Journal of Innovative and Creativity
Journal Homepage: https://joecy.org/index.php/joecy
e-mail: journaljoecy@gmail.com

Faculty of Education
University of Pahlawan Tuanku Tambusai
ISSN 2775-771X (Online)
ISSN 2962-570X **(Printed)**
6 (2) 2026, Page: 31649-31654

The Influence of Taste and Packaging Design on Purchase Intention of Sarsaparilla Lemonade Products Among Generation Z
(A Case Study of Students at Almuslim University)

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Published: June , 2026

ABSTRACT

In today's highly competitive beverage industry, traditional products like sarsaparilla lemonade face a tough challenge in staying relevant to younger consumers. This study examines the impact of taste and packaging design on the purchase intention of sarsaparilla lemonade among Generation Z, focusing on students at Universitas Almuslim, Bireuen Regency. Employing a descriptive quantitative approach, data were gathered via questionnaires from 96 respondents selected through purposive sampling using the Lemeshow formula. The data were then analyzed using multiple linear regression after meeting classical assumption requirements. The t-test results indicate that both taste ($p = 0.019$) and packaging design ($p = 0.000$) partially exert a positive and significant effect on purchase intention. Notably, packaging design emerged as the most dominant variable with a regression coefficient of 0.512, outperforming taste at 0.149. Simultaneously, the model accounts for 83.5% of the variance in purchase intention ($R^2 = 0.835$). These findings underscore a behavioral shift among young consumers who are highly responsive to visual stimuli before evaluating product taste. Consequently, traditional beverage producers are encouraged to prioritize modernizing packaging aesthetics while maintaining flavor consistency to successfully capture the Generation Z market.

Kata Kunci: Taste; Packaging Design; Purchase Intention.

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INTRODUCTION

The development of the beverage industry in Indonesia has shown significant changes, including in the category of traditional beverages, which have begun to adapt to the needs and preferences of modern consumers. Sarsaparilla lemonade is one of the traditional beverages that remains recognized by the public due to its distinctive taste and historical value. However, the emergence of various modern beverage products offering innovative flavors and more attractive appearances has created challenges for traditional beverages in maintaining consumer interest, particularly among Generation Z consumers. A study by Rizky Maulana and Siti Rahmawati (2022) stated that product innovation is one of the key factors in enhancing the attractiveness of traditional beverage products, enabling them to remain appealing to consumers.

Generation Z is a group of consumers who tend to be highly selective when choosing products. Consumers in this generation not only consider the functional aspects of a product but also pay attention to the consumption experience it provides. A study conducted by Dewi Anggraini (2021) found that taste has a significant influence on consumers' purchasing decisions for beverage products. Young consumers tend to prefer products with unique, refreshing flavors that align with current trends rather than products with flavors perceived as monotonous. This situation suggests that traditional beverages such as sarsaparilla lemonade need to undergo innovation in order to remain attractive to university students and younger generations.

According to Denny Firmansyah et al. (2023), purchase intention is a stage in the consumer decision-making process in which consumers develop a genuine willingness to purchase a product

because it is perceived as capable of satisfying their needs and desires.

In addition to taste, packaging design is also one of the factors that influence consumers' purchase intentions toward a product. Packaging serves not only as a means of protecting the product but also as a marketing communication tool capable of attracting consumers' attention. A study conducted by Nur Aisyah and Muhammad Fikri (2020) found that packaging design has a positive effect on consumers' purchase intentions, particularly among younger age groups. Generation Z consumers tend to be more attracted to products with visually appealing, modern, and aesthetically pleasing packaging than to products with simple packaging.

This phenomenon can also be observed among students of Almuslim University in Bireuen Regency. Although some students are familiar with sarsaparilla lemonade as a traditional beverage, they have not yet made it their primary choice for daily consumption. A study by Rahmad Hidayat (2023) explains that consumers' purchase intentions are influenced by their experiences with product taste quality and the visual appeal of the product. Students tend to be interested in trying a product when it has attractive packaging and a taste that matches their preferences.

The development of social media has also influenced the consumption behavior of Generation Z in determining product choices. Beverage products with attractive visual appearances are more likely to capture consumers' attention through digital platforms such as Instagram and TikTok. A study conducted by Lina Marlina (2022) found that appealing product visuals can significantly increase consumers' purchase intentions through social media. In this context, packaging design serves as an important element in creating the product's visual appeal, while taste plays a crucial role in maintaining consumer satisfaction after the purchase has been made.

