A Qualitative Investigation Into Multi-Sensory Package: Environmental Packaging, Visual and Haptic Packaging Appeal Among Consumers

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The purpose of the study was to investigate three areas of research in the packaging literature; environmentally friendly packaging, responses to specific colors (blue and yellow) and haptic packaging. All three areas were extensively investigated through depth interviews with discussion and implications provided. The study utilized semi-structured depth interviews among 20 participants from various generational segments. Questions were designed around each of the research topic areas. Mock advertisements and products were used in interviews to solicit appropriate feedback. Transcriptions were analyzed by two researchers independently and then cross analysis was further conducted. Findings showed that younger demographic consumers were both more aware and more prone to consider environmentally friendly packaged products. This study builds on multiple facets of literature by providing qualitative evidence to support and extend the fields. The study provides original methodology and findings.

Keywords: environmentally-friendly packaging, packaging design, haptic packaging, multi-sensory packaging, depth interviews

INTRODUCTION

Packaging plays a significant role in consumer habits in retail (Hine, 1995; Peck & Childers, 2003; Velasco & Spence, 2019). Hine (1995) argues that while packaging conceptually could be traced back to early humans, the real growth in the significance that packaging plays in purchasing decisions really gained ground in early 1900's. In fact, Nickels & Jolson (1976) posited that "packaging" should be considered the fifth 'P' in the classic marketing mix tool. Multisensory packaging is a significant field within the marketing literature and has seen considerable focus over recent years (Velasco & Spence, 2019). These things drive consumer behavior and how a consumer chooses between the different products on the shelves in the store. In this paper, an in-depth hermeneutic investigation was conducted to investigate three core areas of packaging's impact on consumption habits: environmentally friendly packaging, the color schemes of the packaging, and multisensory product packaging.

LITERATURE REVIEW / HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

Research Area 1 – Environmentally Friendly Packaging

One immensely popular topic in modern packaging research is environmentally friendly packaging**.** Modern consumption has seen an increase in consumers' considerations towards the environmental impact of their consumption decisions (Levins, 2019). As a result, businesses have reacted to this shift in consumer

culture and aligned their efforts by many to offer alternative packaging in their products as well as in their supply chain processes (Levins, 2019). Environmentally friendly packaging can include, yet is not limited to, the package, the product, the way the product is bought, the way the product is carried, or even how the packages are made. Johnson, (2019) listed nine packaging alternatives, Biodegradable packing peanuts, corrugated bubbly wrap, air pillows made of recycled materials, cornstarch packaging, mushroom packaging, seaweed packaging, recycled cardboard and paper, eco-friendly plastic and recycled plastics, and organic fabrics. These alternatives focus on how the product is transported in its package. These categories illustrate how consumer consideration is being given to all stages of the product's usage.

Clorox Green Works markets their environmentally safe products in both subtle and obvious ways. Many consumers do not even know that they are being swayed to buy their product, for example: Clorox puts the word 'Green' in their brand name, bringing slight awareness to the consumer, but not overexplaining how the product is environmentally friendly. On the other hand, "These green products tend to use biodegradable, nontoxic ingredients, and are packaged in bottles that can be recycled" (Lin & Chang, 2012, pg. 125). This is something that the company makes obvious while creating a clear marketing objective encouraging consumers to look for ways to help the environment. By using both of these techniques, consumers are attracted to the environmentally friendly product and the packaging techniques used.

Another company who also makes a clear environmentally friendly marketing objective is Seed, "Seed takes the title of making the first-ever shower-friendly paper bottle. Each bottle is made out of 100% post-consumer recycled paper and lined with a post-consumer recycled plastic liner, resulting in a bottle with 60% less plastic than a traditional one" (Rosmarin, 2019). Seed is sold at Sephora and is known for their body products. Their product lines include body moisturizer, body cleanser, and hair/face products. Their products are shower friendly with the article from Business Insider describing, "When you shower, the paper will get wet (it's still paper), but thanks to a mineral coating it will dry quickly and look good as new in no time" (Rosmarin, 2019). The article also had multiple examples of other brands that use sustainable packaging. Seed was chosen to further explain due to the fact that it is such a common household item. It is important that these items, commonly used and kept, are environmentally friendly since they are the ones purchased frequently.

