BACHELOR THESIS

Never Seen, Never Heard, Never Sold

A Study on the Influence of Product Packaging on Brand Image and Purchase

Decision

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Acknowledgement

This thesis is the last theoretical part before completing our studies towards a European Double Degree in International Management at both Augsburg University of Applied Sciences, Germany and Luleå University of Technology, Sweden. We conducted this study in Sweden during the spring term 2014. This study gave us deeper insight into the area of product packaging as well as branding. While this experience has been challenging, we have not only learned a lot about the topic but also about ourselves.

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Thi Truc My Nguyen & Sara Kök

Abstract

Never seen, never heard, never sold. In today's marketplace consumers are confronted with an overwhelmingly wide choice of products. What encourages a consumer to choose Den Gamle Fabrik's orange marmalade over Bob's Squeezy orange marmalade, or Schwarzkopf Gliss' hair repair shampoo over that of Dove? Brands need to find a way to break through the visual clutter of a retail store shelf in order to persuade consumers to reach for their product. Product packaging has been long recognized as an important marketing communication tool. This study examines the influence of product packaging on brand image as well as purchase decision.

In order to gain a deeper understanding of the role of product packaging in the brand communication and purchase decision process, a qualitative research was pursued. A multiple cases study with two focus groups was conducted and evidence gathered to explore the topic. Our findings suggest that packaging plays a major role in attracting and communicating to the consumers at the point of purchase. Color and shape are the two packaging elements that have been found to be highly noticeable and crucial in delivering brand meaning to the consumers. The findings further suggest that product packaging may also influence consumers' perception of the brand as it continues to communicate to the consumers in their homes. However, further research is needed in order to examine this phenomenon.

Keywords: Product Packaging, Brand Image, Purchase Decision, Communication, Symbolism, Brand Meaning, Marketing.

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1 Introduction

This first chapter will provide the background information regarding the relevant areas of this thesis. Thereafter the problems concerning the impact of product packaging on consumer response to a brand will be discussed. Furthermore this chapter presents the purpose and the research questions guiding this thesis and provides its outline.

1.1 Background

"The role of packaging is changing from that of 'protector' to 'information provider' and 'persuader'." (Agariya, Johari, Sharma, Chandraul & Singh, 2012, p. 2)

Originally, product packaging served as protection of products during the distribution process. It is defined as "the wrapping material around a consumer item that serves to contain, identify, describe, protect, display, promote, and otherwise make the product marketable and keep it clean" (ibid, p. 1). Nowadays, product packaging fulfils three functions - the logistic function, the commercial function and the environmental function. The logistic function of packaging is concerned with its physical requirements to not only protect the product but also to facilitate its distribution from producer to end consumer. The increasing awareness of environmental issues nowadays also requires packaging to fulfil an environmental function, i.e. the reutilization, recycling, selection of packaging materials etc. should be taken into consideration. This could represent an interesting area of research. However, the commercial function of product packaging is still the most important one. (Rundh, 2013)

In its commercial function, product packaging is used as a communication tool. As part of an integrated marketing strategy, "well-designed packages can build brand and drive sales, and obviously become an important element for building customer value and competitive advantage" (ibid, p. 1552). More specifically, product packaging can function as a silent sales representative and a brand builder. Therefore it potentially influences the purchase-decision process. (Rundh, 2013) As a point-of-purchase communication vehicle, the aim of product packaging is to attract the buyer, to communicate a message to the buyer, to create desire for the product and to sell the product (Griffin & Sacharow & Brody, 1985 cited in Agariya et al., 2012). Moreover, product packaging is also to create consumer confidence and provide a positive overall impression (Rettie & Brewer, 2000). It can be seen as a variable that influences product evaluation (Banks, 1950; Brown, 1958; McDaniel & Baker, 1977; Miaoulis & d'Amato, 1978 cited in Underwood et al., 2001).

More recently, researchers also emphasize the importance of product packaging to not only attract attention at the point of purchase during the selection process (first moment of

truth) but also to facilitate the use, handling and actual consumption of the product after the purchase has been made, i.e. at the second moment of truth (Metcalf, Hess, Danes & Singh, 2012). At the first moment of truth, visibility plays a crucial role. Increased shelf visibility has been found to be the strongest single driver of sales increases. (Young, 2010) Firstly, the visibility of product packages is important because two-thirds of purchasing decisions are said to take place in a 'default' mode, i.e. consumers already know which brand they want to purchase and therefore give little consideration to other brands. A visible and recognizable package helps consumers to find the product and therefore may prevent them from considering other brands. (Agariya et al., 2012) Secondly, consumers who choose their purchases out of habit or who have low levels of involvement with the decision process, tend to ignore most of the marketing stimuli at the point of purchase. Hence the ability of product packaging to attract consumers' attention is important. (Underwood, Klein & Burke, 2001) Thirdly, product packaging that causes consumers to engage with the brand or take a second look, is said to more likely motivate them to purchase. In this case, product packaging elements should create a contrast between the brand and its competitors. Color blocking, unique shapes or structures and a strong brand identity could help to create the contrast needed to increase a package's visibility. (Young, 2010)

At the second moment of truth, product packaging continues to communicate to consumers since it becomes part of their lives (Underwood, 2003). Product packaging that provides convenience and ease of use can lead to an enhanced user experience, increase customer satisfaction and result in stronger brand preference and loyalty. (Metcalf et al., 2012; Young, 2008). In general, it can be said that a consumer's interaction with the product also influences his perception of the brand, i.e. brand image (Underwood, 2003).

In summary, product packaging influences purchase decision as well as brand image. The major role of product packaging as a brand communication vehicle is to attract and persuade the consumers at the point of purchase as well as to continually communicate to the consumers in their homes. (Underwood, 2003; Young, 2010; Agariya et al., 2012).

1.2 Problem Discussion

As described in the background, product packaging can be used as a tool to communicate messages about product attributes to consumers. However, there are problems that can be linked to product packaging. Even if a company does not "explicitly recognize the marketing aspects of packaging" (Silayoi & Speece, 2007, p. 1498), packaging cannot escape performing the commercial function since it is a product attribute that is perceived

by consumers. That means there is a possibility that product packaging communicates negatively. Contrary, a well designed package with consideration to its commercial function will attract attention and communicate positively to consumers. (Silayoi & Speece, 2007)

Nowadays, retail stores do not only carry a wide variety of products but also a wide range of brands offering the same or similar products. Consumers are confronted with an overwhelmingly wide choice of products. What encourages a consumer to choose Den Gamle Fabrik's orange marmalade over Bob's Squeezy orange marmalade, or Schwarzkopf Gliss' hair repair shampoo over that of Dove? Generally, price, quality, and durability are a few of the traditional values that consumers look for in the products they buy. Nevertheless, consumers are aware that they are influenced by other factors such as package color, commercials and magazine advertisements for example. (Levy, 1959)

According to Levy (1959), "people buy things not only for what they do, but also for what they mean" (p. 118). Often the attitudes, ideas and feelings that consumers have about brands are crucial to them in choosing and sticking to the brands that seem most appropriate (Gardner & Levy, 1955). According to Gardner & Levy (1955), the conception of a brand consists of subtle variations in feelings about them, not necessarily in the quality of the product. The image of a product associated with a brand "may be clear-cut or relatively vague" (ibid, p. 35), "varied or simple" (ibid) or "intense or innocuous" (ibid). Moreover, how people perceive a brand may be different from how people who have experienced the product perceive the brand. Nevertheless, people's perceptions of the brand all contribute to them deciding whether or not the brand fits to them. (Gardner & Levy, 1955)

"A big problem in this area, then, is what kind of symbol a given brand is to consumers" (Gardner & Levy, 1955, p. 35). Even though companies often use symbolic messages to communicate a certain brand identity, consumers may have additional or even conflicting associations with these symbols since the symbolic meaning that is given to certain goods is affected by trends and society. Poorly chosen symbols can therefore create an unintended brand image in the minds of consumers. (Levy, 1959) "Through product design, pricing, promotion, and distribution the firm must communicate to the market the desired clues for consumer interpretation and, therefore, develop the desired symbolic meaning for the brand" (Grubb & Grathwohl, 1967, p. 26). For the scope of this thesis, this means that packaging as part of product design is critical in the communication and creation of a brand image in the minds of consumers.

Another problem that companies face is the increasing competition and similar prices and quality for similar products in today's marketplace. Recently, marketers have recognized the power of packaging to impact sales (Young, 2010). As consumers who choose their products out of habit tend to ignore most of the marketing stimuli at the point of purchase, the role of product packaging has become increasingly important (Underwood et al., 2001). Therefore it is crucial for brands to find a way to "break through the visual clutter" (Agariya et al., 2012, p. 2) of a retail store shelf and to persuade consumers to purchase their products. Young (2010) has found that "increases in shelf visibility were the single strongest driver of sales increases" (p. 46), in other words "unseen is unsold" (ibid). However, in an attempt to change the appearance of their brands to drive sales, more companies have been found to fail than to succeed (Young, 2010). In a study by Young (2010), only 10% of new package designs led to significant sales increases, whereas 20% even led to sales inclines. According to him (2010), "it is far easier to damage a brand than to grow it via packaging" (p 44).

Given the commercial function of packaging to attract, to persuade consumers, to communicate symbolic meanings, and to convey a brand image, it is necessary to fully understand how product packaging can influence brand image as well as consumers' purchase decision. This is especially important since, as mentioned before, changes in product packaging are likely to backfire, leading to decreases in sales and the creation of an unintended brand image in the mind of consumers. (Underwood, 2003; Young, 2010; Agariya et al., 2012)

1.3 Purpose

The purpose of this research is to gain a deeper understanding of the influence of product packaging on brand image as well as consumers' purchase decision. In order to examine the influence of product packaging on brand image as well as on purchase decision, the following research questions were posed:

Research Question 1: How does product packaging influence brand image?

Research Question 2: How does product packaging influence purchase decision?

1.4 Outline of the Thesis
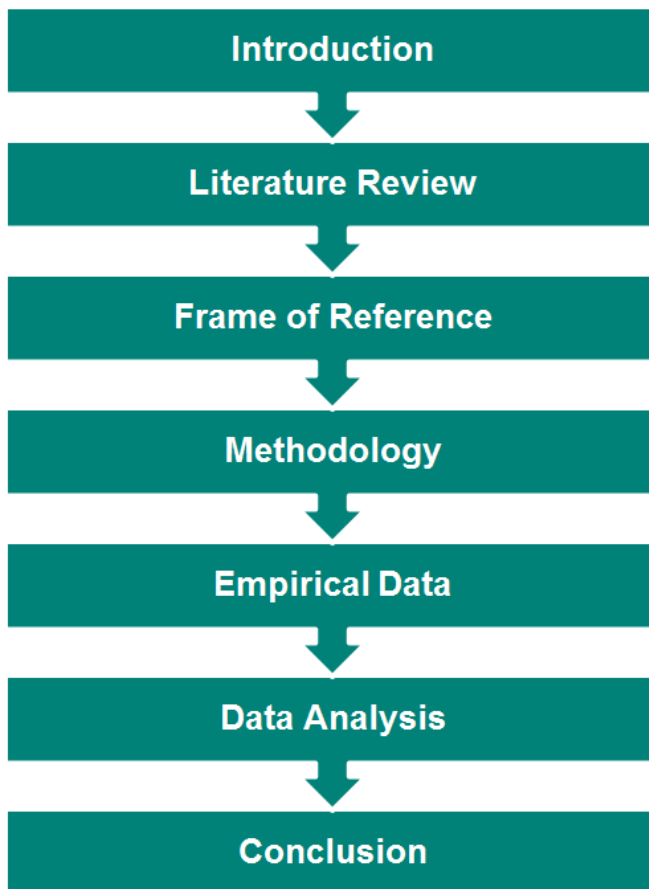
Figure 1: Outline of the Thesis

As illustrated in Figure 1, *Chapter One* is the introduction to the thesis and provides relevant background information followed by a problem discussion which leads to the purpose and the research questions guiding this study. *Chapter Two*, the literature review, presents previous literature and theories related to the area of product packaging and brand. *Chapter Three*, the frame of reference, includes the relevant theories and models connected to the specific research questions of this thesis. This chapter will be used as a basis for the data collection. *Chapter Four* provides the methodology for the data collection and analysis. The empirical data will then be presented in *Chapter Five* and analyzed in *Chapter Six*. The thesis will end with *Chapter Seven* which consists of the answers to the research questions, a final conclusion as well as theoretical and managerial implications, implications for future research, and the limitations of the study.

2 Literature Review

This chapter presents the studies related to the topics brought up in Research Question 1 and Research Question 2. It consists of three sections. The first section provides definitions and concepts related to packaging, brand as well as purchase intention and decision. In the second section, theories relevant for answering the research questions and upon which the research models are based, will be reviewed. The third section gives an overview over the different models that could help answer the research questions.

2.1 Areas of Interest

This part of the literature review provides the different definitions and concepts regarding product packaging, brand, and purchase intention and decision in order to provide a clear understanding of the terms used in this research.

2.1.1 Product Packaging and Elements of Product Packaging

Packaging can be defined as "the container for a product - encompassing the physical appearance of the container and including the design, color, shape, labelling and materials used" (Agariya et al., 2012, p.1). It is used to identify, describe, protect, display as well as to promote the product and to make it readily marketable, storable as well as to protect it against damage (Agariya et al., 2012). The packaging process consists of "all the activities that different actors perform to add value in a supply chain from the design of a package, to its re-cycling by the end consumer" (Rundh, 2013, p. 1550).