Taste and packaging design are important factors that can influence consumers' purchase intentions toward a beverage product. A taste that matches consumers' preferences can create satisfaction and encourage repeat purchases, while attractive packaging design can increase consumers' attention and interest in the product. As a modern consumer group, Generation Z tends to consider both visual aspects and consumption experiences when making purchasing decisions. Therefore, the combination of a desirable taste and an appealing packaging design has become an important strategy for enhancing the competitiveness of traditional beverage products in an increasingly competitive market.

This study was conducted to analyze the influence of taste and packaging design on the purchase intention of sarsaparilla lemonade products among students of Almuslim University. The findings are expected to provide valuable information and insights for business practitioners in developing more effective marketing strategies that align with the characteristics and preferences of today's consumers.

METHOD

This study employed a quantitative approach with a descriptive research design to analyze the influence of taste and packaging design on the purchase intention of sarsaparilla lemonade products among Generation Z consumers in Bireuen Regency. The population consisted of all Generation Z individuals in Bireuen Regency, defined as those born between 1997 and 2012. Since the exact population size was unknown and considered large, the sample size was determined using the Lemeshow formula with a 95% confidence level and a 10% margin of error, resulting in a total of 96 respondents. The sampling technique used was non-probability sampling with a purposive sampling approach, in which respondents were selected based on specific criteria, namely belonging to Generation Z and having prior knowledge of or experience consuming sarsaparilla lemonade products. The study utilized both primary and secondary data. Primary data were collected through questionnaires distributed to respondents, while secondary data were obtained from relevant literature, books, and academic journals. The research instrument employed a Likert scale to measure the variables of taste (X_1), packaging design (X_2), and purchase intention (Y). The taste variable was measured through indicators including appearance, aroma, flavor, texture, and temperature. The packaging design variable was measured through indicators such as protection, economic value, communication, aesthetics, and identity. Meanwhile, the purchase intention variable was measured through transactional intention, referential intention, and preferential intention indicators.

The data analysis techniques employed in this study included validity and reliability tests to assess the appropriateness of the research instrument, as well as classical assumption tests consisting of

normality, multicollinearity, and heteroscedasticity tests. Multiple linear regression analysis was conducted to examine the influence of the independent variables on the dependent variable. In addition, a partial test (t-test) was used to determine the individual effect of each independent variable, while a simultaneous test (F-test) was conducted to examine the combined effect of the independent variables on purchase intention. Furthermore, the coefficient of determination **(**R^2**)** was utilized to measure the model's ability to explain the variation in the dependent variable.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results of Respondent Characteristics Description

The survey results from 96 student respondents at Almuslim University indicated that the majority of respondents were attracted to sarsaparilla lemonade products that offered a refreshing taste and appealing packaging design. Respondents perceived that modern and aesthetically pleasing packaging was effective in capturing consumers' initial attention, while taste was considered the primary factor influencing repeat purchase intention. These findings suggest that the combination of a desirable taste and attractive packaging design can significantly enhance Generation Z consumers' purchase intention toward sarsaparilla lemonade products.

Validity and Reliability Test Results

This study uses a questionnaire as a data collection instrument, so validity and reliability tests are carried out first to ensure that the instrument is appropriate and can be used.

Table 1

Validity test of Taste and Packaging Design Variables

Variable	Indicator	Code	Pearson Correlation	Sig. (2-tailed)	Ket
Taste (X1)	Appearance	X1	0,641	0,000	Valid
	Smell	X1	0,613	0,000	Valid
	Flavor	X1	0,680	0,000	Valid
	Texture	X1	0,616	0,000	Valid
	Temperature	X1	0,601	0,000	Valid
Packaging Design (X2)	Safety	X2	0,814	0,000	Valid
	Economy	X2	0,511	0,000	Valid
	Communication	X2	0,717	0,000	Valid
	Aesthetics	X2	0,575	0,000	Valid
	Identity	X2	0,858	0,000	Valid
Purchase Interest (Y)	Transaction Interest	Y	0,654	0,000	Valid
	Reference Interest	Y	0,910	0,000	Valid
	Pre-Reference Interest	Y	0,838	0,000	Valid

Source: Processed Data (2026)

Based on the results of the validity test, all statement items in the variables Taste (X1), Packaging Design (X2), and Purchase Interest (Y) have a Sig. (2-tailed) value < 0.05 so that all statement items are declared valid and suitable for use as research instruments.