This research area primarily focused on cleaning supplies and beauty/body products. Environmentally packaging goes deeper than just what is seen with the products being sold. It deepens with how products are packaged, made, and even carried. The use of reusable bags plays a part in environmentally friendly packaging. Business Insider explained, "Plastic packaging makes up over one sixth of waste in United States landfills" (Rosmarin, 2019). This is a massive amount of space that plastic takes up. Unfortunately, many grocery stores use plastic bags for consumers to haul the groceries they just bought. There are some substitutes for plastic, but plastic is a cheap and durable way to package/carry, so it is hard to replace for many companies. Many companies focus on plastic in the packaging, but something often forgotten about are the plastic bags that are thrown away after buying products. The use of reusable shopping bags is becoming more prevalent, therefore it will be a focus of research.

Research Area 2 – Colors of Packaging

One of the first things a consumer typically notices, will be the color of the package. Many researchers have spent hours depicting the psychological effects colors have on packaging. One way the book *Multisensory Packaging: Designing New Product Experiences*, described color was that it had three distinct components: hue, lightness, and saturation (Velasco & Spence, 2019). Spence and Velasco went into further detail about these three components and how companies try to utilize their shelf-space with the best possible color scheme for their product. Furthermore, Bock, Pandalaere and Kenhove (2013), showed how colors that convey positive meanings (e.g., green) generally induce approach responses, whereas colors carrying negative meanings (e.g., red) induce avoidance responses. These two colors are seen a lot in many products, one product that uses the color red is Coca-Cola. Red has a negative connotation that comes with it, but it also gets stuck in the consumer's mind when they are looking at a product and are immediately drawn to the red ones. Many consumers like the risky product and the red labels promote that. Furthermore, "Green

contrasts chromatically and psychologically with red and offers general associations with approach motivations" (Bock, Pandelaere, & Kenhove, 2013 pg. 342). This is dependent on the consumer, but there are many instances where this quote holds true. Green and red clash and it might depend on the mood, age, or gender of the consumer to see if they reach for the red or green product.

Colors are associated with a product or a brand for example, UPS uses brown to evoke feelings of simplicity and honesty (Carson, 2018). UPS chose a color that many companies don't choose, but since brown corresponds to the product UPS carries it makes sense. "It became an inseparable part of UPS branding, even becoming shorthand for the company itself, as in its former slogan: 'What can Brown do for you?'" (Carson, 2018, pg 2). The color brown is highly recognized with this brand and instantly became a part of what they stand for. Another example of product/brand association, Apple uses white to evoke feelings of purity and perfection (Carson, 2018). Lately, Apple has brought in different colors to their products but their initial product was white and their brand still is white. Apple has achieved that crisp look for their products and maybe that is why consumers are drawn to them. "Whether it's the soothing simplicity of its packaging, the simple purity of its logo or the fact that iPhones and iPads are available in white, Apple's use of white is nothing short of iconic" (Carson, 2018, pg. 2). No matter what the brand or package, their color scheme was not chosen by luck, it had a strategy behind it and is packaged to evoke certain emotions among the consumer.

While these articles might have mentioned multiple colors, for the upcoming research focus, the primary colors will be blue and yellow since the previous literature focused on red, green, brown, and white. Blue and yellow are common colors and many products come to mind when these are mentioned. In the book, *Multisensory Packaging: Designing New Product Experiences*, Spence and Velasco talked about how companies attempt to create a meaning through the colors that are used on the products. "For instance, based on large-scale online data collection, Woods and his colleagues have demonstrated that pairs of colors, if clearly organized into foreground/background combination , may sometimes convey a specific attribute" (Velasco & Spence, 2019, pg. 32). The current study will build on these research specifically focusing on blue and yellow and their role in logo appeal.