According to Evans & Berman (1992 cited in Ampuero & Vila, 2006) packaging is considered to be part of the product whereas Olson & Jacoby (1972 cited in Ampuero & Vila, 2006) regard packaging as merely related to the product yet not as part of the product itself. Zeithaml (1988 cited in Ampuero & Vila, 2006) however supports both the view of Evans & Berman (1992) and Olson & Jacoby (1972). She argues that packaging can be either an intrinsic (e.g. non-drip top) or an extrinsic (e.g. information on the label) attribute of a product, i.e. packaging can be part of the product or only be related to it. Contrary, Keller (1993) claims that packaging is neither related to the product nor part of it. Packaging is considered to be a non-product-related attribute and alongside the name, the slogans, the logo or graphic symbol, and the personality, an element of the brand (ibid). However, Underwood (2003) argues that this view is short-sided. Classifying packaging as a non-product-related attribute would imply that packaging merely carries a symbolic meaning since Keller (1993) states that symbolic benefits usually derive from non-product-related attributes whereas functional and experiential product benefits derive

from product-related attributes. Yet Underwood (2003) claims that the functional and experiential benefits are as equally important as the symbolic meaning of packaging. They are said to be "critical to the total product offering" (ibid, p. 64), particularly for low involvement consumer nondurables. For the scope of this research, packaging is therefore considered to be a product-related attribute including both functional and experiential as well as its symbolic benefits.

Elements of Product Packaging

According to Ampuero & Vila (2006) product packaging influences consumers' perceptions of and their responses to a product. The appropriate combination of the elements of product packaging is needed "in order for the desired effect to be achieved" (ibid, p. 112). Vila & Ampuero (2006), similarly to Underwood (2003), distinguish between graphic and structural elements of product packaging. Graphic elements include color, typography, shapes used as well as images. Form, size of the containers, and materials are considered as structural elements of packaging. (ibid) In contrast to this distinction, Rettie & Brewer (2000 cited in Agariya et al., 2012) separate non-verbal and verbal elements of product packaging. Non-verbal elements contain both the visual as well as structural elements, as classified by Vila & Ampuero (2006) and Underwood (2003), including for example color, graphics, materials, form, and size. Verbal elements relate to elements that provide direct information to the consumer, for example product name, brand, producer, country and instruction of usage (Rettie & Brewer, 2000 cited in Agariya et al., 2012). Likewise, Agariya et al. (2012) distinguish between visual (graphic, color, size, form, material) and verbal elements (product information, producer, country-of-origin, brand). Another classification is made by Silayoi & Speece (2004), who divide the elements of packaging into visual and informational elements (information provided and technology).

Table 1 below provides a summary of the elements of product packaging and the corresponding researchers.

Table 1: Elements of Product Packaging

Elements of Product Packaging	
Visual/Non-verbal	
Color	Vila & Ampuero (2006); Underwood (2003); Rettie & Brewer (2000); Agariya et al. (2012); Silayoi & Speece (2004)
Graphic	Rettie & Brewer (2000); Agariya et al. (2012); Silayoi & Speece (2004)
Size	Vila & Ampuero (2006); Underwood (2003); Rettie & Brewer (2000); Agariya et al. (2012); Silayoi & Speece (2004)
Form/Shape	Vila & Ampuero (2006); Underwood (2003); Rettie & Brewer (2000); Agariya et al. (2012); Silayoi & Speece (2004)
Material	Rettie & Brewer (2000); Agariya et al. (2012); Vila & Ampuero (2006); Underwood (2003)
Images	Vila & Ampuero (2006); Underwood (2003)
Typography	Vila & Ampuero (2006); Underwood (2003)
Shapes used	Vila & Ampuero (2006); Underwood (2003)
Verbal/Informational	
Product Name	Rettie & Brewer (2000)
Product Information	Agariya et al. (2012); Silayoi & Speece (2004)
Brand	Rettie & Brewer (2000); Agariya et al. (2012)
Producer	Rettie & Brewer (2000); Agariya et al. (2012)
Country-of-origin	Rettie & Brewer (2000); Agariya et al. (2012)
Instruction of Usage	Rettie & Brewer (2000)
Technology	Silayoi & Speece (2004)

Source: See in the Table

The different researchers in Table 1 include different elements of packaging in their studies. According to Grossman & Wisenblit (1999 cited in Silayoi & Speece, 2007) visual elements such as color and graphics are crucial in consumers' choice of low involvement products. These usually include food and other fast-moving consumer goods (Grossman

& Wisenblit, 1999 cited in Agariya et al., 2012). Conversely, for purchase decisions where an evaluation of product attributes is important, i.e. high involvement products, the visual elements of product packaging are less influencing. Another influencing factor is time pressure. According to Silayoi & Speece (2007) and Stravinskienė, Rūtelionė & Butkevičienė (2008, cited in Agariya et al., 2012) the impact of visual elements is stronger when consumers are under time pressure. Contrary, verbal elements are said to be more influential when consumers are not under time pressure when selecting a product at the point of sale. (Silayoi & Speece, 2007; Agariya et al., 2012)

Visual/Non-verbal Elements

"For consumers, the package is the product, particularly for low involvement products where initial impressions formed during initial contact can have lasting impact" (Silayoi & Speece, 2007, p. 1498). Therefore product packaging must have enough shelf impact to stand out in a crowd of competing products (Silayoi & Speece, 2007). "The package must draw attention to itself" (Agariya et al., 2012, p. 3). A study by Young (2010) confirmed that increased shelf visibility could lead to increased sales. His study also found that a consumer's reexamination of a brand is an even stronger indicator for purchasing. Reexamination or taking a second look at the brand implies that consumers are "reconsidering a brand and bringing it into their consideration set" (Young, 2010, p. 46). If product packaging is to create shelf visibility and to motivate reconsideration, it has to create a contrast to competitors (Young, 2010.) Moreover, the visual elements can also be a tool of indirect communication that conveys intrinsic attributes of the product, for example elegance, femininity and value (Agariya et al., 2012).

Silayoi & Speece (2007) regard *colors and graphics* as two of the most important elements of low involvement product packaging since these two elements are "highly noticeable" (p. 1498). According to Hine (1995 cited in Underwood, 2003) individuals experience colors on a physiological, cultural and associational level. Physiological responses to colors are universal and involuntary whereas cultural associations vary across cultures (Underwood, 2003). Associational responses to color are a result of marketing efforts over time through which consumers learn color associations that lead them to expect or prefer specific colors for particular product categories (Underwood, 2003; Grossman & Wisenblit, 1999 cited in Silayoi & Speece, 2007).

Graphics includes image layout, color combinations, typography, shapes used, logos and product photography (Silayoi & Speece, 2007; Underwood et al., 2001; Underwood, 2003). Graphics are regarded as important since they help to create an overall image on the package (Silayoi & Speece, 2007). Underwood & Klein (2002) studied the effects of

product pictures on consumers' beliefs about the brand and their evaluations of the brand and package. Product pictures can be used to communicate brand information and change consumers' beliefs about a brand. Consumers who mostly base their decisions upon these brand beliefs were found to have a better evaluation of the brand and the package when it included product pictures. (ibid) Rettie & Brewer (2000) emphasize the importance of placement of graphic elements. According to them, consumers tend to better remember verbal information when they are placed on the left hand side whereas visual elements are better positioned on the right hand side (ibid).

Other visual elements include *size, shape/form and materials* **used**. These elements are also said to "reflect a great deal about the nature and personality of a product" (Young, 1996, cited in Underwood, 2003, p. 66). To consumers size can be an indicator of the volume. Different packaging sizes can appeal to the needs of different consumers. (Silayoi & Speece, 2007) According to Young (2004), shape can convey underlying values such as heritage, taste and quality for example. Studies also found that changes in packaging shape even had stronger positive impact on shelf visibility than changes in graphic design (ibid). Furthermore, product packaging is a critical element for the creation of imagery and identity of a brand (Lindsay, 1997 cited in Underwood, 2003). "The shape of package can become an innovative marketing tool creating an iconic brand image" (Agariya et al., 2012, p. 12).

Verbal/Informational Elements

Verbal/informational elements of product packaging are a tool of direct communication to describe the product and its benefits. Included are the product name, product information, brand name, producer, country-of-origin, instruction of usage as well as technology as can be seen in Table 1. Product information includes for example the content of the product, instructions on use as well as information which is required by law. This information is placed on the label or the immediate package of the product. (Agariya et al., 2012) "Packaging technology conveys information which is often linked to the consumer's lifestyle" (Silayoi & Speece, 2007, p. 1500) since developments in packaging technology come "directly from current trends of products and consumer behaviors" (ibid). New technologies are often developed to provide for example convenience, ease of dispensing the product or freshness and longer shelf life. These benefits need to be "presented visually as one of the communication elements" (ibid). (Silayoi & Speece, 2007)

2.1.2 Brand Definitions, Branding and Brand Image

There is a wide variety of brand definitions to be found in literature. The American Marketing Association defines a brand as "a name, term, design, symbol or any other

feature that identifies one seller's good or services as distinct from those of other sellers". According to Knox (2000 cited in Knox & Bickerton, 2003) a brand is "a product or service, which a customer perceives to have distinctive benefits beyond price and functional performance" (p. 999). Kapferer (1992 cited in De Chernatony & Dall'Olmo Riley, 1998) however argues that "a brand is not a product. It is the product's essence, its meaning, and its direction, and it defines its identity in time and space" (p. 420). He criticizes the fact that "too often brands are examined through their component parts: the brand name, its logo, design, or packaging, advertising or sponsorship, or image or name recognition, or very recently, in terms of financial brand valuation" (Kapferer, 1992 cited in De Chernatony & Dall'Olmo Riley, 1998, p. 420). Gardner & Levy (1955) state that "a brand name is more than the label employed to differentiate among the manufacturers of a product" (p. 35). "It is a complex symbol that represents a variety of ideas and attributes" (Gardner & Levy, 1955, p. 35). Its meaning is derived from the "body of associations [or public image] it has built up and acquired as a public object over a period of time" (Gardner & Levy, 1955, p. 35). Similarly to Kapferer, Gardner & Levy (1955) consider a brand to have a "character or personality that may be more important for the over-all status (and sales) of the brand than many technical facts about the product" (p. 35).

Table 2 below provides a summary of the previously mentioned brand definitions.

Table 2: Brand Definitions

Source	Brand Definition
American Marketing Association	"A name, term, design, symbol or any other feature that identifies one seller's good or services as distinct from those of other sellers."
Knox (2000 cited in Knox & Bickerton, 2003)	"A product or service, which a customer perceives to have distinctive benefits beyond price and functional performance."
Kapferer (1992)	"A brand is not a product. It is the product's essence, its meaning, and its direction, and it defines its identity in time and space… Too often brands are examined through their component parts: the brand name, its logo, design, or packaging, advertising or sponsorship, or image or name recognition, or very recently, in terms of financial brand valuation"
Gardner & Levy (1955)	"A brand name is more than the label employed to differentiate among the manufacturers of a product. It is a complex symbol that represents a variety of ideas and attributes. It tells the consumers many things, not only by the way it sounds (and its literal meaning if it has one) but, more important, via the body of associations it has built up and acquired as a public object over a period of time."

Source: See in the Table

As can be seen in Table 2 brands are often defined through their brand component parts such as the name or logo (American Marketing Association; Kapferer, 1992 cited in De Chernatony & Dall'Olmo Riley, 1998). However, Knox (2000), Kapferer (1992) and Gardner & Levy (1955) recognize the importance of defining a brand beyond its tangible components. A brand also represents an overall personality, ideas and attributes (Knox, 2000; Kapferer, 1992; Gardner & Levy, 1955). This extension of the brand definition is essential since the theories used to explain why consumers choose one brand over another are built upon this notion.

