of the agency managers as a strategy advertising agencies employ in their execution of packaging as a communication device. Again, competition is ever increasing in today's world market and it is crucial to effectively promote products through targeted packaging designs.

Agency managers rely on the briefing by clients to imagine the target for a particular product. Sometimes, it might also take subsequent meetings between the brand owner and the agency to clearly define the target when uncertain.

AGM-2 explains that:

The client sometimes will give you a brief, a brief that talks about what he expects at the end of the day, so that brief informs the way we think, the way we creatively think. So, once the client is able to give you a brief, it directs the way you should go about it, it makes your work a bit easier.

However in some cases clients are not very clear about their product specifications and must be guided to come up with the appropriate target for the product. Some established brands however have what AGM-3 refers to as the 'brand key'. The brand key specifies all the technicalities of the brand in terms of its colours, illustrations and values. The brand key literally opens up the brand to the creative agency and helps them to interpret the brief in line with the overall culture of the brand. Underwood, (2003) and Dobson and Yadav (2012) assert that this focus on targeting with packaging design helps also to define and communicate the personality of the brand through multiple structural and visual elements and through distinctive designs and on pack communication providing rich brand associations. This includes; texts/fonts, shapes, graphic design, size, colors, illustrations, construction, layout, texture, brand logo and package materials.

### 4.3 RQ3 - What are the Perspectives of Agency Managers on Packaging Design?

The third and final research question investigated agency managers' perspectives of packaging design. This research question was addressed through the responses obtained from the advertising agency managers. Three themes emerged from the responses. These themes run through all three interviews and reflect the highlights of perceptions held by creative advertising agency managers about packaging design.

The themes identified are presented in table 5.

**Table 5. Thematic categorisation of the perspective of agency managers on packaging design**

S/N	Factors of consideration	Frequency
	Effective packaging is attractive and instructive	3
	A good brief is a great relief	3
	Brand owner makes the final decision	3
	Brand illusion	2

Table 5 shows four themes that emerged from the interviews with creative advertising agency managers. The themes are accompanied by a frequency distribution indicating how often each theme emerged in the separate interviews. It would be observed however that all three themes run through all three interviews except 'brand illusion'.

#### 4.3.1 Effective packaging design is attractive and instructive

Packaging design serves many purposes as has been already explained in this study under research question one. From the perspective of agency managers, effective packaging is attractive and instructive. An attractive packaging design does not only imply that the packaging design has a high aesthetic appeal but also that it appeals to consumers on the emotional level. Based on this data, it is evident that, a rousal of

interest, which is the second stage of the AIDA model is also a key part of agency managers' strategy. As the AIDA model proposes, it is important in a series of actions to gain the interest of the prospect once you get their attention in order for the other stages to follow.

Packaging design must also be instructive from agency managers' perspectives. This means that, the packaging design must be informative. Prospects should be able to read and get some basic information such as the date of production and expiry, storage, composition and company information on the package design. An agency manager (AGM-3) explains that:

The importance of packaging is under-scored by the fact that it needs to be very attractive. Apart from the attraction of a packaging, we believe and ensure that our packaging is also instructive. Instructive in regards to literature and the content that we are selling to whoever the consumer is.

Furthermore, AGM-1 adds that:

Customers' want to know the content (of a product), because there may be some items or some content that might not be good for your health. So, how do you know that this product is good for me or not? The content of the product is good for me or not, you can tell from the packaging.

This statement illustrates the instructive component of packaging design which requires that the product package design bears enough information to satisfy consumers about the content of the product. The efficient combination of attractive and instructive elements of packaging design increases the appeal of the product.

This is significant because as one advertising agency manager (AGM-1) puts it;

Every market and the kind of package or packaging that appeals to it. Because if you are selling a product that is meant for kids you should

be careful the kind of packaging you do. If you are selling a product that appeals to the elite, let's say the upper class, very educated discerning people, the packaging is totally different...