Research Area 3 – Sensory Packaging

When shopping, some consumers like to feel and touch everything. Sensory packaging, also known as, multisensory, haptic, or tactile packaging is an evolving way to package products to appeal to these types of consumers. In their article, Peck and Childers (2003) investigated children's involvement with packaging of toys and how effective multisensory packaging is in the industry. "Less haptically motivated consumers, for whom a clear visual examination of a product would be expected to satisfy their needs for both instrumental and autotelic haptic information when there is a barrier to touch" (Peck & Childers, 2003, pg. 35). They want the consumer to feel something and it makes them stop where they are. A step further, they want the consumer to 'ooo' and 'ahh' over the product so that it makes them more likely to purchase it. Research shows that interpersonal touch can affect consumers' attitudes and behaviors in retail settings (Peck & Childers, 2003).

In their 2016 article, Silva and Mazzilli investigated multisensory packaging in the perfume industry. In this article, Silva explains, "Packaging is no longer limited to the function of protection and transportation. Packaging is an artifact directly related to the product, often understood as part of the product and not simply as wrapping" (Silva & Mazzilli, 2016, pg. 7). Furthering with this, they account for two parts of a package's design: structural and visual (Silva & Mazzilli, 2016). This takes place in the perfume industry with merely all of the perfumes or colognes that are purchased. Consumers might not have time to go through and smell all of the perfumes, so they will either go to how the bottle looks or how it feels. For instance, "In the case of perfumes, it is crucial that elements such as texture, shape, and colors be in synergy with the sensations that fragrances supposedly will evoke" (Silva & Mazzilli, 2016, pg. 7). Thus, creating a multisensory bottle for the perfume to be contained. A perfume bottle must closely represent what the perfume will be like. Perfume companies can incorporate many senses in their products, but how the package feels to a consumer, the shape, or the texture will ultimately make them want to smell the product,

The packaging becomes a physical embodiment to what the brand is trying to covey to the consumer (Kniazeva & Belk, 2007).

In this research area, multisensory packaging is becoming prevalent among many companies. The research focused on how a package can draw a consumer into wanting more with an example of the perfume industry. This is just one of many industries that have to compete for this. In the research, children were mentioned and how they are geared towards touching everything and are haptically motivated while they are young. Children learn by touching and feeling, which is why many toys have a tiny hole for a child to touch the product before they buy it. The current study will use children toy's packaging in order to test different multisensory packaging displays.

METHODOLOGY

In order to study all three of these themes, depth interviews were conducted over a period of 2 weeks in November of 2019. There were follow up interviews conducted in January 2020 to gain further clarification and to allow for additional insights. Twenty participants were interviewed about their consumer decisions, their thought process, and how they felt about certain topics that related to the research. Table 1 provides a breakdown with aliases for these twenty people.

Fourteen were female and six were male. The interviews were specifically skewed females as evidence suggests this as a primarily target for many of these topics (Moss & Colman, 2001). Consistent with Kasasa (2019) each participant was also classified into a specific age generation. The Baby Boomer's age range is from 1944-1964, Generation X from 1965-1979, Millennials from 1980-1994, and lastly Generation Z is 1995-2015 (Kasasa, 2019). Eleven people from Generation Z, two that were Millennials, five from Generation X, and two Baby Boomers were interviewed. People were chosen from each age range to diversify responses, also to focus primarily on females since much of the research consisted of grocery shopping or just shopping in general, but knowing males also do some of the shopping, they were included as well.

TABLE 1
PARTICIPANT LIST

Name	Generation	Gender
C. Kruse	Gen Z	Male
D. Moss	Gen Z	Male
T. Burrus	Gen Z	Male
D. Webb	Gen Z	Female
E. Vogel	Gen Z	Female
J. Weydert	Gen Z	Female
M. Recio	Gen Z	Female
M. Ewing	Gen Z	Female
R. Galyean	Gen Z	Female
S. Gonzalez	Gen Z	Female
S. Gordon	Gen Z	Female

B. Burrus	Millennial	Male
R. Burrus	Millennial	Female
C. Gonzalez	Gen X	Male
D. Tate	Gen X	Female
K. Gonzalez	Gen X	Female
K. Cowan	Gen X	Female
K. Newlin	Gen X	Female
W. Cisna	Baby Boomer	Male
L. Cisna	Baby Boomer	Female