Branding and Brand Image

According to Kavaratzis & Ashworth (2005) branding is a mode of communication. It incorporates three elements of the concept of a brand - brand identity, brand positioning and brand image (Kavaratzis & Ashworth, 2005). Figure 2 shows a modified representation of De Chernatony & Dall'Olmo Riley's (1998) model of the "cyclical process through which the brand becomes the interface between the firm's activities and consumers' interpretations" (p. 428).
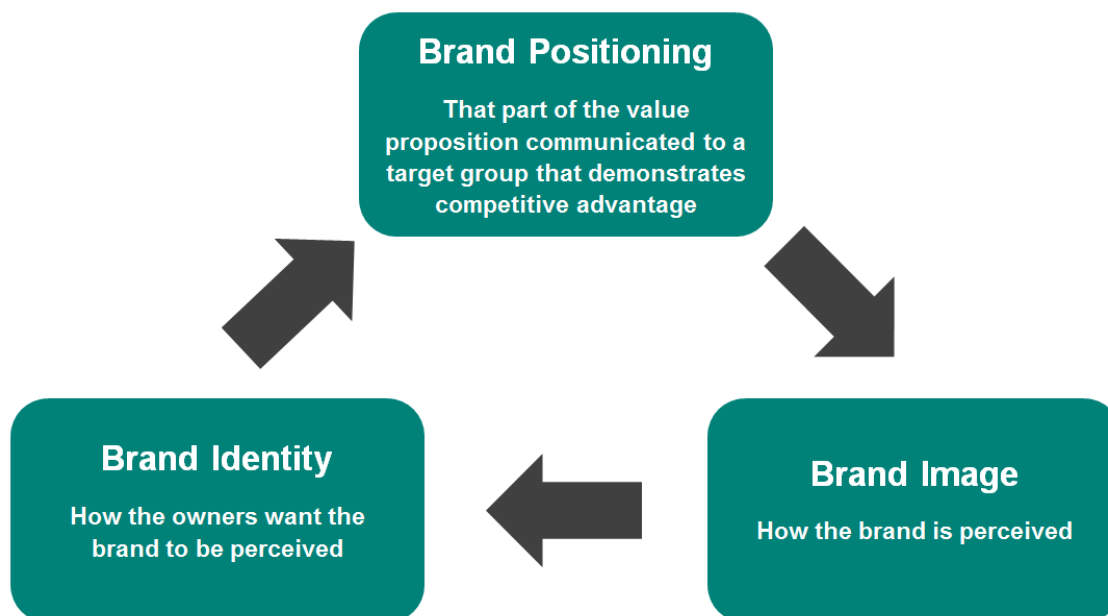
Figure 2: Brand Construct
Source: Modified from De Chernatony & Dall'Olmo Riley (1998), Kavaratzis & Ashworth (2005)

As can be seen in Figure 2, brand identity refers to the pre-determined features and attributes of a brand, including symbolic, experiential, social and emotional values that the brand owners want consumers to perceive (De Chernatony & Dall'Olmo Riley, 1998). Brand positioning is the use of the elements of the marketing mix in the communication of a brand's position in relation to its competitors and represents a competitive advantage. (De Chernatony, Dall'Olmo Riley, 1998) The concept of brand image was first noted by Gardner & Levy (1955). According to them, the "image of a product associated with the brand" (ibid, p. 35) is a set of ideas, feelings, and attitudes that consumers have about a brand. Similarly, Keller (1993) describes brand image as the "perceptions about a brand as reflected by the brand associations held in consumer memory" (p. 3). These perceptions are said to be consistent with their self-images, and their emotional and functional needs (De Chernatony & Dall'Olmo Riley, 1998). Brand image is "what people believe about a brand - their thoughts, feelings, expectations" (Bennett cited in Kavaratzis & Ashworth, 2005, p. 509). In other words, it is the "sum total of impressions that consumers receive from many sources, all of which combine to form a brand personality"

(Herzog, 1963 cited in Nandan, 2005, p. 276). Nandan (2005) refers to these sources as touch points at which consumers come into contact with "various aspects of the product, brand and company" (p. 276). Among others, these touch points include advertising, price, interaction with sales person and packaging. She further emphasizes the importance of an integrated marketing strategy that ensures brand consistency at all touch points. (Nandan, 2005) Moreover, it is important to monitor consumers' perceptions of the brand, i.e. brand image, in order to be able to close any gaps between brand identity and brand image or to reinforce the features and attributes of a brand that are most relevant to consumers (De Chernatony & Dall'Olmo Riley, 1998).

2.1.3 Purchase Intention and Purchase Decision

According to Dodds et al. (1991) purchase intention can be defined as buyers' willingness to buy. Buyers' willingness to buy and their perceptions of value were found to be positively related (Dodds et al., 1991). Turney & Littmann (cited in Nasermoadeli, Choon Ling, & Maghnati, 2013) take the definition of purchase intention a step further and propose that "intention to buy is the buyer's prediction of which company he will select to buy" (p. 128). They state that purchase intention can be regarded as an indicator of real purchase behavior (Turney & Littmann cited in Nasermoadeli et al., 2013).

A decision is the "selection of an option from two or more alternative choices" (Lin & Chen, 2009, p. 30). A purchase decision can be regarded as the execution of a purchase intention. It encompasses decisions about the brand, vendor, quantity and timing as well as payment-method of a purchase (Kotler cited in Lin & Chen, 2009). Particularly important for this research is brand choice, the "selection of the target brand for purchase from among the set of competing brands" (Underwood et al., 2001, p. 405).

2.2 Theory of Self-concept/Brand Image Congruity

This part of the literature review presents the theories upon which the studies and models concerning the influence of product packaging on brand image and purchase decision are based. Gardner & Levy (1955) were the first ones to note that brand image, or the notions people have about a brand, is a crucial factor in a customer's purchase decision. This theory was later on reinforced by Levy's (1959) article *Symbol for Sale*. In his paper Levy (1959) introduced the concept of the self and emphasized that not only the brand image but also the congruity between the self-concept and the brand image are an influencing factor of consumer behavior.

2.2.1 Product Symbolism

Understanding why or how consumers choose one brand over another requires "a greater awareness of the social and psychological nature of products" (Gardner & Levy, 1955, p. 34). Levy (1959) states that "people buy things not only for what they can do, but also for what they mean" (p. 118). In addition to a product's functions, the things people buy also carry personal and social meanings. Products can be seen as symbols that stand for personal attributes and goals, and social patterns and strivings. (Levy, 1959) However, the symbolic meaning of an object "does not reside in the object but in the relation between the object and the individuals classifying the object" (Grubb & Grathwohl, 1967, p. 25). Especially for products with similar qualities, consumers seem to differentiate brands according to the "subtle variations in feelings about them" (Gardner & Levy, 1955, p. 35). Moreover, the sets of ideas, feelings, and attitudes that consumers have about brands determine which ones they regard as appropriate and which ones they choose (ibid). A consumer evaluates products according to "standards which he has established for what is important or potentially important to him" (Levy, 1959, p. 119). Every purchase involves an evaluation of the symbolic meaning of the product to decide whether or not it fits. Only fitting symbols are chosen. Symbols are said to fit or to be appropriate if they help to maintain or enhance an individual's self-concept. Moreover, products will be used and enjoyed. (Levy, 1959)

2.2.2 Self-Concept

It is important to understand the self-concept since it influences consumer behavior (Levy, 1959). Individuals are said to behave in consistency with their self-concept (Lecky, 1945 cited in Levy, 1959). The self can be defined as "what one is aware of, one's attitudes, feelings, perceptions, and evaluations of oneself as an object" (Grubb & Grathwohl, 1967, 24). It develops as a result of social interactions and its environmental settings. The self is a concept that individuals strive to maintain and to enhance. (Grubb & Grathwohl, 1967) The purchase and consumption of products can be self-enhancing in different ways. Firstly, the self-concept is enhanced if the buyer believes that the purchased product is "recognized publicly and classified in a manner that supports and matches his self-concept" (Grubb & Grathwohl, 1967, p. 25). Secondly, self-enhancement occurs through positive reactions of others (Grubb & Grathwohl, 1967).

Levy (1959) states that symbolic meaning of goods facilitates decision-making. Consumers tend to make choices based on whether or not the symbolic meaning of certain products harmonizes with their self-concept (Levy, 1959). Sirgy (1982) calls this theory self-image/product-image congruity. Similarly to Levy (1959), Martineau (1957 cited

in Grubb & Grathwohl, 1967) made the assumption that "consumer buying behavior is determined by the interaction of the buyer's personality and the image of the purchased product" (p. 23). He further states that "the product or brand image is a symbol of the buyer's personality" (ibid).

2.3 Models

Based on the theory of self-concept/brand image congruity researchers have identified packaging as a brand communication vehicle and have developed models to describe the elements of packaging that influence brand image and consequently purchase decision. The following section contains different models that could be used to answer the research questions.

2.3.1 The Influence of Product Packaging on Brand Image

Building on existing frameworks (customer-based brand equity, consumer-brand relationships, product symbolism/self-concept), Underwood (2003) identifies packaging as a product-related attribute that plays a major role in the creation and communication of brand identity. .

Figure 3 shows Underwood's (2003) conceptual model of product packaging and its role in the brand communication process.

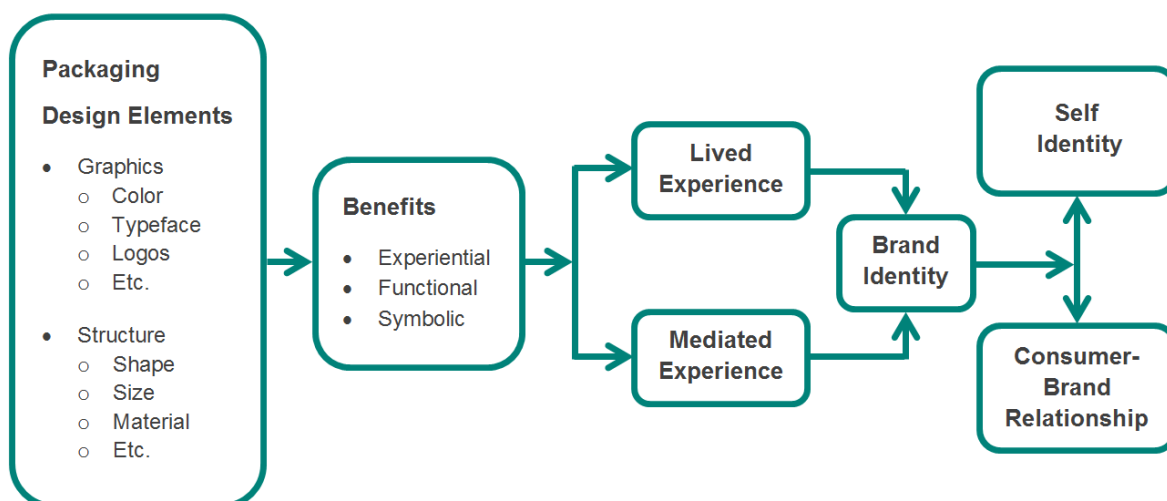**Figure 3: Conceptual Model of Product Packaging and its Role in the Brand Communication Process**
Source: Adapted from Underwood (2003)

As can be seen in Figure 3, brand identity is communicated through the functional, experiential and/or symbolic brand benefits conveyed through product packaging via the mediated and lived experiences between the consumer and the brand. Referring to Keller

(1993), Underwood (2003) defines brand identity as "the contribution of all brand elements to brand awareness and brand image" (p. 72). This means companies communicate their brand identity through the brand elements (e.g. name, logo) which is perceived as brand image by the consumer. At the same time, Underwood (2003) claims that for "many products brand identity is a result of product packaging that communicates (...) an intended meaning for the brand" (p. 71). This statement shows that Underwood (2003) does not clearly distinguish between brand identity and brand image. He seems to use these terms interchangeably. As defined earlier in this thesis, the intended meaning for a brand is brand identity (De Chernatony & Dall'Olmo Riley, 1998). Therefore, brand image (not brand identity) must be the result of product packaging that communicates an intended meaning for the brand. This is the case, because packaging is a product-related attribute that is perceived by consumers (Silayoi & Speece, 2007). According to Keller (1993) brand image is defined as "perceptions about a brand" (p. 3). Even though Underwood (2003) does not clearly distinguish brand image and brand identity, his study may still be relevant and be used for this thesis. Therefore, to avoid further confusion, we assume that Underwood (2003) uses these terms interchangeably as there may be no gap between brand identity and brand image. Product packaging can therefore be understood as a brand communication vehicle that communications brand identity and creates brand image. It also contributes to enhancing the self as well as to strengthening the consumer-brand relationship. (ibid)

The **elements of product packaging** can be divided into graphic (e.g. color, typeface and logos) and structural elements (e.g. shape, size, material). The elements of product packaging convey the experiential, functional and/or symbolic brand benefits that are revealed to the consumers through mediated and lived experiences. (Underwood, 2003)

Functional benefits refer to advantages of product consumption that are "linked to fairly basic motivations" (Keller, 1993, p. 4) such as the "desire for problem removal" (ibid). By providing functionality, packages can make a product more convenient and faster to use (Underwood, 2003). Bertrand (2002 cited in Underwood, 2003) found that when companies add package features that improve the functionality of a product, consumers often perceive this as a consideration of their needs.

Experiential benefits are related to the feelings connected to the use of the product. They are said to meet experiential needs such as variety, sensory pleasure and cognitive stimulation. (Keller, 1993) These feelings can be evoked with the help of product packaging that includes sensory representations (e.g. images) of ideas, feelings and memories for instance (Yuille & Catchpole, 1977 cited in Underwood, 2003).

Symbolic brand benefits help to satisfy "underlying needs for social approval or personal expression and outer-directed self-esteem" (Keller, 1993, p. 4) Consumers may prefer or desire certain brands because they perceive them as reflecting their own self-image or see them as representing an image that they currently do not possess but strive to have (Ataman & Ülengin, 2003). Moreover, consumers value a brand because of how the symbolic brand benefits harmonize with their self-concept (Solomon, 1983). Both graphic and structural elements are said to have the capacity to convey symbolic brand benefits, or to connote symbolism, as these elements often have commonly understood meanings in a certain culture. Package colors, for example, can be a source of identification and visual differentiation among brands and evoke emotions and associations that strengthen a brand's benefits and/or symbolism. (Underwood, 2003) Similarly, the structural elements of product packaging also represent a "great deal about the nature and personality of a product" (Young, 1996 cited in Underwood, 2003).

