# EXPLORING PACKAGING DESIGN FOR THE PROMOTION OF INDIGENOUS PRODUCTS

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ABSTRACT

Packaging design is the process of combining a form, structure, materials, colour, imagery, typography, and regulatory information with elements and principles of design to make a product attractive and desirable to the targeted consumers. The indigenous products are the naturally manufactured materials, food, drinks, and cereals from our environments. This study covers the rebranding of indigenous local products of Diet-Life Drink Company, which is highly marketed in an interior market area, in Enugu East LGA, due to its packaging inferiority. This aimed at creating an aesthetic packaging that reflects the delicious and unique taste of the local product, and producing a suitable design for the drink, with great emphasis on the attractiveness of a different packaged design to stimulate consumer's interest with easy comprehension of the contents' details in different dialect. This research work involved also, the branding of a unique promotional Chiller or Cooler Box, designed for Diet-Life Drink that would be good for point of sales. The Indigenous product can capture a potential targeted audience's attention so easily because of its exceptional packaging, taste and nutritional value, as was depicted on the designed information content. This indigenous product "Diet-Life Drink" was formerly known as Zobo Drink which contains Hibiscus flower leaves with a great sense of nutritional value. The choice of colour used is an interpretation of the naturalness and purity of the product, the Diet-Life Drink container is five (5) feet high and one point five (1.5) feet wide of a well-designed paper board carton with transparent nylon inside for easy viewing of the juicy content and to avoid leakage and rusting that can curse hazard to life. The Diet-Life Drink logo is a combination of the names used. The Brand name Diet-Life Drink was stylishly arranged and underlined with a stroke to depict the flow of the liquid, the drop illustrations depict the validity of the natural content of the drink. Finally, the paper encourages manufacturers to always ensure that the information used on their packaged design is not deceptive but well designed with clarity and truth of the product's quality information.

**Keywords:** Packaging design, Promotion, Consumer interest, Indigenous product.

# INTRODUCTION

## Background to the Study

In today's competitive environment, the role of packaging has consistently changed due to the increase in self-service and changes on consumer's interest. Several authors and experts have defined packaging in many ways, Kotler, (2012) asserts that "packaging is the process of conceptualizing, planning, and designing a packet or wrapper to contain, protect and merchandise a product". Packaging design can simply be defined as the process of creating everything on the outside of a product which a consumer would buy at a supermarket or through online. This might include the container, any graphic or text on the package, as well as all labels and interior packaging. Indigenous product can be generally defined as products that are locally produced and manufactured, naturally occurring, and abundant on any locality. David J. Schwartz also added that "Package is what contains, protects and identifies the basic products" Also Prof. William J. Stanton, inputs that "Packaging may be defined as all the activities involved in designing and producing the container or wrapper for a product".

In the global world where Nigeria plays a greater role, caution is always observed in consumables, especially drinks and food intake. This is most keen in advanced countries than in the less advanced, like Nigeria. In the former, the people are more aware, discernible, and educated than the ignorance and illiteracy in most of the less advanced countries. Due to this ignorance; added to the inflexible desire of some manufacturers (many non-descriptive) for extreme and criminal profit, sub-standard products packaged foods are produced, relying on the force of the selling concept to market these products to the unsuspecting consumers.

In modern time advertising, if the packaging design does not sell a product in the market, it is as good as worthless. For instance, when you walk into a bookstore, the packaging of a book can convincingly determine to a greater extent whether or not you would proceed to check on the content of that book. The beauty of clothes on a mannequin standing outside a boutique is what attracts people to see what is inside the boutique. The cloth sellers place it outside so that their potential customers can have an idea of what is inside the boutique. This is to deduce that the container of a product is just as important as its content. And these pops up the idea to explore packaging design as a means of promoting indigenous products like "zobo" container.

Packaging as Sales Kuvykaite (2009) asserts that packaging attracts consumer's attention to particular brand, enhances its image, and influences consumer's perceptions or desire about a product. Company's interest in the package as a total sales promotion is growing increasingly. The package becomes an ultimate selling proposition stimulating impulsive buying behavior, increasing market share, and reducing promotional costs. Packaging can be defined as the container which is necessary to convey a product to the ultimate consumer, as contrasted with packing such as in cartons and crates, which is required for bulk shipment.

Pilditch (2015), opines that "the brand imagery launched by the physical package is expressed in real terms that generate specific reactions by the consumers". Also, packaging is the art of enclosing or protecting products for distribution, storage, sale which is bought by the consumer. This is a function of the three Cs of design: "Configuration, Color, and Copy" also defined packaging as the silent salesman in the store and it was the only communication between a product and the final consumer at the point of sales, most consumers are moved by the products package, that is by the colors on the design used, barrier protection, the image used, information transmission-that is how to use the product and mostly containing the expiry date for the product.