All of these interviews were conducted by one person in a location specified by the participant to encourage comfortability of all participants. An initial script was created prior to interviews so that there was general consistency in construction of each session. Interviews consisted of 18 open ended questions with five of those questions having a second part i.e. "If yes, …". In the end, these yes or no questions provided an overall understanding of the consumer's overall perspective. This script was created with the original gaps in the literature review in mind. For environmentally friendly packaging, questions pertaining to consumers' thought processes when reviewing environmentally packaging. Perceptions and habits pertaining to the use of reusable shopping bags were also discussed in the interviews. The colors of blue and yellow were used since these two colors lacked significant conclusions in previous research. In line with the multisensory packaging gap, children's toys were selected as the category of packaging to investigate due in large to considerable literature suggesting it as an industry that draws heavily on multisensory packaging. The toys that were chosen are mentioned below in deciding if a consumer prefers closed or open packaging for multisensory products. Interviews lasted between 20 and 30 minutes. Audio from all interviews was collected and transcribed for data interpretation.

There were six questions in the first research area of environmentally friendly packaging. Questions furthered to see if the participants focused on environmentally friendly packaging/products, or if the participants used reusable bags during their shopping trips. This segment of questions dove into how the participants felt about the importance of the product packages, the product itself, and how the product is then transported home with them.

In the second research area of colors among the product packages, the focus was on the colors of blue and yellow. Respondents were presented with images for two corporate logos, (Aquafina and Frito Lay). Two different logos were presented, each with the only changes being the colors for the background of the ad were either blue or yellow. Aquafina was chosen because water is something that is commonly associated with the color blue. The logo says, "pure water, perfect taste," which leads the consumer to believe in those expectations of that brand of water. For the second logo, Frito Lay was chosen, which has a yellow logo. This logo has a sun radiating behind it and the words "good fun!" underneath the brand. Depicted in Figure 1, displays the original blue Aquafina logo. In Figure 2 shows the converted yellow Aquafina logo. Next, Figure 3 is the original yellow Frito Lay logo, and Figure 4 is the converted blue Frito Lay logo. After showing the interviewees the original and converted logos, a couple of more questions were asked, consisting of four questions in this research area.

FIGURE 1

FIGURE 2

FIGURE 3

FIGURE 4

The third research area on multisensory packaging had a total of six questions in that segment. First asked, was if the consumer was a haptic consumer and then went from there. For some respondents, additional help had to be given by presenting the example of going shopping and touching every article of clothing, for this helped the respondent decipher if they demonstrated haptic consumer characteristics. Then, two children's toys were presented to them. Figure 5 is shown below and shows the toy with the closed packaging. Figure 6 shows the open box with the button, "try me" on the pet, so consumers can feel how soft the product is.

FIGURE 5

FIGURE 6

A pilot study was conducted to test all questions and items that were to be used in the interviewing process prior to the final data collection. All interviews were conducted in a natural setting selected by the participants. Interviews lasted between 20 minutes to 1 hour. Audio for all interviews were gathered and transcribed by the researcher. Transcriptions were reviewed by the second researcher in order to provide a dual check for the transcription of the data.

Transcriptions and field notes were interpreted independently by both researchers using the hermeneutic methodology in order to uncover themes related to each of the research gaps (i.e. environmental friendly packaging, color, and multisensory packaging). Interpretive inquiry is described as, "a systematic search for deep understanding of the ways in which persons subjectively experience the social world" (Hultgren, 1989, p. 41). Interpretive analysis aims to gain better understanding of a phenomenon under investigation through language (Van Manen, 1990). A thematic analysis was conducted independently by both authors. Data pertaining to each research gap were analyzed for common themes. Themes were discussed by both authors with additional analysis taking place after each discussion. Once each researcher felt that a complete analysis of the data had occurred, and saturation was reached, analysis was halted.

FINDINGS

Environmentally Friendly Reusable Shopping Bags

The majority of participants claimed that they care about whether or not the products that they purchase were environmentally friendly (85% of total). This was even more pronounced among younger consumers with all but one Generation Z participating stating that environmental cues were not an important component of their consideration. With other participants mentioning that price determines whether they consider environmentally impacts in their purchase decisions.