Mediated experiences are gained through "exposure to mass-communication culture and mass media products" (Underwood, 2003, p. 63). Consumers can experience symbolism of product packaging without actually purchasing or using the product. The source of these experiences can derive from the information on the package at the point of purchase as well as from the exposure to the package in advertisements and promotional communications. These mediated experiences can deliver symbolic brand benefits to consumers through the commonly understood meanings of certain packaging elements. Convenience, family, prestige, value and variation in quality are examples for symbolism that is generated by the package. Furthermore, a lot of functional packaging features can represent symbolic utility in addition to the functional utility that is already expected. Tamper proof seals for instance have the functional utility of improving protection and security of a product. The symbolic meaning of this functional utility is then the enhanced quality of the product. Another example is the no-drip spout, a packaging feature that has the functional utility of providing ease of disbursement. The symbolic meaning of this feature is convenience. (Underwood, 2003)

The ***lived experiences*** between a consumer and brand derive from direct interaction with the product and its packaging, beginning with the purchase and usage of the product. As functional and experiential benefits are related to the use of the product and its package, they are gained through lived experiences. (Underwood, 2003) Underwood (2003) further claims that consumers can gain symbolic brand benefits via the lived experiences as well, not just via the mediated experiences. He suggests that the lived experiences between a consumer and a brand may be even more important than the mediated experiences in delivering symbolic meaning of a brand to the consumers. Even though most elements of

product packaging have commonly understood meanings, the interpretation of the meaning of these elements by each individual may be even more critical to the attribution of a symbolic meaning to a product (Blurner, 1969 cited in Underwood, 2003). This means the lived experiences can deliver symbolic brand benefits to consumers through the commonly understood meanings of certain packaging elements as well as through the meaning that the individual consumer gives to a product. As the package resides in the home of the user, it does not only perform a functional role. Moreover, it becomes part of the consumer's life and therefore continually communicates to the consumer. (Underwood, 2003)

To sum it up, in addition to the functional and experiential benefits gained through the lived experiences, consumers can also gain symbolic benefits via the lived experiences, not just the mediated experiences. Product packaging can influence consumers' perception of the brand as its elements convey these benefits to the consumer. Packaging can therefore contribute to an enhancement of the self and is said to create or strengthen a relationship between the consumer and the brand. (Underwood, 2003)

2.3.2 The Influence of Product Packaging on Purchase Decision

Similarly to Underwood (2003), Agariya et al. (2012) also examine the role of packaging in the branding process as it plays "a vital role in communicating the image and identity of an organization" (p. 1). Furthermore, they determine the elements of product packaging that can be used to communicate the brand value to consumers (ibid).

Product packaging is said to be a "cross-functional and multidimensional aspect of marketing" (Bone & Corey, 2000 cited in Agariya et al., 2012, p. 1). It serves as a sales tool, a brand builder and a communication trigger. In its function as a sales tool, product packaging can be used to attract attention, describe the content or product features, and make the sale. As a brand builder, product packaging "creates an image in the minds of consumers" (Agariya et al., 2012, p. 2) through the "total sensory experience" (ibid) of the brand. This can for example enhance brand recognition. Additionally, brand image is a hint that helps consumers reach a conclusion about the quality of a product and therefore could persuade purchase. In accordance with the theory of self-concept/brand image congruity, Agariya et al. (2012) also argues that "consumers seek a relationship between their self-concept and the brand image of a product" (p. 2) and tend to prefer brands that enhance their self-image. Effective product packaging therefore has to communicate a brand image that is congruent to a consumer's self-image. From a different view, Agariya et al. (2012) also lift the idea that the major role of product packaging may not be its communication function but rather its role as a communication trigger. In this function,

packaging is to recall a consumer's memory about the brand that has been created through marketing efforts prior to the consumer's contact with the product at the point of sales. (ibid)

All in all, the aim of a good package design is to attract the buyer, to communicate the message to the buyer, to create desire for the product, and to sell the product (Griffin et al., 1985 cited in Agariya et al., 2012). To examine the impact of packaging elements on consumers' purchase decisions and based on previous studies, Agariya et al. (2012) developed the research model of the elements of product packaging as illustrated in Figure 4 below.
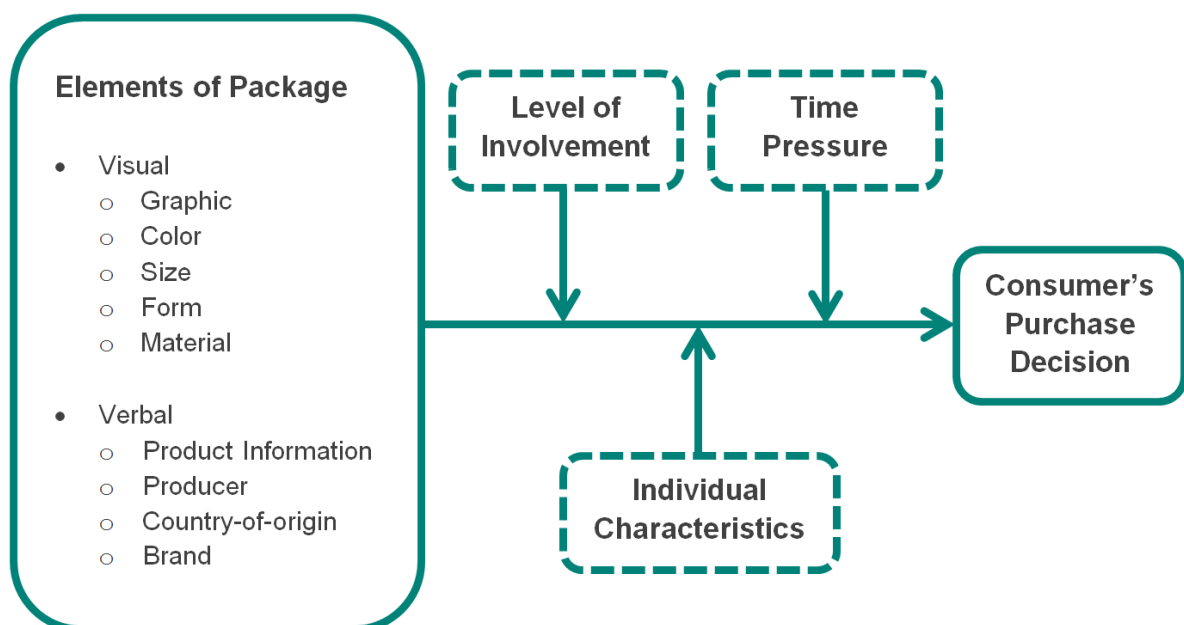
Figure 4: Elements of Package and Consumer's Purchase Behavior
Source: Adapted from Agariya et al. (2012)

As can be seen in Figure 4, the elements of packaging can be divided into visual and verbal elements. The visual elements include graphic, color, size, form and material. The verbal elements include product information, producer, country-of-origin as well as brand. These elements are said to influence a consumer's purchase decision. (Agariya et al., 2012) Moreover, the impact of product packaging on purchase decision can be influenced by the level of involvement, time pressure and individual characteristics of the consumer (Stravinskienė et al., 2008; Grossman & Wisenblit, 1999; Silayoi & Speece, 2004 cited in Agariya et al., 2012).

Considering the main goals of packaging to attract the buyer, to communicate the message to the buyer, to create desire for the product, including the consideration for convenience and ease of disposability, and to sell the product, Agariya et al. (2012)

developed a packaging matrix as shown in Table 3. The packaging matrix provides a framework for examining the role of packaging in brand communication. It can also be used to determine the elements/attributes of packaging that can be used to communicate the brand value to customers. (ibid)

Table 3: Product Packaging Matrix

Package Design	Liking for Package	Communication through package	Usability of Package
• Attraction of buyer • Communication to the buyer • Convenience in handling and using • Saleability of product • Green aspect	• Brand • Country of origin • Color connotation • Symbol connotation • Size	• Color • Symbols/Logo • Information about product • Brand image • Shape • Size	• Ease of handling • Disposability • Moisture protection • Protection from ultraviolet radiation

Source: Adapted from Agariya et al. (2012)

Table 3 above shows the four main aspects that may influence purchase decision. The package design, consumers' liking for the package, the communication through the package and the usability of the package may all contribute to a consumer's decision making process. (Agariya et al., 2012) More specifically Agariya et al. (2012) examined the "dependence of packaging design upon the buyer attraction, communication to buyer, convenience in handling and using, saleability of product and green aspect; relationship between liking for package and brand, country of origin, color connotation, symbol connotation and size; relationships between communication through the package and independent variables like information, shape, brand image and symbols/logos; relationship between usability of package and ease of handling, disposability and protection" (p. 1).

3 Frame of Reference

The following chapter presents the frame of reference which will be used for the data collection and analysis. Based on the theories and models presented in the literature review, a conceptualized model was developed to answer the research questions. The three most important models for this thesis are Underwood's (2003) conceptual model of product packaging and its role in brand communication process, Agariya et al.'s (2012) framework for product packaging - the packaging matrix - as well as Agariya et al.'s (2012) model for the elements of package and consumer's behavior.

This research aims at examining the contribution of product packaging to a consumers' perception of a brand and its influences on purchase decision. As a reminder, the purpose and research questions of this study are shown in the Table 4 below.

Table 4: Purpose and Research Questions

Purpose	The purpose of this research is to gain a deeper understanding of the influence of product packaging on brand image as well as on consumers' purchase decision.
Research Questions	RQ1: How does product packaging influence brand image? RQ2: How does product packaging influence purchase decision?

As can be seen in Table 4, this study focuses on three main areas, namely brand image, purchase decision, and product packaging. The literature review has provided an overview over the research area. However, in order to answer the research questions, there is a need to focus on the concepts that cover the main areas of this research.

Concerning the elements of packaging, this study is based on Agariya's model for elements of package and consumer's behavior, as shown in Figure 4. However, time pressure, involvement level and individual characteristics will not be included in the frame of reference since this would go beyond the scope of this study. Moreover, Agariya's packaging matrix, illustrated in Table 3, serves as a basis to examine the aspects of packaging that ultimately influence purchase decision. These two models provide the frame to investigate the influence of packaging on purchase decision. Regarding product packaging and brand image, Underwood's conceptual model of product packaging and its

role in the brand communication process is adopted. In order to keep the focus of this topic, the specific influence of product packaging on the consumer-brand relationship and self-identity is not examined and therefore not included in the frame of reference.

Figure 5 illustrates the frame of reference regarding the research questions.
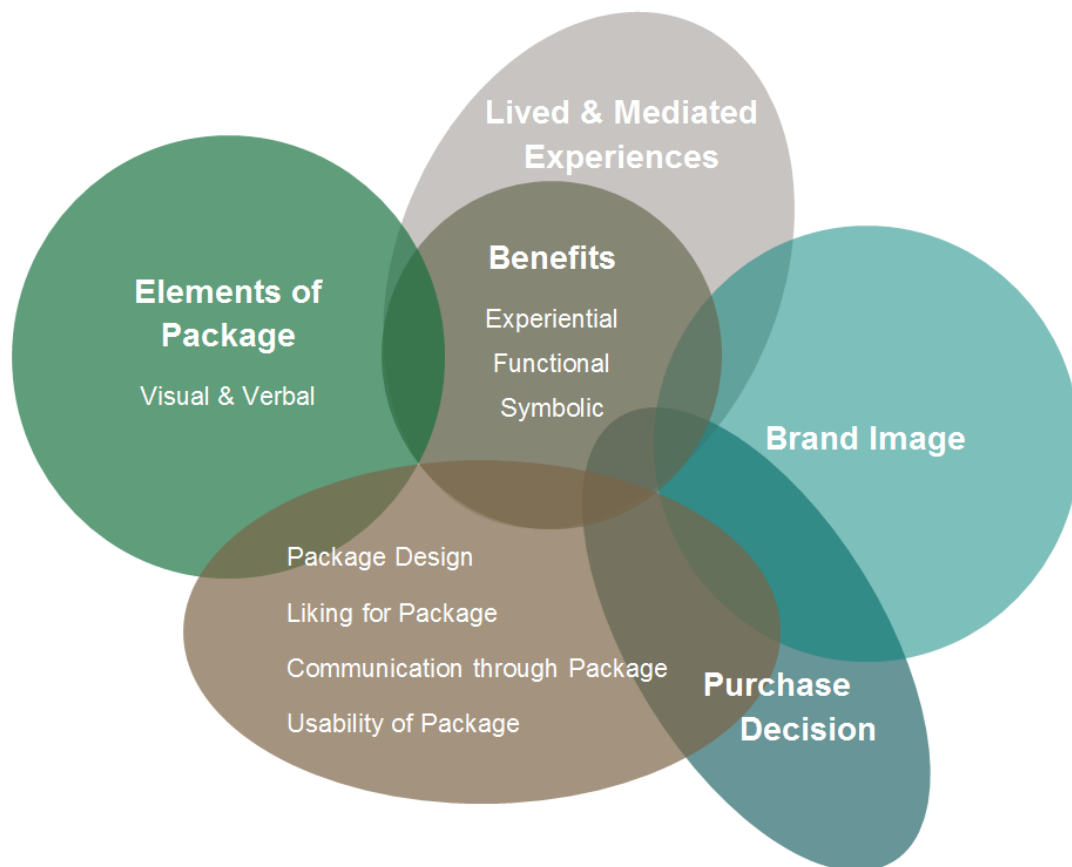
Figure 5: Frame of Reference
Source: Modified from Underwood (2003) and Agariya et al. (2012)

Keller (1993) describes brand image as "perceptions about a brand as reflected by the brand associations held in consumer memory" (p. 3). Consumers receive these associations or impressions from many sources. (Herzog, 1963 cited in Nandan, 2005). Nandan (2005) refers to these sources as touch points at which consumers come into contact with different aspects of the product, brand and company. Among others, product packaging is regarded as one of these touch points (ibid). Agariya et al. (2012) state that packaging can be "treated as a set of various elements communicating different messages to a consumer" (p. 4). These can be divided into visual as well as verbal elements (Agariya et al., 2012). According to Silayoi & Speece (2004 cited in Agariya et al., 2012), visual elements contain information that affect consumers' emotions whereas verbal information influence them on a rational level. In general the elements of packaging can influence consumers' purchase decision, or brand choice, in different ways.