This statement above also shows that the nature of the attractive and instructive elements of a product package may vary depending on the market segment that is targeted. This finding is consistent with the work of Rundh, (2005) who explained that agency managers expect to have a competitive advantage through efficient packaging design. Efficient packaging design appeals to consumers, it strengthens the product's position in the market place and it is also a form of external relations (Ampuero & Vila 2006). Leading from this, it is evident that advertising agency managers and brand owners use packaging to create desire for their brands which is the third stage of the AIDA model to move the consumer to the last stage which is action and in this case, purchase.

#### **4.3.2 A good brief is a great relief**

Packaging design is a complex process which requires that many elements are considered; the operating environment, regulation, the product to be sold, target consumers, distribution channel and the brand that owns the product among others. In spite of its complexity, packaging is a key element of the marketing mix, and as such one of the key marketing levers that firms can control (Dobson & Yadav, 2012). The complexity of packaging design requires clarity at every stage of the process, especially at the beginning when the brand owners contact a creative agency for their services.

All (n=3) agency managers indicated that because of the many elements involved in the packaging design process, proper documentation is necessary. Owing to this, a good first step is to request a brief from the brand owners. The brief is a concise

description of the expectations of the brand owner regarding the finished package design. This includes the target for the product, the purpose of the product and other essential information that can enhance the agency's understanding of the task at hand.

One agency manager (AGM-3) explained:

It all starts with the brief, it is very important. Sometimes also when the briefs are also not correct from the client they do not give proper instructions. We can get a brief from somebody by way of a verbal briefing and you insist on a written brief and they go round in circles and you never get it. But you need to insist that they write you a brief so that you can always refer to it

In the above statement, AGM-3 explains the importance of receiving a brief from the client but also hints that, briefs might not always be as good as expected or might not be received at all. This means that in some occasions the creative advertising agencies have to try harder at understanding the client's needs because briefs are not available.

It was also realised that beyond providing a brief for the assignment, some clients even have what is called the brand book. AGM-2 remarks:

...another important thing is to consider referring to the client's brand book if there is one because the proper clients have got a brand book and it is their bible that you refer to or their encyclopedia.

Notwithstanding the importance of the brand book, only one agency manager mentioned that his agency worked for an organisation that had a brand book. This means that many organisations do not have this important document and even worse than that, some organisations depend entirely on the advertising agency to interpret their brand and design their product package.

The seeming apathy on the part of brand owners is problematic because, Bone and Corey (2000) opine that packaging design decisions affect production and distribution



efficiency, product containment and protection, consumer safety and use assistance, and environmental considerations, as well as marketing communications. Thus, packaging design is too important to be left almost entirely for creative advertising agencies to do guess work. Kotler and Armstrong (2012) also support this position and explain that an organisation must effectively blend each marketing mix tool into a comprehensive integrated marketing program that communicates and delivers the intended value to chosen customers. In light of this, packaging design as a part of the marketing mix must be under the direct control of the brand owners although they may require expert assistance from creative agencies to produce and execute their campaigns.

#### **4.3.3 The brand owner makes the final decision**

The creative agency managers stated on many occasions that they have some clients who are clueless about their own brands and depend entirely on the expertise of the creative advertising agency. In spite of this, all the agency managers consider the brand owner or client as the one to make the final decision on packaging design. This shows that from the agency's perspective, the client is always the 'boss' regardless of the level of knowledge the client has about packaging and branding. AGM-1 explains that:

Because they (clients) are close to the end user of the product, they go to the market, make market research. We rely on the information from them on how to go about designing the product. When it comes to the look, the colours, font, the kind of words you put on the package, all these things you rely on them because they know what the market wants or needs at that particular time. The information you give us is what we put on our product.