> **Participant "M. Ewing" (Gen Z) -** I like to buy environmentally friendly products, but sometimes they are pricier and I don't always have that big of a disposable income for those products.

> **Participant "D. Moss" (Gen Z) -** America is already one of the less polluting countries in the world, so me, being one person, is going to have such a meniscal effect in comparison to the global movement.

> **Participant "K. Gonzalez" (Gen X) -** If I am at the store, I typically try to purchase environmentally safe products over the others. I also recycle so I look for the products that are recyclable.

Price was a major factor in influencing consideration with the majority of older population (Generation X and Baby Boomers) with 65% of older participants citing it as a critical component in their consideration of environmentally friendly products and packaging. Older populations seemed less willing to spend additional money on products solely for the environmental packaging. Younger consumers, by contrast, appeared to be willing to spend some additional funds as long as they felt the brand was actually true in its claims in environmental packaging.

> **Participant "K. Newlin" (Gen X) -**The products that advertise that they are environmentally friendly are typically more expensive. Being on a budget does not allow me to purchase a product that is more expensive just because it saves the environment.

> **Participant "L. Cisna" (Baby Boomer) -** I would like to buy more environmentally friendly products and promote going green but they are more expensive. When it comes down to it, I go with the cheaper products.

> **Participant "D. Webb" (Gen Z) -** I look at and care about products that are environmentally safe. I know they can be more expensive at times, but if I can change even a little bit, I will.

This is in line with previous literature like Trimble & Rifon (2006) who posited that younger, primarily female consumers were more ethically-minded in their consumption choices and that appeals to their ethics had a significant impact on their consideration for environmentally friendly products. This is also confirmed in Tung, Koenig, & Chen's (2016) article that investigated environmentally friendly apparel and gender differences. They found that younger females were motivated by their self-identity and how strongly or weakly the concept of a "Green Consumer" was to their self-concept while younger males required cognitive involvement (justification) when deciding to purchase environmentally friendly apparel. We also saw these gender differences in the current study where males were more prone to either completely dismiss the importance of environmentally packaging or cite the importance of price in their consumption selection. Even Generation Z males were the only participants from that segment to cite price as an influence in their consideration of the importance for environmentally friendly packaging.

Younger consumers also were more likely to denote that they had seen more environmentally friendly marketing in retailers (80% Generation Z vs. 50% Generation X and Baby Boomers). Again, illustrating how it is younger consumers who are more receptive to such marketing communications. In looking at why this might be the case, many younger consumers had more direr perceptions towards the future welfare of the World. Many mentioned how they were concerned about global warming, species extension, and increased population growth that could have detrimental impacts on the Globe. While older consumers cited their rationale for considering environmentally friendly products and packaging was larger that it was the right thing to do for society. This goes to more of a motivation of fear versus social perception. Older participants were more likely to denote how they say purchasing environmentally friendly products would impact how others saw them in their communities.

> **Participant "K. Newlin" (Gen X) -** I typically use the plastic bags just because it is easier for me personally. Also, Wal-Mart now has grocery pick-up which is a huge time saver for me, but they do not use reusable bags.

> **Participant "J. Weydert" (Gen Z) -** I have noticed in stores how there are products like decomposable straws and Mountain Dew does cut outs of turtles to promote recycling and I think that is really important since those animals are affected.

> **Participant "S. Gonzalez" (Gen Z) -** Many environmentally friendly products are a big change to the older generations and they just aren't as subject to change as other generations. For the example of reusable bags, I would take those into a store since I am new to grocery shopping, rather than a Baby Boomer who has grocery shopped with plastic bags nearly their whole life.

The Colors Blue and Yellow in Packaging Colors

When asked what the interviewees thought of multiple logos that were manipulated by adding the colors blue or yellow, multiple answers were received. They consisted of blue making them feel sad, calm, thinking of a boy or a body of water. While yellow made them feel overall happy, bright, cheery, and reminded them of sunshine. A small amount of the participants agreed that it depended on the shade of blue (15%). Agreeing that the darker the blue, the sadder and the lighter the blue, the calmer or more refreshing. Some products that were listed that came to the participants' minds that had blue packaging were water products, Pepsi, 2% milk, and a lot of products with the brand Great Value, which was found in their local grocery store. Yellow brought up products of the cleaning variety (30% of respondents agreed), and potato chips. Words such as, "fresh", "Vibrant", and "new" were ascribed to the logos with yellow backgrounds.