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Firstly, these elements convey functional, experiential as well as symbolic brand benefits which are revealed to the consumer through their mediated and lived experiences with the product packaging. (Underwood, 2003) Functional benefits are related to basic needs, and experiential benefits concern the feeling of using a product. The symbolic benefits satisfy "underlying needs for social approval or personal expression and outer-directed self-esteem" (Keller, 1993, p. 4). These benefits and experiences in turn shape consumers' perception of the brand (Underwood, 2003). Consumers may prefer or desire certain brands because they believe that these brands reflect their own self-image or they regard them as projecting an image that they presently do not possess but strive to have (Ataman & Ülengin, 2003). According to Solomon (1983), consumers therefore value a brand because of how the symbolic brand benefits harmonize with their self-concept.

Secondly, the elements of packaging together with their goals to attract, communicate, create desire and sell the product determine package design and contribute to consumers' liking for a package, the communication through the package and the usability of the package. These aspects, which depend on various factors that are brought up in the literature review and shown in the packaging matrix in Table 3, together with the brand image also influence consumers' decision making process. (Agariya et al., 2012)

The proposed frame of reference could answer the research questions as follows.

RQ1: How does product packaging influence brand image?

Product packaging can influence brand image through the different packaging elements as these convey experiential, functional and/or symbolic brand benefits to the consumers. Their experiences with the product packaging, lived and mediated, allows them to experience the benefits and therefore shape their perceptions of the brand. (Underwood, 2003)

RQ2: How does product packaging influence purchase decision?

Agariya et al. (2012) identify four main aspects that influence consumers' purchase decision:

- package design,
- liking for package,
- communication through package,
- and usability of package.

As already mentioned and shown in the literature review, firstly, package design is dependent upon its attraction of the consumer, its communication to the consumer, its

convenience in handling and using, and the saleability of the product as well as the green aspect. Secondly, brand name, country of origin, color and symbol connotation as well as size influence consumers' liking for the package. Thirdly, the elements of product packaging such as color, symbols and logos, information about the product, shape, size, as well as brand image contribute to the communication through the package. Lastly, the usability of a package depends on ease of handling, disposability, moisture protection, and the protection from ultraviolet radiation. (Agariya et al., 2012) Brand image plays an important role in this frame of reference. Not only does it contribute to the communication through the package, but it also influences purchase decision positively when it is congruent with a consumer's self-image. (ibid)

The answers to the research questions have been fairly straight forward and based on Underwood's (2003) and Agariya et al.'s (2012) frameworks. However, they do not clearly describe all the overlaps between the relevant areas as presented in the suggested framework. The overlap that has not been described yet is the connection between the brand benefits and the four aspects that influence purchase decision. First of all, functional benefits could be connected to information about the product that is communicated through the package for example. Furthermore, experiential benefits, which refer how it feels to use a product, could include for example ease of handling as well as convenience in handling and using and therefore be connected to package design and usability of package. Additionally, symbolic benefits could be connected to the liking for a package for example which is influenced by color and symbol connotations for instance.

4 Methodology

This section provides the research methodology considering the purpose of this thesis. It includes the research purpose, the research approach as well as the research strategy. Moreover, the method for data collection, sample selection and data analysis are discussed.

Research can be defined as "something that people undertake in order to find out things in a systematic way, thereby increasing their knowledge" (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2007, p. 5). This definition is based upon three main characteristics:

- "data are collected systematically" (ibid)

- "data are interpreted systematically" (ibid)

- "there is a clear purpose: to find things out" (ibid)

Collecting and interpreting data systematically implies that "research is based on logical relationships and not just beliefs" (Ghauri and Grønhaug, 2005 cited in Saunders et al., 2007, p. 5). This includes an explanation of the data collection methods, a discussion why the results obtained are meaningful and the limitations of the study. (Saunders et al., 2007) To find out things indicates that there can be multiple purposes for the research including describing, explaining, understanding, criticizing and analyzing (Ghauri and Grønhaug, 2005 cited in Saunders et al., 2007). Moreover, this also suggests the importance of clarifying what exactly one wants to find out (Saunders et al., 2007).

Figure 6 below shows the methodology process:

Figure 6: Methodology Process

As can be seen in Figure 6 the methodology consists of seven steps. The following sections contain a discussion of the research purpose, research approach and research strategy. Furthermore the methods for data collection will be explained and the samples will be selected. Lastly, the methods for data analysis will be described. In general, reliability and validity are two important issues to consider.

4.1 Research Purpose

Defining the research purpose is the first step of the methodology. The research purpose can be explanatory, descriptive, and exploratory. However, a research may have multiple purposes. (Saunders et al., 2007)

Explanatory Studies

The aim of an explanatory study is to establish and explain causal relationships between variables. Its focus therefore lies on a situation or a problem. To get a clearer view of the relationships, explanatory studies usually include the use of statistics to analyze quantitative data. (Saunders et al., 2007)

Descriptive Studies

Descriptive studies aim at portraying "an accurate profile of persons, events or situations" (Robson, 2002 cited in Saunders et al., 2007, p. 134). They can be considered as extensions or forerunners to either exploratory or explanatory studies. According to Saunders et al. (2007) it is important to have a clear understanding of the phenomena that one wants to collect data on. However, they criticize the fact that descriptive studies often lack conclusions from the data obtained and that they are too descriptive. (Saunders et al., 2007)

Exploratory Studies

Exploratory studies aim at finding out "what is happening; to seek new insights; to ask questions and to assess phenomena in a new light" (Robson, 2002 cited in Saunders et al., 2007, p. 133). Furthermore exploratory studies can be used to clarify problems or to gain a deeper understanding of a problem. The advantages of an exploratory study are its flexibility and adaptability to change when new data appear or new insights occur in the progress of the research. This means that the research starts with a broader perspective and becomes narrower as it progresses. (Saunders et al., 2007)

Considering the purpose of this thesis to gain a deeper understanding of the influence of product packaging on brand image as well as purchase decision, the research purpose of this thesis will be descriptive and exploratory. The aim is not to explain the causal relationship or correlations between product packaging and brand image or purchase decision. Therefore, this thesis will not consider elements of an explanatory study.

4.2 Research Approach

In general one can differentiate between two different types of research approaches. Depending on the chosen research approach, the focus then either lies on the collection and analysis of quantitative (numeric data), or qualitative (non-numeric) data. (Saunders et al., 2007)

Quantitative Research

Quantitative research emphasizes the collection and analysis of numeric data (Saunders et al., 2007). Since the aim of quantitative research is to validate facts, estimates, relationships and predictions, data has to be collected from large samples. This can be done through the use of questionnaires or surveys for example, which contain standardized questions and predetermined response options. (Shiu, Hair, Bush & Ortinau, 2009) The meaning of quantitative data derives from numbers which are analyzed through

the use of diagrams and statistics (Saunders et al., 2007). The results of a quantitative study are often generalizable from the sample to the population. (Shiu et al., 2009; Newman & Benz, 1998)

Qualitative Research

Qualitative research involves data collection techniques or data analysis procedures that generate or use non-numeric data, such as words, pictures or video clips (Saunders et al., 2007). Qualitative research methods are commonly used in exploratory studies. The focus lies on the collection of detailed primary data from relatively small samples. (Shiu et al., 2009) Data can be collected through interviews or observations and analyzed by categorizing the data for example (Saunders et al., 2007). The aim of a qualitative study is to discover and to identify new ideas, thoughts as well as feelings and to gain insight into research problems (Shiu et al., 2009). Yin (2011, p. 8) discusses five features of qualitative research:

- "studying the meaning of people's lives, under real-world conditions" (ibid)

- "representing the views and perspectives of the people in a study" (ibid)

- "covering the contextual conditions within which people live" (ibid)

- "contributing insights into existing or emerging concepts that may help to explain human social behavior" (ibid)

- "striving to use multiple sources of evidence rather than relying on a single source alone" (ibid)

Firstly, "studying the meaning of people's lives, under real-world conditions" (Yin, 2011, p. 8) implies letting participants express themselves through their behavior, words and social interactions with only minimal interference by the researchers. Furthermore, their responses are not limited by a set of predetermined questions. Secondly, qualitative studies enable researchers to capture the views and perspectives of the participants. "Thus, the events and ideas emerging from qualitative research can represent the meanings given to real-life events by the people who live them, not the values, preconceptions, or meanings held by researchers" (ibid). Thirdly, qualitative research also considers contextual conditions such as the social, institutional and environmental conditions within which people live. This is especially important, since human behavior can be heavily influenced by these contextual conditions. Fourth, the results of qualitative studies can contribute "insights into existing or emerging concepts that may help to explain human social behavior" (ibid). Lastly, qualitative research calls for the use of multiple sources of evidence instead of relying on a single source alone in order to increase credibility and trustworthiness of the study. (Yin, 2011)

This thesis aims at gaining a deeper understanding of the contribution of packaging elements to brand image and purchase decision, i.e. finding out why or how packaging can shape consumers' perception of a brand and influence their purchase decision. Therefore it is necessary to capture people's views and perspectives as well as new ideas, thoughts and feelings that may emerge. This can be done through qualitative research where the analysis and interpretation of results focuses on words rather than numeric data. The purpose of this study, however, is not to explain correlations between packaging and brand image or purchase decisions or to validate hypotheses. Therefore the research approach of this thesis will be solely qualitative and not quantitative.

4.3 Research Strategy

Before being able to start the data collection, the research strategy must also be determined. According to Yin (1994) there are five different strategies for conducting research - experiment, survey, archival analysis, history and case study. Each of these can be used in exploratory, descriptive as well as explanatory studies (Yin, 2003 cited in Saunders et al., 2007). The choice of the appropriate research strategy depends on three conditions (Yin, 1994, p. 4):

- "the type of research question posed" (ibid)

- "the extent of control an investigator has over actual behavioral events" (ibid)

- "the degree of focus on contemporary as opposed to historical events" (ibid)

The first and most important condition that determines the research strategy is the type of research question. 'What' questions often imply an exploratory study. In this case any of the research strategies are applicable. 'How many' or 'how much' are two different types of 'what' questions that can be best answered using surveys or archival analysis strategies. 'Who' and 'where' questions indicate surveys or archival records as the preferred research strategies. Histories, experiments and case studies are the most suitable strategies to answer the questions 'why' and 'how'. (Yin, 1994)

The extent of control over behavioral events is the second condition which determines the research strategy. The only research strategy where behavior can be manipulated by the investigator is the experiment. Concerning the other research strategies the investigator has no control over behavioral events. (Yin, 1994)

The last condition of the research strategy is the degree of focus on contemporary as opposed to historical events. Experiments, surveys, archival analysis, histories as well as case studies can be used when a contemporary event is given. However, the focus of

histories lies more on historical events. Moreover, archival studies can be used both for contemporary as well as historical events. (Yin, 1994)

Even though the research strategies are not mutually exclusive, using a case study may be especially advantageous, when a "'how' or 'why' question is being asked about a contemporary set of events over which the investigator has little or no control" (Yin, 1994, p. 9). For this thesis, a case study will be conducted since 'how' questions are being asked, a contemporary event is investigated and the researchers have no control over this event.

Case Study

A case study can be defined as "a strategy for doing research which involves an empirical investigation of a particular contemporary phenomenon within its real life context using multiple sources of evidence" (Robson, 2002). According to Saunders et al. (2007) case studies are particularly helpful if one wants to gain a deep understanding of "the context of the research and the processes being enacted". Moreover, case studies are mostly used to answer the questions 'why' and 'how'. According to Yin (1994) there are four case study strategies based on two dimensions:

- single-case design v. multiple-case design
- holistic design v. embedded design

Single case studies are used when the case is critical, extreme or unique. However, it can also be used "because it is typical or because it provides you with an opportunity to observe and analyse a phenomenon that few have considered before" (Saunders et al., 2007, p. 140). A multiple cases study focuses on finding out if the results of one case are similar to other cases. This ensures the overall trustworthiness of a study (Saunders et al., 2007). For this thesis a multiple cases study is chosen. This ensures the overall validity of the study as examining two cases means collecting evidence from two sources. Both single as well as multiple cases studies can be analyzed holistically or as an embedded case. (Yin, 1994) This study will analyze the influence of product packaging on brand image and purchase decision from a holistic point of view.

4.4 Data Collection

After determining the research purpose, approach and strategy, the next step of the methodology is data collection.