The response of AGM-1 highlights the crucial aspects of packaging and the need for packaging design to be backed by market research. From this standpoint, the advertising agencies appear to be very knowledgeable in what makes an effective packaging design, but same cannot be said for all brand owners although the ultimate decision of which design finally ends up on the market lies with the brand owner or client. However, Reti and Brewer (2000) assert that packaging design and advertising are a great source of product information for consumers who are the ultimate targets of brand owners and hence the final decision of which packaging design to use should rest with brand owners. This finding is also congruent with Young, (2008) who states that packaging is one of the promotional tools at the disposal of brand owners because at the point of sale, packaging becomes the most important element and attracts the consumer to make a final purchase. Young, (2008) adds that packaging design may influence consumers by improving visibility and shelf impact, offering greater functionality and also by improving the perception of the brand image.

#### **4.3.4 Brand illusion**

Advertising agency managers come against some challenges that lead either to misconstruing the brand which then affects the effectiveness of the packaging design or the final product. This situation occurs because some brand owners may understand the product they want to sell may be unable to express the product information intelligibly to their creative agencies. There are some brand managers who do not also appreciate the nuances of effective packaging design as much as the creative advertising agencies do. This is not a rare occurrence as AGM-3 explains:

In a situation where a client has no clue of what he wants, in fact he doesn't even understand the importance or need for a good packaging, then as a consultant, or a marketing communications consulting firm, you put your ideas together, you study the nature of the product,

and you consider its clientele because it's not every packaging that appeal to every market. Every market and the kind of package or packaging that appeal to it.

As AGM-3 explains, the expertise of the creative advertising agency is necessary in ensuring that clients who do not already know which packaging design would suite their product are helped to make the right decision. However, there are also occasions where the creative agency might have its design reviewed or rejected by the client because it does not suit the brand specifications. Creative advertising agencies avoid this occurrences as much as possible by subjecting their work to several internal reviews before submitting to the client and also by presenting more than one design for the client to select the preferred one for final design decisions.

AGM-2 remarked;

We do lots of reviews. Sometimes we just do not want to do one review. We do about three reviews before the job is passed and sometimes it even comes with some doubts that we did not review it enough.

This shows that from the advertising agency managers' perspective, there is the possibility of not meeting clients' expectations and hence precautionary steps are taken to avoid this from occurring. This also indicates the important and complex nature of packaging design.

The findings of the study in this regard confirm the assertion of Jinkarn and Suwannaporn, (2014) that arriving at a n effective package design is a strenuous exercise. Jinkarn and Suwannaporn, (2014) add that the packaging design process is worth the effort because product or brand managers can take advantage of this to maximize the functionality of their packaging design because the packaging of consumer goods have become very critical for driving marketing efforts. Nonetheless,

the possibility of brand illusion cannot be overlooked in packaging design because studies (Underwood & Klein, 2002; Underwood, 2003) have gone further to posit that packaging and packaging design are marketing communication tools which also constitute brand creation. This means that, at the time of packaging design, the brand is still being created and is hence susceptible to misinterpretation.



## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.0 Introduction**

This chapter presents the summary of all major findings of the study and the conclusion based on the findings of the study. It also includes the limitations of the study and recommendations that arise out of the study.

#### **5.1 Summary**

The purpose of the study was to explore the perspectives of advertising managers about packaging design in the marketing mix. The study specifically investigated the roles of packaging design in the marketing mix, the main considerations for effective package design and the perspectives of agency managers about packaging design. In-depth interviews were used to elicit responses from the three purposively sampled advertising agency managers in Accra. The data obtained through the interviews were transcribed and the thematic analysis technique was used for the analysis.

#### **5.2 Main findings**

Three research questions underpinned this study. These questions bordered on the roles of packaging design in the marketing mix, the factors considered in designing effective packaging design, and the perspectives of advertising agency managers about packaging design.

It was found out that, packaging design is highly esteemed in the creative advertising industry owing to its strategic and functional benefits. Advertising agency managers recognised packaging design as part of branding and hence a way of giving the

product a name and place on the market. Packaging design was also found to be a source of information to consumers during the purchasing decision process.

In addition packaging design increases the product's chances of selling (i.e. sellability). It also keeps the product safe during transfer from the producer through the distribution channels to the final consumer.