> **Participant "S. Gordon" (Gen Z) -** Yellow is one of the only colors that has the effect of actually brightening my day. It is just one of those colors that could almost go with anything and it is an instant mood changer.

> **Participant "D. Webb" (Gen Z) -** The color blue can signify a lot of things, and since this blue was a brighter and lighter blue, it could easily be placed on a bag of chips to stick out on the shelf.

> **Participant "K. Cowan" (Gen X) -** Yellow is an attention getter. I think of chip bags, cereal boxes, and cleaning supplies when I think of yellow.

The participants had a strong recognition of logos and could easily name off products that had blue or yellow in them. Therefore, bringing out the two logos of Aquafina and Frito Lay with the inverted colors had the participants instantly invested in the pictures of the logos. All participants agree that the Aquafina logo should be blue, with a basis of the words 'pure' and 'water' on the logo. On the other hand, the majority agreed that the Frito Lay logo should be yellow (80%), with the remaining participants seeing either color suitable for the logos. This decision was backed by the words of 'Good Fun' and the radiating sunshine in the background for some participants. Generation Z participants were the remaining 20% that saw either color with the Frito Lay logo. All of the Millenials, Generation X, and Baby Boomers agreed yellow should be with the Frito Lay.

Coupland describes in the literature *Invisible Brands: An Ethnography of Households and the Brands in Their Kitchen Pantries*, that invisible brands are brands that are taken from the marketplace, exist in households, yet are mundane and blend into the household environment (Coupland, 2005). The brands that were chosen, Aquafina and Frito Lay, are the perfect candidates for an invisible brand which falls into this literature. They are described as low involvement purchases, which happens when consumers do not put a lot of thought into the purchase of the product. The older generations all agreed that the color yellow went

with the Frito Lay logo. This being an invisible brand in their household for much longer is a connection to why they all agreed. Coupland also explains that the brands are purchased over and over again and while not allowing the everyday brands to be a part of their extended selves (Coupland, 2005). The youngest generation, Generation Z, had other thoughts and they are all new to shopping and not quite settled into a home where an invisible brand could take place. Therefore creating an open mind for the logos and their color schemes, and with their age, their purchasing being repeated is less in comparison to their elders.

Children's Toys and Multisensory Packaging

The majority of the participants claimed to be haptically motivated while shopping (65%). Consumers will touch various items such as articles of clothing, different product packages, or in this specific case children's toys. Casual observation reveals that individuals differ greatly in the amount of touch they exhibit while shopping. Whereas some consumers touch products to simply place them in shopping carts, other consumers spend more time exploring products with their hands before ultimately making a purchase decision. 75% of the participants said that they would rather buy the children's toy depicted in Figure 6 over Figure 5. The toy that was chosen by more had an open box, presenting a fuzzy dog, with a try me button that made the dog walk and bark.

> **Participant "M. Recio" (Gen Z) -** I am a haptic consumer. When I go shopping, I find myself touching everything even if it isn't on my shopping list. The pink dog is something that would catch my attention.
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> **Participant "C. Gonzalez" (Gen X) -** I enjoy the senses of touching and seeing while shopping. If I can touch the product I am going to buy before purchasing, I can get a better look at the quality of it, which is of utmost importance to me.
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> **Participant "D. Moss" (Gen Z) -** Before I go into a store I know what I want so I do not need to touch every item. I just get what I need and leave the store.

Peck & Childers (2003) explain a Need For Touch (NFT): Autotelic Factor, which is inline with why children go up and down the toy aisles touching everything. They describe how the Autotelic Factor is more of a need to touch for the pure enjoyment of touching, rather than touching with an intent to purchase. A child does not necessarily touch things to buy them, but rather touches things and then becomes connected to them furthering a need for the product after just messing around with it. Thus, "Consumer research has shown that when individuals are given the opportunity to touch an object, they report a greater sense of ownership of the object" (Peck & Shu, 2009). A child that is motivated by a NFT with the Autotelic Factor in play can then make the child realize they need a toy since they have then played with it, although that was not the original motivation behind touching all of the toys in the aisle.