Packaging is a critical strategic element for brand differentiation and identity, because this helps the producer to differentiate its product and identity from its competitors, thereby enhancing its promotional value.

Underwood, Klein and Burke (2001) found that designing packages with product images gains attention from brands, especially brands that are less familiar and that provide experiential benefits. That packaging really affects the buying behavior of some individuals looking at the young people, also packaging provides the manufacturer with the final opportunity to persuade prospective buyers prior to brand selection because shoppers are exposed to packages just as they are in other forms of promotion. Consumers can easily overcome the challenge of visually assessing volumes contained within a variety of shapes because most product labels provide the information via their packaging Ampuero and Vila (2006).

Packaging Design and Consumer Purchasing Decision

The purchase decision is a series of choices or judgment that were made by a consumer prior to making a purchase that begins once the consumer has established a willingness to buy. The consumer must then decide while making the purchase, what brand, model, or size to purchase, when to make the purchase, how much to spend, and what method of payment will be used, but this decision can only be influenced by the product package design, how unique is the product from other brands, thus packaging design affects consumer purchasing decision.

According to Rundh (2005), package attracts consumers' attention to a particular brand, enhances its image, and influences consumers' perceptions about the products, thus packaging a certain product based on your consumer needs, the producer can use labeling or image description to arouse the interest of the consumer to purchase that particular product, when the consumer is

moved by the image or label used in packaging the product he or she desires or makes a purchase for that product that is needed.

A lot of firms in the industry have embarked on one strategy or the other in order to gain more market share for their products. In an attempt to get more customers to patronize their products, companies have engaged in different innovations so as to make their products compete with those of competitors, the packaging form is one way to gain consumer notice Berkowtiz (1987). Organizations now engage in good packaging and if the information supply of the label does not agree with the knowledge and expectations of the consumer, it may serve as a disincentive for the product purchase.

In an article on Suniel Global (2020), it explained packaging as the activity of designing and producing the container or wrapper for the product. It is an important and effective sales tool to encourage consumers to buy such products. It is a powerful medium for sales promotion. It must perform all the base functions, ease of handling and storage, convenience in usage etc., and should not be deceptive and convey any deceptive message. It is the best method of advertising that attracts consumers to buy the products.

Stanton (2018) defined "Packaging as the general group of activities in product planning which helps in value designing and producing the container or wrapper for a product". Pride and Farrell concluded that Packaging involves the development of a container and a graphic design for a product. In this study, the researcher enhanced the quality of the indigenous product like "Life & Diet Drink" by producing a well-designed hexagonal container with inclusion of transparent material for easy access to the content, and with some of the content description depicted in three different ethnics' dialects. This is used to boost the consumer's acceptability; given it an edge over

other products' packaging design strategies in advertising Nwachukwu (2004) observed that advertising is an indispensable marketing tool. When brand competition is high, advertising is used to carve a niche for the product and possibly win the contest. In Nigeria today, brands competition has given rise to increased demand for brand awareness, desire and purchase. If advertising must accomplish these marketing objectives, it must be able to speak to the majority of the target market in a language, which they can understand and relate with. The cultural content, that the product and advertisement portray, must be conveyed in a vehicle authoritative and credible enough to the target audience. The language of the advertisement must also be accessible to the various groups to which the message is targeted. Only indigenous languages can meet this requirement. Local languages are definitive, credible, time-honored, non-alienating, perfectly assimilated, readily available, and useable by a vast majority of the local populace.

The Nigerian business community can gain huge marketing points by tapping into the potential of this great natural communication endowment. This may be the magic wand for a huge advertising breakthrough for the Nigerian business community in this millennium. As the content of this drink is an original product of a natural flower known as Hibiscus flower, also known as "Zobo Leaves", which is mixed with another nutritive ingredient to give it a juicy wine, mostly preferred to other foreign drinks. Packaging is a big component of a brand's marketing strategy and communicates the brand's message and values. Marketing information can be designed into visual elements that are used on the package to communicate a message that speaks to consumers' emotions. 'Color' is the visual element the professionals use to catch the attention of consumers and most effectively influence their emotions. Designers and marketers can together achieve successful packaging as the designer combines design elements that tell the brand's story and the marketer knows how the package sells and maximizes profit. Roper and Parker, (2010) reported that Packaging is a very

important element of the marketing mix. The pristine packaging color-coded and designed by professionals to be the silent salesman of the brand undoubtedly has considerable impact on the purchase decision."