With regard to the factors considered in creating effective packaging design, it was found that keeping a cordial client-agency relationship is essential. It was also found that maintaining originality and innovation is necessary in creating effective packaging design. Other equally important considerations in creating effective packaging designs were industry regulations and proper targeting.

Agency managers shared several perspectives on packaging design. However, essentially, they all indicated that effective packaging design is instructive and informative. Furthermore, although it was realised that brand owners may not always be on top of issues when it comes to packaging design, agency managers acknowledge brand owners as the ones to make the final decision when it comes to the final packaging design. Again, from the perspective of agency managers, having a good brief from a client is an important first step because it improves the agency's understanding of the task at hand.

Last but not least, there was also an issue of brand illusion which is the tendency to misinterpret the brand or the inability to clearly express the brand message in a manner easily discernible by advertising agencies. Brand illusion usually comes up when the client does not fully understand his own product in relation to the target market that his/her brands needs to appeal to.

### **5.3 Conclusions**

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions are drawn:

Firstly, packaging design is an indispensable promotional activity: this confirms the work of Underwood and Klein (2002) and Kotler, et al. (1999).

Also, despite playing many important roles, broadly, packaging design serves two categorical purposes; strategic purpose and technical purpose. Packaging design is only effective when it serves these broad purposes. That notwithstanding, several other roles can be allocated to packaging design depending on the nature of the product in question and the marketing strategy of the manufacturer.

Advertising agency managers essentially have a good appreciation of packaging design perhaps much more than some brand owners do, but this does not necessarily undermine the position of the brand owner as the one to make the final decision regarding which packaging design is most suitable for his/her a product.

The packaging design process is also complex with many elements requiring close collaboration and concerted efforts from both brand owners and the advertising agency in order to create an effective packaging design. This confirms the assertion of Jinkarn and Suwannaporn (2014) that arriving at an effective package design can be a strenuous exercise.

### **5.4 Limitations**

The major limitation to this study was gaining access to the advertising agency managers. Gate keepers were very instrumental in gaining access, however due to the position and work responsibilities of the agency managers some rescheduled several times till they finally granted the interview. Time and financial constraints were also critical issues for this study, thus limiting the sample size to three advertising agency

managers all located in Accra.

### **5.5 Suggestions for Future Studies**

Future studies may consider extending the sample size and demographic representation of the sample in order to have a more broader perspective of agency managers about packaging design. Also, in the future, a multiple case study design may be used to investigate packaging design into much detail by including other staff of creative advertising agencies in the study. Further, future researchers may also consider exploring the perspective of brand owners and product managers on packaging design.

### **5.6 Recommendations**

Based on the discussions and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations are made to help improve packaging design in the Ghanaian market.

In the first place, brand owners must always endeavour to include packaging issues in their market research efforts about their products in order to provide good briefs to better guide the agencies they engage to create the most effectiveness packaging solution.

Furthermore, brand owners and their agencies must include end users throughout their packaging design processes because their collaboration is very important for the creation of effective packaging design as they are the final users of the package.

Again, brand owners and creative agencies must explore other strategic roles that packaging design can play in their marketing efforts and harness them to create a more competitive market positioning.



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## APPENDIX

### INTERVIEW GUIDE

#### PACKAGING DESIGN IN THE MARKETING MIX: PERSPECTIVES OF ADVERTISING AGENCY MANAGERS

1. How important is packaging design from the agency perspective?
2. What are agencies contributions to packaging design?
3. What are your main considerations in designing a package for a product?
4. Ideally, what makes a packaging design effective?
5. Who makes the final decisions in the product packaging process?
6. Please describe to me the processes undergone in your agency to arrive at a final package design?
7. What can go wrong in the packaging design process?
8. What is the nature of your relationship with product/brand managers (clients) with respect to packaging design?
9. Are there any laws/rules guiding packaging design in Ghana? What are they?
10. What are some of the precautionary measures your agency takes to ensure effective packaging design?