Additionally, when asked which one they would buy for a/their child, 15% of the participants then changed their answer to Figure 5 and gave the reasoning of the enclosed box adding an extra layer of protection. Adding into the discussion, it raised concerns to the participants of how many other people had touched the toy or played with it before they got to it. As an adult, it is concerning knowing what all could contaminate a child in their young age. As a child, the idea of a fuzzy dog that walks and barks is much more interesting than the ideas of what the dog has been in contact with. This was consistent across all generations with the responses received.

> **Participant "E. Vogel" (Gen Z) -** Touching the open package and the animal inside kind of freaks me out because of all the germs. I think of all the people who have been in the store and touched the animal, which makes me not want to get that toy, especially if it is for a child.

> **Participant "C. Kruse" (Gen Z) -** Little kids learn by touching and feeling things, they are more likely to want something that they have already touched or have already played with to know what it does.

> **Participant "K. Newlin" (Gen X) -** Because children learn from touch and feeling different items that are new to them. Also, they don't worry about germs or getting dirty or sick from touching anything.

The Law of Negative Contagion (Tylor, 1974) is in line with the finding above. It is proposed that when consumers know that other consumers have touched the products then their evaluation and purchase intentions decrease (Argo, Dahl, & Morales, 2006). This research was tested in retail shopping and even dove deeper to look at if someone they loved touched an item in comparison to someone they did not love to see if their perception changed. This is simpler, yet still applicable. In a retail environment, there are "contamination cues" (Argo, Dahl, & Morales, 2006) given to a consumer which allows the consumer to go into thought about who all has touched the object: other shoppers, manufactures, transportation, retail workers, etc. Thus, creating that awareness, this heightens when a child is involved and they are in the toy aisle with multiple partially opened toys. Products can also have "positive" contamination cues as well. In Argo, Dahl & Morales, (2006) the authors demonstrated that attractiveness of a person who touches a product can have a positive impact on whether subsequent consumers wish to touch the same items. In the case of the interviews, questions were framed in the context of selecting a product for their child. In this instance, it seems that protection of a more vulnerable consumer out weights any positive contamination.

Haptic packaging also demonstrated a higher ability to elicit memories from consumers. It seems that the act of engaging with the product specifically, touching a product allowed for more consumers to have more emotional memories about past products or experiences that helped then gain a stronger affiliation with the product. 80% of the participants remembered instantly having a toy as a child that they loved. Some of the toys included: soft bears, strawberry scented dolls, stretchy figures with a plastic smell, and monkeys with soft bows on them.

> **Participant "C. Gonzalez" (Gen X) -** When I grew up you could not touch the product, we had to use our imagination as to how we could play with that toy. There was no such thing as multisensory packaging, so now that that is a part of product packaging kids are definitely going to be highly motivated by those things.

> **Participant "R. Burrus" (Millennial) -** Kids are still learning especially by touch. They are more likely to be more interested in something that they can touch.

> **Participant "K. Cowan" (Gen X) -** I had a yellow teddy bear that I loved and took with me everywhere. I don't really remember having many interactive toys, I had my teddy bear.

These toys all were identified with a certain smell or texture to them that made them stand out to the child. The participants went into small detail about their past toys and could still visualize the specific toys. When the participants thought of the toys they mentioned how soft they were or how they smelt. Bone and Ellen (1992) conjecture that imagery may involve sight, taste, smell, and tactile sensations. Not only do consumers think about the initial sight of a product, but once they get attached to it, many other senses come into play. Through this, it was found that many participants were initially drawn to the dogs by the packaging and colors, but were convinced of which they would rather have after touching the products. Thus this brought together two of the senses, with a third sense of hearing with the dog in Figure 6 barking and walking.

DISCUSSION / IMPLICATIONS

The current study offers many insights into three common areas of research in the multisensory packaging literature. Findings including generational differences in the acknowledgement, appeal and evaluation of environmental packaging, color – brand congruence, the emotional elicitation of specific hues (blue and yellow), and the role of haptic packaging appeal to consumers. Findings offered consistent findings with previous literature as well as new insights to the field.