4.4.1 Primary and Secondary Data

When answering research questions, researchers can reanalyze data that "have already been collected for some other purpose" (Saunders et al., 2007, p. 246). Such data are called secondary data. However, researchers can also collect and analyze new data. Data that is collected for a specific purpose is known as primary data. (Saunders et al., 2007) Such data represent raw data and data structures that have not had any type of meaningful interpretation (Shiu et al., 2009). According to Saunders et al. (2007) there are three different types of secondary data - documentary data, survey-based data and data compiled from multiple sources. Sources of documentary data include written and non-written materials such as interview transcripts, emails and voice recordings. Survey-based data can derive from censuses, continuous and regular surveys as well as ad hoc surveys. Multiple-source data can be found in for example books, journals and government publications. Sources of primary data are mainly surveys, focus groups, in-depth interviews or observations. (Saunders et al., 2007) As this research is a qualitative one, the focus lies on collecting detailed primary data from small samples by asking questions.

4.4.2 Sources of Evidence

According to Yin (2003) there are six major data collection techniques, or sources of evidence, that are commonly used in case studies:

- documentation
- archival records
- interviews
- direct observation
- participant observation
- physical artifacts

Given the purpose of this thesis, to gain a deeper understanding of how product packaging shapes consumers' perception of a brand and how it influences their purchase decision, interviews seem to be the most straight-forward technique for collecting data. Firstly, interviews allow a direct focus on the topic. Secondly, interviews provide the opportunity to capture the participants' opinions and "insights into certain occurrences" (ibid, p. 90) that researchers can use as the basis for further inquiry. (Yin, 2003)

4.4.3 Interviews

There are three types of interviews - structured, semi-structured, unstructured or in-depth interviews. In structured interviews, researchers use questionnaires with a predefined set of questions. The aim of structured interviews is to collect quantifiable data. They are therefore used for quantitative research. Hence structured interviews are not considered for this thesis. Contrary, semi-structured and in-depth interviews are used for qualitative research. Qualitative interviews are necessary when the purpose of a research is to understand the reasons behind the research participants' decision, or the reasons for their attitudes and opinions. Semi-structured interviews cover a predetermined range of themes and questions that are adaptable from interview to interview. Additional questions can be added or questions can be left out depending on the situation. Audio-recording or note-taking are helpful in capturing ideas and perspectives emerging from conversations or discussions. In-depth interviews are more informal. Even though there are no predetermined questions, there should be a clear idea about the aspects that are to be explored. In in-depth interviews the conversation is guided by the interviewee's perceptions. One advantage of semi-structured and in-depth interviews is that they allow the researchers to clarify and follow up on responses to understand the meaning of the participants' responses. This adds "significance and depth to the data" (Saunders et al., 2007, p. 315). Moreover, new areas concerning the research topic may emerge during a discussion All in all, semi-structured and in-depth interviews enable researchers to "collect a rich and detailed set of data" (Saunders et al., 2007, 316). (Saunders et al., 2007)

Since the purpose of this thesis is to gain a deeper understanding of product packaging especially with regards to its influence on brand image and purchase decision, a semi-structured interview with predetermined range of questions and themes seems to be reasonable. First of all, guiding the discussion into the areas of interest, namely brand image and purchase decision with a predetermined range of questions, ensures that data concerning these areas are collected. However, the adaptability of semi-structured interviews allows participants to bring up new ideas and perspectives. (Saunders et al., 2007)

4.4.4 Focus Groups

There are various forms of interviews. For this thesis, a focus group will be conducted. According to Carson et al. (2001 cited in Saunders et al., 2007), a focus group "is a group interview that focuses clearly upon a particular issue, product, service or topic and encompasses the need for interactive discussion amongst participants" (p. 339). Similarly, Shiu et al. (2009) define a focus group as a small group of people who are brought

together to interactively and spontaneously discuss a certain topic or concept. The interactions and responses of participants have to be "closely controlled to maintain the focus" (Saunders et al., 2007). Furthermore, the participants are encouraged to discuss and voice their opinions without having to reach a conclusion (Krueger & Casey, 2000 cited in Saunders et al., 2007). Group interviews such as the focus group, can be highly productive as participants not only respond to the researchers questions but also have the opportunity to evaluate or challenge points made by other participants. A group discussion can therefore lead to a variety of different ideas and perspectives that can help to explore concepts. (Saunders et al., 2007)

As mentioned before, a multiple cases study was chosen in order to answer the research questions. Therefore two focus groups will be conducted. This allows a comparison between the cases and identification of patterns and trends across both cases thus ensuring the validity of this study.

Focus Group Procedure

To ensure that data collected from both focus groups are comparable, an interview guide, based on the frame of reference, is developed. This interview guide can be found in the Appendix and will be used to guide the discussions of both focus groups. Focus group 1 will discuss the product packaging of orange marmalade and its influence on purchase decision as well as brand image. The discussion in focus group 2 will evolve around the product packaging of hair repair shampoos. A detailed explanation of the selection of these products can be found in section *4.5 Sample Selection*. Nevertheless, both focus groups will follow a similar procedure.

Each focus group consists of three parts:

> *Part 1:* Choosing of one brand of orange marmalade/hair repair shampoo by each participant
> *Part 2:* Group discussion, guided by the interviewers' questions
> *Part 3:* Using of product packaging and discussion afterwards

Part 1: Firstly, the participants will be called into the discussion room individually where a selection of eight different brands of orange marmalade/shampoo will be displayed on a shelf. The participants will be told to choose one of the brands they would like to purchase. The reason for calling them in individually is to prevent their decision to be influenced by other participants. Furthermore, the products will not have any prices. Even though price may play a role in a real retail store setting, the focus of this study is to

understand the influence of product packaging on the participants' perception of a brand and their decision making process.

The following instructions will be used to bring the participants into a purchase scenario. These differ slightly for the two focus groups.

- Instructions for focus group 1 (orange marmalade):

  "Imagine you are at a retail store. Behave the way you normally would at the store. You want to buy orange marmalade. Here are the different products you can choose from. When you've made your decision, please let us know."

- Instructions for focus group 2 (hair repair shampoo):

  For female participants:

  "Imagine you are at a retail store. Behave the way you normally would at the store. You want to buy a hair repair shampoo <u>for yourself</u>. Here are the different products you can choose from. When've you made your decision, please let us know."

  For male participants:

  "Imagine you are at a retail store. Behave the way you normally would at the store. You want to buy a hair repair shampoo <u>for your girlfriend</u>. Here are the different products you can choose from. When you've made your decision, please let us know."

  The instructions for female and male participants differ slightly for this focus group since all the hair repair shampoos could usually be used by women whereas not all of them would normally be considered as shampoo for men. Giving the male participants the instruction to buy the shampoo for their girlfriends will ensure that all the brands will be considered and none of the products will be left out of consideration if they are not perceived as shampoo for men.

Part 2: This part of the focus group is the same for focus group 1 and 2. After choosing a brand of orange marmalade/hair repair shampoo, the discussion will be started with opening questions. These will be followed by questions from the interview guide that fit the topics brought up by the participants.

Part 3: After covering all the questions regarding the participants' purchase decision as well as their perception of the brand and the product packaging, the next part of the focus group will concern the usage of the package. Firstly, the participants will use the product packaging of orange marmalade/hair repair shampoo. Secondly, questions will be asked

regarding the usage as well as changes in their perceptions of the brand after usage. The procedures for this part of focus group 1 and focus group 2 differ due to the products.

Focus group 1:

The participants of focus group 1 will be seated around a set breakfast table. They will be told not to try the marmalade since the focus of this discussion is on the product packaging. Their opinions should therefore not be influenced by the actual product. The usage of the packaging will include opening the jar/bottle/bag of marmalade, spreading marmalade on a piece of bread, closing the package and placing it back on the table.

Focus group 2:

The participants of focus group 2 will be asked to make their hands wet, open the bottle of shampoo, squeeze some of it on their hands, close the bottle and place it on the floor. Moreover, they will be told to concentrate on the handling of the package and not the actual shampoo since the focus of this discussion is also on the product packaging. Their opinions therefore should not be influenced by the actual product.

4.5 Sample Selection

Since it is not possible to collect data from an entire population, it is necessary to select samples. Moreover this study is a qualitative one. The aim therefore is to gain deeper insight into the research area and not to generalize findings. The following section includes the selection of the participants for the focus group. Moreover, the selected products for the study are presented.

4.5.1 Selection of Focus Group Participants

The sample selection techniques can be divided into probability and non-probability sampling. Probability sampling techniques are based on statistics. They include for example simple random, systematic, stratified random, and cluster sampling. These sampling techniques are often associated with survey or experimental research designs and are used when the purpose of the research is to make a generalization from the sample to the entire population. However, this is not the purpose of this study. In exploratory studies, such as this thesis, "a non-probability sampling may be the most practical" (Saunders et al., 2007, p. 226). Non-probability sampling, or non-random sampling, includes a variety of techniques to select samples based on subjective judgement including quota, purposive, snowball, convenience or self-selection sampling for example. (Saunders et al., 2007)

When choosing participants for focus groups, researchers have to keep in mind the purpose of the research and consider who can best provide the needed information. According to Shiu et al. (2009), a focus group should be as homogeneous as possible to ensure proper group dynamics. However, participants should also vary enough to allow for differing opinions. Desirable similarities among participants can include characteristics such as age, gender, educational level, or occupation. Having common characteristics within a group makes participants feel comfortable with one another and enables a natural and comfortable group environment. Another aspect to consider is whether or not participants have prior knowledge about the topic to be discussed. Different levels of knowledge may prevent an interactive discussion. (Shiu et al., 200) However, for the purpose of this thesis, the participants are not required to have any specific knowledge about the topic. Firstly, they will discuss about daily products that can be found at regular retail stores. Secondly, the focus lies on their own perceptions of the products and brands as consumers.

For this study, participants were selected for two focus groups. Table 5 shows the participants for focus group 1. This group will be interviewed about the product packaging of orange marmalade and its influence on the participants' purchase decision as well as their perception of the brands. The participants of focus group 2 are shown in Table 6. This group will be interviewed about the product packaging of hair repair shampoo.

All the participants were carefully chosen to ensure homogeneity within the group. They are all students at Luleå University of Technology. Therefore they have a similar level of education. Moreover, they are all in their twenties and most of them know each other from university. The homogeneity of the groups creates a comfortable atmosphere for an interactive discussion. At the same time, the participants vary in their field of studies, gender and nationality and most importantly in their personalities. This ensures that the focus group interview will yield different perspectives, ideas and opinions.

Table 5: Focus Group 1 – Orange Marmalade

Focus Group 1	Gender	Age	Nationality
Interviewee 1	Female	25	Spanish
Interviewee 2	Female	24	Spanish
Interviewee 3	Female	23	Spanish
Interviewee 4	Male	20	Scottish
Interviewee 5	Male	20	Scottish
Interviewee 6	Male	20	Scottish

As shown above, focus group 1 consists of three males and three females. The age ranges from 20 to 25 years. Moreover, the participants are from Spain and Scotland. The fact that there are only two different nationalities is a coincidence since the participants were chosen mainly based on their gender and personality.

Table 6: Focus Group 2 – Hair Repair Shampoo

Focus Group 2	Gender	Age	Nationality
Participant 1	Female	25	Turkish
Participant 2	Female	25	Chinese
Participant 3	Female	23	Spanish
Participant 4	Male	28	Canadian
Participant 5	Male	24	German
Participant 6	Male	20	Scottish

As can be seen in Table 6, focus group 2 consists of three male and three female participants. Their age ranges from 20 to 28 years. Furthermore, the participants are all from different countries. These countries are Turkey, China, Spain, Canada, Germany, and Scotland.

4.5.2 Selection of Products

To interview the focus groups about product packaging and its influence on their purchase decision as well as their perception of the brand, two product types were chosen - orange marmalade and hair repair shampoo. The product types are from the fast-moving consumer goods category since previous research suggests that for this category, product packaging plays a major role in influencing purchase decisions and creating brand images (Agariya et al., 2012). The chosen products were bought in a Swedish retail store. For each product type, the different brands could be found next to each other on the shelf.

The product for the first focus group is orange marmalade. Figure 7 shows the eight different orange marmalades that were chosen for this study.

(From left to right: Eldorado; Den Gamle Fabrik; Önos Gunillas; Björnekulla; Bob Squeezy; Garant; St. Dalfour; Bob Original)

Figure 7: Orange Marmalade

The brands shown in Figure 7 were chosen since they all vary in their looks. The different combinations and use of packaging elements can clearly be seen. The products can be distinguished through the size, shape, material, use of graphics, colors, information on the labels and typefaces for example. For example, St. Dalfour's glass jar has an elongated shape whereas Önos Gunillas' glass jar is rather wide. Another example is the different use of graphics. The label on Eldorado's orange marmalade features a real photo of oranges whereas the label on Björnekulla's orange marmalade features a 'drawing' thereof. Contrary, the label on Den Gamle Fabrik's orange marmalade does not have any pictures at all. Moreover, Bob's squeezy orange marmalade and Garant's orange marmalade come in a plastic bottle and not in a glass jar like most of the other brands. Bob's original marmalade, however, comes in a plastic bag. Another distinct element of the packaging can be found on Björnekulla's orange marmalade. Its label also includes an eco-label. The reason for choosing this many different brands was to simulate a retail store setting, where consumers are confronted with a vast choice of brands.