Reliability Test Results

Table 2

Results of Reliability Test of Product Quality Variables and Purchasing Decisions

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Provision	Information
Taste (X1)	0,752	> 0,50	Reliabel
Packaging Design (X2)	0,796		Reliabel
Purchase Interest (Y)	0,825		Reliabel

Source: Processed Data (2026)

The results of the reliability test show that the Taste variable (X1) has a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.752, the Packaging Design variable (X2) of 0.796, and the Purchase Intention variable (Y) of 0.825. All Cronbach's Alpha values are greater than 0.60 so that all research variables are declared reliable and suitable for use as research instruments.

Normality Test Results

Table 3

Kolmogorov-Smirnov Normality Test Results

		Standardized Residual
N		96
Normal Parameters[a,b]	Mean	.0000000
	Std. Deviation	74642171
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.175
	Positive	.117
	Negative	-.175
Test Statistic		.175
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.176[c]

a. Test distribution is Normal.

b. Calculated from data.

c. Lilliefors Significance Correction.

Source: Processed Data (2026)

Based on the results of the normality test using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov method, a significance value (sig) of 0.176 was obtained. Because this value is greater than the 0.05 significance level (0.176>0.05), it can be concluded that the data is normally distributed. Thus, the assumption of normality has been met and the data is suitable for analysis.

Multiple Regression Equation Results

Table 4

Multiple Regression Equation Test Results

Coefficients[a]						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	**Std. Error**	**Beta**		
1	(Constant)	1.608	0.762		2,564	,038
	Taste	,149	,062	,176	2.390	,019
	Packaging Design	.512	0.49	,764	10.374	,000

Source: Processed Data (2026)

The results of the simple regression analysis show the following regression equation:

$Y = 1.608 + 0{,}149X_1 + 0{,}512X_2$

The regression equation shows that the taste variable (X1) has a regression coefficient of 0.149, which means that every one-unit increase in the taste variable will increase purchasing interest by 0.149 units assuming other variables remain constant. In addition, the packaging design variable (X2) has a regression coefficient of 0.512, which means that every one-unit increase in the packaging design variable will increase purchasing interest by 0.512 units assuming other variables remain constant.

Results of the Determination Coefficient Test

Table 5

Results of the Determination Coefficient Test

Model Summary[b]				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Error of the Estimate
1	,914[a]	,835	,832	.754441

a. Predictors: (Constant), Taste, Packaging Design

b. Dependent Variable: Purchase Interest Source: Processed Data (2026)

The analysis results show that the coefficient of determination (R2) is 0.835. This means that 83.5% of the variation in the purchase intention variable can be explained by the taste and packaging design variables.

Hypothesis Testing Results

Tabel 6

Hypothesis Testing Results Coefficients[a]

Model		t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	-2.110	.038
	Taste	2.390	.019
	Packaging Design	10.374	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Purchase Interest

Based on the table above, the results of the t-test hypothesis testing show that the taste variable obtained a significance value (Sig.) of 0.019. This value is smaller than the set significance level of 0.05, so H0 is rejected and H1 is accepted. This indicates that taste has a significant effect on purchasing interest. In addition, the packaging design variable obtained a significance value (Sig.) of 0.000 which is also smaller than 0.05, so H0 is rejected and H2 is accepted. Thus, it can be concluded that packaging design has a significant effect on purchasing interest. Therefore, taste and packaging design partially have a significant effect on purchasing interest.

CONCLUSION

The results of the study indicate that taste and packaging design have a positive and significant effect on purchasing interest in sarsaparilla lemonade products among Generation Z, especially students at Almuslim University. Simultaneously, these two variables are able to explain the variation in purchasing interest by 83.5%, which indicates that product quality and packaging appearance are the main factors in attracting consumer interest. Partially, taste has a positive and significant effect on purchasing interest, which indicates that the better the consumer's perception of the appearance, aroma, taste, texture, and temperature of the product, the higher the consumer's tendency to make a purchase. In addition, packaging design also has a positive and significant effect and is the most dominant variable in influencing purchasing interest. These findings indicate that Generation Z consumers tend to be more interested in the visual appeal of the product before directly assessing the product's quality. Therefore, an attractive, communicative, and identity-based packaging design can create a positive impression and increase product competitiveness in the market.

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