First, when investigating environmental packaging across generations, it seemed that there continues to be a perception among most participants that environmental-friendly packaging would have a higher price tag. While this finding was consistent across generations, it appeared that younger consumers denoted a lower effect in price and drive to purchase environmentally friendly packed products. This was due in large by the motivation behind the consumption choice across generations. Younger consumers were motivated to purchase because of a higher level of concern in the welfare of the planet as well as how this would impact their future lives. Whilst older audiences claimed to be motivated by social pressures and denoted the necessity to have their environmentally friendly purchases more socially visible as an important aspect of which product categories they would prefer to purchase environmentally friendly products.

These findings demonstrate relevance to marketers in the importance of product categories in determining the value of green packaging. Products targeting older demographics should acknowledge the social impact that their products might have in consumer usage. Publicly visible products appeared more likely to be fits for environmental packaging. Furthermore, younger consumers seem to be more apt to want messaging on how the packaging impacts the planet. Whether the product is consumer privately or publicly, the younger audience denoted higher alignment with "Green Consumer" motivations. Younger audiences also seemed more willing to sacrifice for the concepts driving environmental packaging.

The next area of findings surrounds the importance of brand-hue congruence in logo design. Emotional reactions to the hue of logos has long been demonstrated (Velasco & Spence, 2018). Whilst there has been considerable investigation into hue- emotional solicitation, the current study investigated blue and yellow. Findings demonstrate that shades of color have different emotional responses and that the major component of hue-brand acceptance was in the brand attributes and color associations. For example, many participants preferred the blue background for Aquafina because the product had associations with water and purity. While Frito-Lay potato chips provoked associations such as fun and excitement which were also associated with yellow among the majority of participants. This was also reinforced with the inclusion of a sunrise in the backdrop of the logo.

These findings provide evidence of how specific shades of blue and yellow are interpreted by different consumers. Hue-brand congruency is consistently provided with new evidence for these two colors. Blue elicits fluidity, and motion while lighter shades also denote calm and tranquility. While brighter yellows promote action and new birth; many times denoting association with cleaning products. These findings give additional evidence for marketers in the industry on how to best align hues of these two primary colors with the associations in their marketing imagery.

The final area of findings acknowledge the role of haptic marketing in packaging. It presents evidence on the draw of haptic packaging in soliciting involvement of the consumer while also bringing up the contamination facet and its role in haptic appeal. Consumers were drawn to engage more with packaging that encouraged haptic involvement and denoted higher memory recall and emotional association to the experience with the packaging. The act of touching a product often resulted in higher connection with the product which could result in a higher value in the products lost. Memory played a significant role in this as haptic packaging elicited more visceral emotional affiliations with the product. There also was a negative side-effect of touch in the area of contamination. Consumers denoted concern about the safety of products that held haptic packaging due to the concern of additional consumers involvement with the product and germs associated with such exchanges.

These findings provide evidence useful to marketers of children's toys as well as other product categories. While only children's toys were tested in the current study, findings could be generalized to other product categories. Marketers should be cognizant of how haptic packaging induces higher level

involvement with consumers. Products may stimulate more engagement with consumers through haptic packaging, but marketers need to be careful to minimize contamination concerns.

The current study looked to investigate three popular areas of multisensory packaging appeal; environmental, hue, and haptic. Through intensive depth interviews, data was gathered to investigate each area and provide findings. Findings can be used in the industry to better align each aspect of multisensory packaging with marketing objectives. Whilst different opinions occurred across generations and participants, all participants agreed that multi-sensory packaging plays a necessary marketing tactic in modern competitive environments.

> **Participant "T. Burrus" (Gen Z) -** Yes. Those are three of the biggest factors people think of, usually subconsciously, while they shop. Environmentally friendly packages are up and coming and people are concerned about helping the Earth more now than ever.

> **Participant "B. Burrus" (Millennial) -** No, because I believe that these themes are already in use by most companies and will, at most, put them at par with other competitors.

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