The product for the second focus group is hair repair shampoo. Figure 8 shows the eight brands that were chosen for this study. Similarly to the first focus group, the reason for choosing this many different brands of shampoos was to simulate a retail store setting, where consumers are confronted with on overwhelmingly wide choice of brands.

(From left to right: Garnier Fructis; Schwarzkopf Gliss; Wella Pro Series; Syoss; L'Oréal Elvital; Pantene Pro-V; Head & Shoulders; Dove Hair Therapy)

Figure 8: Hair Repair Shampoo

Similarly to the orange marmalade, the shampoo brands shown in Figure 8 were also chosen because of their different looks. One remarkable difference is the use of colors. All the brands make use of colors to differentiate their product from the others. Garnier Fructis and Wella Pro Series for example use color for the whole bottle whereas, Pantene Pro-V or Dove Hair Therapy only use colors on their label. Another example is the use of material. The Syoss bottle for example is clear, whereas the Schwarzkopf Gliss bottle is made of a shiny plastic and the Head & Shoulders bottle is of a regular white plastic. Moreover, the amount of information on the front label varies across brands. Pantene Pro-V and Head & Shoulders for example focus on very little information whereas the other brands feature more detailed information regarding the advantages of their product. These are only a few examples to illustrate how many variations of the combinations of product packaging elements can be found.

4.6 Data Analysis

Data analysis is a crucial part of research. Collected data is only useful if it is analyzed and the meaning of the data is understood. (Saunders et al., 2007) The analysis of data involves amassing and sorting the data in some efficient manner that allows the researcher to draw necessary conclusions for the study (Yin, 2011). This section explains how data collected for the purpose of this thesis will be analyzed.

Saunders et al. (2007) describe two approaches to qualitative research, an inductive and a deductive approach. An inductive approach is used when researchers build up a theory that is grounded in the collected data. A deductive approach uses existing theory to shape the approach that is adopted to the qualitative research process and to aspects of data analysis. Yin (2003) suggests that when researchers have already used existing theories to formulate their research questions, such as in this thesis, it is also advisable to use the same theories to develop a framework that guides the analysis of the collected data. The advantage of analysing data from a theoretical point of view is that it provides researchers with an initial analytical framework that helps them to get started. Moreover, this facilitates linking the results of a study into the existing body of knowledge in the research area. (Saunders et al., 2007)

According to Miles & Huberman (1994) analysis consists of three activities:

- data reduction
- data display
- conclusion drawing/verification

Data reduction involves selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting, and transforming the data that emerge from field notes or transcriptions (Miles & Huberman, 1994). It is important to note that data reduction is part of analysis, and therefore not separated from it. Moreover it is a continuous process that is not finished until the final conclusions are drawn. Data reduction can already occur, when researchers pose the research questions, develop a frame of reference and decide on the data collection approach. Additionally, Miles & Huberman emphasize the importance of not taking the data out of the context in which they appear. (ibid)

Data display is the organization, and the compressed assembly of the collected data that allows researchers to draw conclusions and to take actions. The most common type of data display is extended text. However, with extended text there is a threat that the collected data is confusing or poorly structured. Thus hasty, partial, and unfounded conclusions may be drawn. Therefore Miles & Huberman (1994) suggest combining extended text with other types of display such as networks, graphs, charts, and matrices. These types of display help to reduce complex information into compact and immediately accessible forms that facilitate justified conclusions*.*

According to Saunders et al. (2007), data reduction and data display involve the categorization and unitizing of data. Categorization is the classification or grouping of the collected data into categories that can be meaningfully analyzed. These categories either derive from the frame of reference, which was developed before the data collection, or from the data itself. Either way, the identification of these categories is guided by the purpose of the research as expressed through the research questions. Unitizing data involves assigning relevant units of data (e.g. a series of words, one or more sentences, a line of a transcript or even a complete paragraph) to the corresponding categories. (ibid)

The third part of analysis is ***conclusion drawing/verification.*** Usually conclusions are already drawn during data collection. This is the case when researchers recognize patterns, regularities, explanations or causal flows for example. However, it is crucial to remain open-minded and skeptical in the beginning. As the data collection and analysis continues, conclusions become more grounded and explicit. (Miles & Huberman, 1994)

Regarding this thesis, the analysis involves a within-case analysis for both cases as well as a cross-case analysis where the empirical data of the cases are compared to each other. Within-case and cross-case analysis are described by Miles & Huberman (1994). As the data collection already followed a deductive approach and was guided by the frame of reference that was developed based on previous theories, the analysis of the collected data for this thesis will also follow the frame of reference. An analytical

procedure that is especially suitable for case studies is pattern matching (Yin, 1994). This involves "predicting a pattern of outcomes based on theoretical propositions" (Saunders et al., 2007, p. 489). and comparing them to the patterns emerging from the empirical data. However, to be able to recognize patterns, data analysis and data display have to be the first steps in the analysis. Finally, conclusions will be drawn and verified as the data analysis progresses. (Miles & Huberman, 1994)

4.7 Validity and Reliability

Validity and reliability are two critical issues in research. Keeping in mind the validity and reliability throughout this thesis will reduce "the possibility of getting the answer wrong". (Saunders et al., 2007, p. 149)

Reliability refers to the extent to which data collection techniques or analysis procedures of a study lead to similar findings if the study is repeated by others at another time (Saunders et al., 2007). According to Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Lowe (2002 cited in Saunders et al., 2007, p. 149) the following questions can be used to evaluate the reliability of a study:

- "Will the measures yield the same results on other occasions?" (ibid)
- "Will similar observations be reached by other observers?" (ibid)
- "Is there transparency in how sense was made from the raw data?" (ibid)

Robson (2002 cited in Saunders et al., 2007) claims that there are four threats to reliability - subject or participant error, subject or participant bias, observer error, and observer bias. Subject or participant errors originate from external factors such as the day of the week the study is conducted on for example. Subject or participant bias can occur if interviewees say what they think the interviewer wants to hear. Errors or bias can also occur because of the observer. Observer error and observer bias can be a result of the way questions are asked and the way answers are interpreted by different observers. (Saunders et al., 2007)

To ensure the reliability of this thesis, steps will be taken to prevent possible errors and bias. First of all, participants of the study will be told that their answers will remain anonymous and the video recording of the focus group session will only be seen by the research team for analysis. To prevent errors by observers, an interview guide with the exact wording of the questions was developed and will be used for both focus group interviews. Additionally, the interviews will be videotaped. This will allow the research team to reexamine the focus group discussion together, instead of having to rely on notes, thus decreasing the probability of observer bias.

Validity is "concerned with whether findings are really about what they appear to be about" (Saunders et al., 2007, p. 150). Yin (1994) describes three tests to ensure the validity of a study - construct validity, internal validity, and external validity. He further recommends case study tactics for each of these tests as well as the phase of research when these tactics should be applied.

Construct validity involves "establishing correct operational measures for the concepts being studied" (Yin, 1994, p. 33). Ensuring construct validity is especially difficult in case studies since data collection can be influenced by subjective judgements of the researcher if there is a lack of a "sufficiently operational set of measures" (ibid, 34). Threats to construct validity most likely occur in the data collection and composition phase of the research. Three case study tactics that can be used to ensure construct validity are the use of multiple sources of evidence, the establishment of a chain of evidence as well as having key informants reviewing draft case study reports. (Yin, 1994)

Internal validity is "a concern only for causal (or explanatory) case studies" (Yin, 1994, p. 35) in which researchers try to establish "a causal relationship, whereby certain conditions are shown to lead to other conditions, as distinguished from spurious relationships" (ibid). Since the research purpose of this thesis is exploratory and descriptive, internal validity is not a concern of this thesis. Therefore, there is no need to further explain the case study tactics.

External validity can also be referred to as generalizability and is concerned with whether the research findings may be equally applicable to other research settings (Saunders et al., 2007). Threats to external validity are most likely to occur in the research design phase. According to Yin (1994), external validity problems are a "major barrier in doing case studies" (p. 36). In case studies it is not possible to generalize from a sample to a larger population as can be done in surveys where statistics is used to make generalizations. Instead, case studies need to rely on analytical generalizations where researchers seek to generalize "a particular set of results to some broader theory" (ibid). Generalizations in case studies can only be made by using replication logic, i.e. developed theories need to be tested through replications of the results in other cases. (Yin, 1994)

Regarding this thesis, construct validity is maintained through the use of multiple sources of evidence since data will be collected through two focus groups. Moreover, the interviews are videotaped as well as transcribed and included in *Chapter 5, Empirical Data*. Lastly, the frame of reference is based upon previous literature and the interview guide was approved by an experienced researcher. External validity is ensured through

conducting two focus groups. Additionally a cross-case analysis will be done and all the findings are compared to the frame of reference. As already mentioned above, internal validity is not a concern since this thesis follows a descriptive and exploratory purpose.
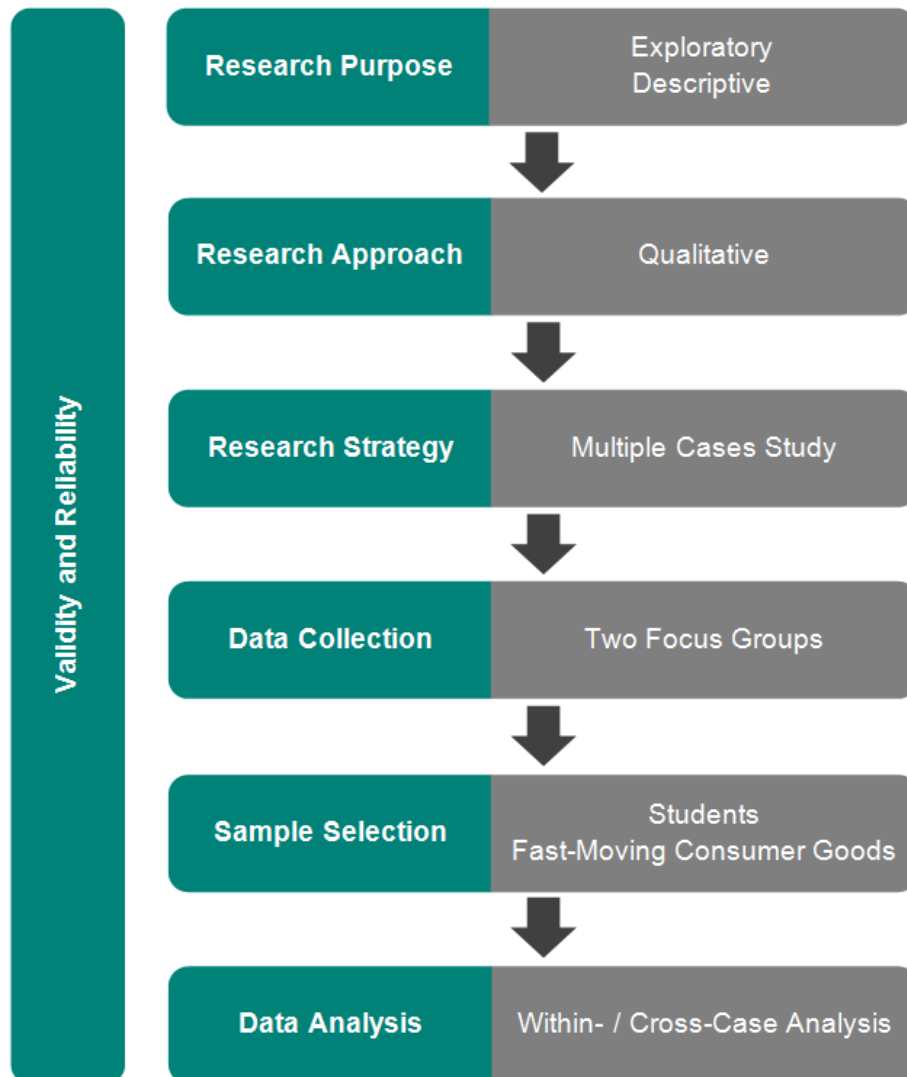
4.8 Overview over the Methodology Process

Figure 9: Methodology Process Overview

5 Empirical Data

This chapter presents the empirical data relevant for the data analysis. As described in the methodology chapter, data was collected from two focus groups. The first section of this chapter provides the collected data from focus group 1. The discussion in this group evolved around the product packaging of orange marmalade. The second section of this chapter contains the collected data from focus group 2. This group examined the product packaging of hair repair shampoo. As mentioned in the methodology chapter, the focus groups were both guided by the same interview guide shown in the Appendix. However, the questions were adapted depending on the situation during the discussion. Both focus groups started off with questions about purchase decision. These were followed by questions regarding product packaging. Furthermore, the participants were asked about their perception of the different marmalade or shampoo brands respectively. Lastly, the participants had the opportunity to use the product packaging and were asked about the brand image after usage.

5.1 Data Presentation: Focus Group 1 - Orange Marmalade

This section contains the empirical data collected from focus group 1. The data is summarized and displayed in a network to provide a compact and comprehensible overview over the data. Thereafter the collected data is presented in more detail.