Diana (2012) asserts that during a short two-decade period (1879-1903) processes for making food packages paperboard cartons, tinplate cans, and glass bottles – were mechanized by American inventor/entrepreneurs Robert Gair, Edwin Norton, and Michael Owens, respectively. Findings reveal that Packaging in the Industrial Revolution played a key role in the development of modern marketing whereby mass-produced cartons, cans, and bottles collectively became building blocks for mass markets. At the initial stage of the supermarket in 1920, annual sales of packaged breakfast cereal, crackers, biscuits, canned fruits and vegetables, preserves, soft drinks, and other prepared foods had appreciated by 60-fold over 1880 levels, 80 percent of which occurred after 1910. Packaging companies of Gair, Norton, and Owens capitalized on new methods of production and business integration (and collusion) to profit from the trend and enabled emerging national brands like Nabisco, Campbell's Soup, and Coca-Cola to successfully lead a revolution in mass marketing.

It is against this background that this study seeks to explore packaging design as a means of promoting Indigenous products in order to enhance products patronage and acceptance by their final consumers.

**Statement of the Problem**

Packaged indigenous products have over the years been in existence in so many ways based on different development stages, some are in glass bottles, waterproofs, tinplate, metal cans, and wooden barrels. Twede (2005) states that by 1870s, food sold in glass bottles, paper board cartons,

and metal cans was still relatively rare in the USA, most food are still distributed in wooden barrels. Packaged foods were becoming more common in Europe where paper, glass, and tinplate technologies had been developed largely by British and French Engineers, starting from the 1600s. The early use of Cartons, bottles, and cans was costly, scarce, and manually produced due to unavailability. Often times, leakages and rusting occur and there is need for a better means, to reduce the high risk of human health hazard by the poisonous toxins caused by those packaging. So many consumers see Nigerian-made and packaged products as fake, adulterated, substandard, and inferior, which affects their perception and acceptance of the product.

Most of the Indigenous products have been variously described by Nigerian consumers and the general public in different dialects and terms as follows; “Awala awa”, “Oluwale”, “Aba made”, “Igbo made”, “Awaa”, among others. All of these refer to the fake or inferiority nature of the packaged design and the promotion strategies used. This can be a result of poor placement or lack of aesthetic value and clarity of content information or the packaging design strategies as applied on the container, which can be affected by the language barrier, whereby the ethnic dialects are usually being avoided on our packaged products due to inferiority complex, thereby placing much value in the use of English language as the only means of communication rather than their “easy to understand” indigenous ethnic dialects. To curb these menaces, the study embarked on rebranding an Indigenous product like “Zobo” to a more modernized and acceptable brand that proffers a unique name like “Diet Life Drink”, with the inclusion of the three different ethnic dialects in Nigeria, and ensuring that the content is nutritiously enriched in quality to enhances its value and acceptability, making it easier for more consumers from different locality to ensure greater patronage.

It is observed that most indigenous manufacturers do not adhere to quality control measures and more often than not, unqualified and non-professional personnel are engaged by mushroom and non-descriptive drink companies. Oftentimes, their promotional claims are deceptive, misleading, and equally puffery, which reinforces the negative attitude of most consumers towards Indigenous Nigerian packaged food products. With all these problems arising in recent times, the need for firms in Nigeria's packaged food industry to readdress and for the government to act fully through its regulatory agencies cannot be over-emphasized. If adhered to, these will in no small measure alleviate or obliterate these problems in the long-run.

**Methodology**

The design of the study was to study practice designed visuals for the "Diet Life Drink" product adopted stages of design starting from thumbnail sketch to computer finishing. Computer applications like CorelDraw x8, and Adobe Photoshop Cs5 were used in the designing process, the display was created in visual concept design and it was constructed in several stages with the inclusion of different ethnic dialects on the content details. The container was well constructed with a bio-plastic material and covered with vinyl printed design for proper sealing of the object and for the purpose of aesthetic, so that the consumers interest will be arouse and well-motivated to patronize the indigenous product.

**Design Processes**

1. Thumbnails sketching
2. Computer Applications like CorelDraw x8
3. Adobe Photoshop Cs5

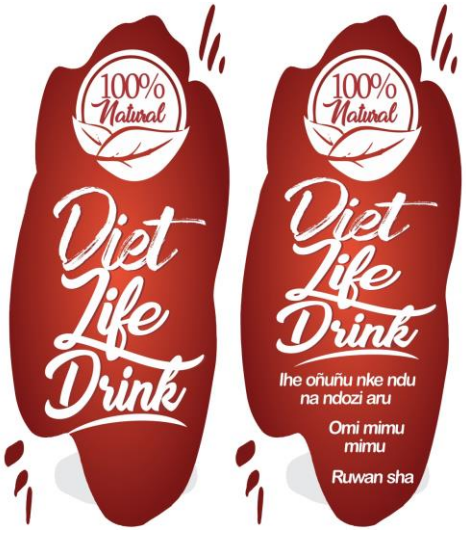
4. Visual Conceptual Design




**Complete Package Design of the Project Object (Ready for printing with Vynl material)**




Miniature of the Project Object




**The Project Object Logo**





Project Object at final construction stage

The Use of the three ethnic dialects on the project container including English
Diet life drink
Best before
Date of production
Store away from direct sunlight
Diet life drink is a pure and natural drink
Prepare from natural leaves and flowers
It's processed in a hygienic environment for good health
Nutritiously enriched

**Yoruba**

Omi mimu mimu
Dara fun akoko kan
Ọjọ ti iṣelọpọ
Tọju kuro lati oorun taara
Ohun mimu igbesi aye ijẹẹ jẹ mimu ti o mọ ti o jẹ deede
Mura lati awọn ewe ati ododo
O ti n ṣiṣẹ ninu agbegbe ti mọtoto fun tito nkan lẹsẹsẹ rọrun
ọlọrọ aladun

**Hausa**

Ruwan sha Abincin mechau
Mafi kyau kafin
Ranar samarwa
Adana nesa da hasken rana kai tsaye

Abincin rayuwa mai tsabta abin sha ne na zahiri
Shirya daga ganye na fure da furanni
Ana sarrafa shi cikin yanayi mai tsabta don narkewa mai sauƙi
Abinci mai gina jiki ya wadatar

**Igbo**

Ihe onunu nke ndu n'edozi aru
O ka nma tupu
Ubọchị nmepụta ya
Chekwaa ya na anyanwụ
Ihe onunu nke ndu di ocha, di ka Chi ye si kee ya
Jikere site na akwukwo ahihia na ifuru
Emere ya n' ogige di ocha ka onwere kwe iba n' aru nke oma
Ihe n'edozi aru bara uba

## Summary of Findings

Packaging is a big component in a product's promotion strategy and to communicate the product's message and values. The information can be designed into visual elements that are used on the package to communicate a message that speaks to consumers' emotions. It was observed that 'color' is the visual element that the professionals use to catch the attention of consumers and most effectively influence their emotions. The inclusion of the three ethnic's dialect helps to make the content message easy to grab and the transparent nylon gives a quick glance of the content before purchase and can also aids in acceptability of the content. Designers and marketers can together achieve successful packaging as the designer combines design elements that tell the product's story and the marketer knows how the package sells and maximizes profit.

It is necessary to note that many formats, layout designs, techniques and media has been used during the research, however, the research study is functional and it serves more useful utilitarian purposes like chilling drinks and promoting strategy using point of sales promotional strategies.

## Conclusion

It was established that product attractiveness has significant effects on consumer perception interest of indigenous product. It was also discovered that product rebranding has significant effects on consumer evaluation of the product. It was ascertained that labeling has significant effects on consumer awareness of the product.

The study explores packaging design as a means of promoting indigenous products in Enugu Environs. Responses from the targeted audience in some selected retail outlets at Abakpa Nike, Enugu East, in Enugu environs were gathered.

It was discovered that apart from the quality content of our indigenous packaged food products, consumers viewed other aspects of the products such as the aesthetic function of the design, as inferior and the sales promotions and advertisements as deceptive, misleading, and mostly falsely exaggerated.

Advertising is big business. Efforts at realizing its full potential in Nigeria should consider the impact of language use to its effectiveness. To this end, Linguistics and Nigerian Languages departments of our schools should consider including ethnics dialect as an integral part of their curriculum. This would help develop the potentials of Nigerian dialects as instruments of information dissemination. 'Color' is the visual element the professionals use to catch the attention of consumers and most effectively influence their emotions.

Designers and marketers can together achieve successful packaging as the designer combines design elements to tell the brand's story and the marketer knows how the package sells and maximizes profit at ease. Language policies should be integrated with communication policies if Nigerian languages are to develop. Native speakers of Nigerian dialects should be encouraged to study and develop their dialects. This would enhance their usefulness as vehicles of information

dissemination. The Nigerian government should make funds available to language scholars to pursue research into the standardization of Nigerian languages for scientific and technological use. This would make them less cumbersome as languages of scientific and technological use.

Finally, it was observed that product branding has significant effects on consumer evaluation of the product.

**Recommendations**

Based on these facts, the researcher made proper recommendations:

1. Manufacturers should concentrate more efforts on making their packaging design very attractive in order to arouse the interest of their customers.

2. Manufacturers should ensure high product distinction between their products and those of competitors' products so as to enhance consumer rating or evaluation of our indigenous product to the foreign product.

3. Manufacturers should pay attention to the information inscribed. The information given on the label and its value have to be highlighted while promoting the product in the market and must also be more technically useful.

4. It is recommended that the organization should not relent in rebranding its packaging design as it has been found to be very useful in attracting customers for purchase trials.

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