Focus group 1 took place in the living room of a student apartment on Wednesday, May 14, 2014. It started at 6:30 PM and lasted for one and a half hours. Six students were invited and agreed to participate. In order to create an overall comfortable and casual atmosphere, drinks and snacks were offered to the focus group participants. Moreover, all the participants had already previously known each other which also contributed to a dynamic and interactive group discussion. In order to facilitate the data analysis later on, the focus group session was videotaped and transcribed. All the participants were informed thereof beforehand and gave their consent. Additionally, to help the discussion and the transcription of the video tape, the different brands of orange marmalade were given a random number. In the data presentation, the marmalade options will be referred to as 'Nr. X'. The various options of orange marmalade and the corresponding numbers are illustrated in Figure 10 below.

(1=Eldorado; 2=Önos Gunillas; 3=Björnekulla; 4=Den Gamle Fabrik; 5=Bob Original; 6=St. Dalfour; 7=Bob Squeezy; 8=Garant)

Figure 10: Orange Marmalade (numbered)

Table 7 shows the participants and the brands they chose.

Table 7: Participants' Choice of Orange Marmalade

Participant	Chosen Brand	Number
Participant 1	Den Gamle Fabrik	4
Participant 2	St. Dalfour's	6
Participant 3	Den Gamle Fabrik	4
Participant 4	St. Dalfour's	6
Participant 5	Bob Squeezy	7
Participant 6	Björnekulla	3

Table 7 shows that two participants chose Den Gamle Fabrik's orange marmalade, two chose that of St. Dalfour's, one chose Bob's Squeezy orange marmalade and another participant chose the Björnekulla marmalade.

As previously mentioned in the methodology chapter, the focus group consisted of three parts. At first, the participants were told to choose one brand of orange marmalade. Thereafter, the group discussion took place. Finally, the participants actually used the product packaging of the orange marmalade, followed by discussion regarding the usage of the package and potential changes in their brand image. Figure 11 gives an impression of the participants' experience with the package.

Figure 11: Usage of Marmalade Package

In order to summarize and display the collected data in an analyzable way, the frame of reference was used. The first step involved reviewing the frame of reference to create categories that would help to group the collected data. The next step was then to go through the transcription of the collected data, keeping the categories in mind, to assign statements and points raised by the participants to the appropriate categories. Figure 12 provides a compact overview over the entity of the collected data, structured with the help of the devised categories.

Figure 12: Overview over Empirical Data of Focus Group 1

As can be seen in Figure 12, all the categories (colored in dark grey) as well as the relevant points raised by the participants evolve around the topic as a whole. This was necessary due to the complex nature of the topic. Since all areas of the topic, namely product packaging, brand image and purchase decision, are somehow interconnected,

they were not treated as separate areas. However, colors have been used to provide structure and clarity to the network. The dark grey network nodes are the categories devised with the help of the frame of reference. Light grey represents the statements and points raised by the participants during the discussion. These include explanations, ideas, associations and feelings connected to the categories. Aspects that were pointed out as negative by the participants were colored in orange. To name the categories, the terms used by the participants were partly adopted. However, these were either the same or similar to the terms in the frame of reference.

In summary, categories that are connected to product packaging of orange marmalade and that seem to have influenced the participants purchase decision and their perception of a brand include:

- previous experience with the brand

- handling of the packaging

- convenience

- ease of use

- size

- shape

- liking for the package

- information

- drawing of oranges

- look

- aspects of product packaging that caught the participants' attention

It is however necessary to mention that all the marmalade packages were transparent so that the participants could see the actual marmalade. In the beginning, the discussion often evolved around the color and the look of the actual marmalade itself rather than the packaging. The moderators had to guide the conversation towards packaging.

One of the reasons for choosing a particular brand of orange marmalade was the ***previous experience with the same brand.*** This category and its connecting network nodes are shown in Figure 13.

Figure 13: Category Case 1 – Previous Experience with the Brand

As illustrated in Figure 13, some of the focus group participants made their purchase decision based on whether they liked or disliked those experiences. Participant 3 had already tried several of the options of orange marmalade presented in this focus group. She chose another brand since she was not satisfied with the brands she had tried before and wanted to try something new. Others had had experiences with the brand yet with a different product of that brand. Participant 5 had recently finished a bottle of Bob's strawberry jam. When asked to choose one of the options of orange marmalade, he narrowed the choice down to two brands (marmalade options Nr. 7 and Nr. 8). These were similar as they both came in a squeezable bottle. His decision then was made in favor of the brand he had previously known, in his words "I've had that brand before so I picked that one". Similarly, Participant 1 chose the marmalade made by Den Gamle Fabrik (Nr. 4) because "The other ones I don't know. It's the only one I know" and she liked it.

Another reason for choosing a particular brand was ***handling.*** The aspects related to this category are shown in Figure 14.

Figure 14: Category Case 1 – Handling

As highlighted with the color orange in Figure 14 "awkward" handling of product packaging was a point that was regarded as negative by the participants. Participant 5 even said that this was a reason why he did not purchase Bob's original orange marmalade in the bag (Nr. 5). He explicitly said, "I thought it'd be awkward. That's why I didn't buy that". More specifically the marmalade bag was regarded as "awkward" since it would be difficult to store as it would fall over and leak in the fridge. Another storing problem could be represented by the tall size of some of the marmalade options (Nr. 7 and Nr. 8). During the usage part of the focus group, Participant 3 mentioned that since there were no instructions for opening on the marmalade bag (Nr. 5), she did not know how and where to open it. Moreover it was "dirty" to get the marmalade out of the bag and spreading it on bread. For all the participants the usage of the bag was even worse than expected. "Hard to open" was also a negative aspect of product packaging pointed out by the participants. The lid on one of the glass jars was difficult to open. Another marmalade jar had an additional plastic seal around the lid. This was regarded as "hard to open", "useless" and therefore negative. However, several other participants saw it as a safety feature that made sure that the product is untainted. This was regarded as positive. In general, packaging that was "easy" to use was perceived as positive.

Convenience and *ease of use* are two other categories that emerged from the collected data. Since the participants often used the terms convenience and ease of use interchangeably, these two categories could not be separated clearly and are therefore shown together in Figure 15.

Figure 15: Category Case 1 – Convenience and Ease of Use

Convenience and ease of use were aspects of product packaging that either led the participants to choose a product or to at least prefer one brand over another. When asked about the aspect of product packaging that influenced her purchase decision, Participant 3

said "the easy way to take the marmalade out". Another participant explained that the only reason he chose Bob's Squeezy marmalade (Nr. 7) was the ease of use and convenience. "I picked that one… because it's easy because then you can just squeeze it". For him this packaging was also convenient since there was no need to use a knife or spoon. Therefore the use was fast. He also brought up convenience and ease of use as an answer to how the chosen brand fit to him since he thought of himself as a simple person. Another element of packaging that was seen as convenient was size. Big packages were considered as convenient since they lasted longer and required fewer trips to the store. On the side, one participant also pointed out that ease of use is important for families with kids.

Another category that is connected to ease of use and convenience is the *size.* Figure 16 shows this category with one network node. This is due to the fact that size is interconnected to other categories and as such has already been displayed with the other categories.
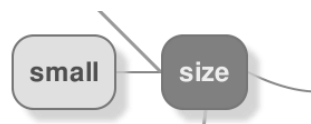

Figure 16: Category Case 1 – Size

Size was mentioned as a reason for purchase by one of the participants. Participant 2 explained "I don't usually eat marmalade" and that, among other reasons, was why she chose St. Dalfour's marmalade (Nr. 6). To her the jar looked small.

The next category, *shape,* is displayed in Figure 17 and is also connected to size.
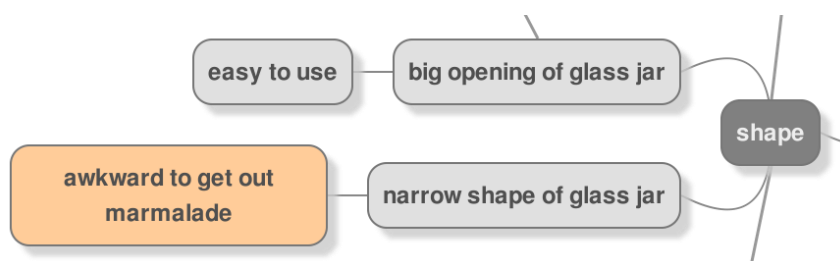

Figure 17: Category Case 1 – Shape

Shape contributed to the participants purchase decision in two ways. According to some participants, the narrow shape of St. Dalfour's marmalade was seen as "awkward" to get the marmalade out with a knife when it would be almost empty. Contrary a jar with a big opening was considered as easy to use.

Liking for the package also contributed to purchase decision and brand image. This category is shown in Figure 18.
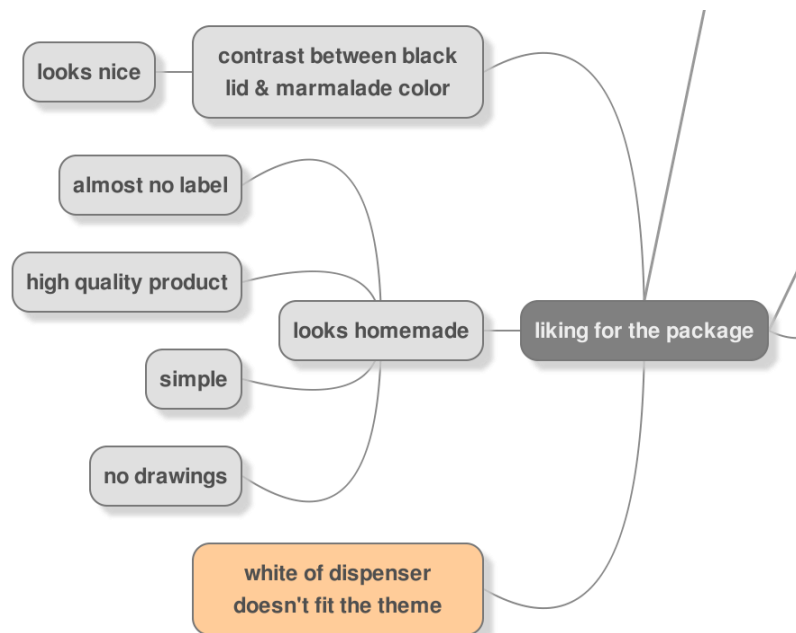

Figure 18: Category Case 1 – Liking for the Package

Participant 6 and 3 both pointed out that they liked the product packaging when it looks homemade. When asked how the chosen brand fit to the participants, Participant 3 said about Den Gamle Fabrik's marmalade (Nr. 4), "I like things that are homemade and… this brand seems to be homemade". Following this statement she was asked about the features of the packaging that made it look homemade to her. To her, the simple label without drawings reminded her of labels that people would normally use if they made the marmalade at home. She further mentioned that the circular shape of the label also made the marmalade look classy. The participants also associated the homemade look with a high quality product. Contrast was another point that contributed to the participants' liking for the package. Participant 3 preferred Önos Gunilla's packaging over that of Den Gamle Fabrik's since the black lid created a contrast to the color of the marmalade whereas the golden lid did not. To her, the contrast made the packaging "look nicer". During the usage, Participant 6 noted that he did not like the white dispenser of Garant's marmalade since it did not fit the color theme of the bottle.

Information provided on the packaging was another important aspect to some of the participants. This category is presented in Figure 19.
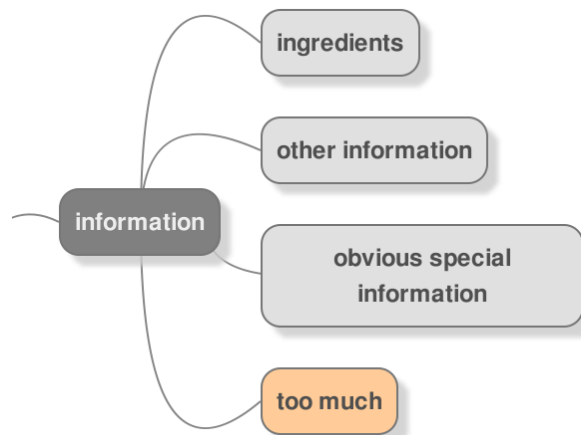

Figure 19: Category Case 1 – Information

Participant 2 regarded information and ingredients on the package as the most important feature to be found on product packaging. "I always read the labels. I always read all", she revealed. Similarly, Participant 4 also preferred if there was more information on the packaging to "figure out what's inside". According to him "if there is more stuff to tell you what's exactly in it, then it's better". Contrary, the other participants cared less about the information provided on the package. However, if the information provided was a defining feature of the product and if that information was made obvious, then Participant 6 would care slightly. He further clarified that he did not care enough to search. Participant 5 even claimed that generally "there's too much on packaging" and that "they should get rid of some of it" since some of the information was neither needed nor read anyways. He preferred it when the package was "cleaner".

Drawing of oranges was another category, illustrated in Figure 20, that was emphasized by some of the participants when asked about the feature that would influence their purchase decision.
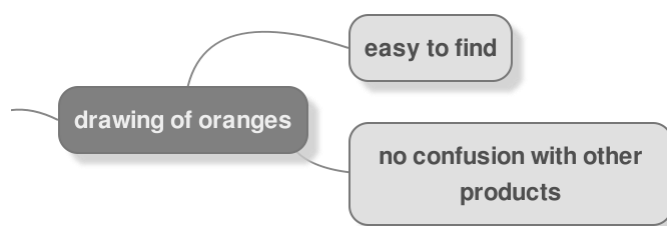

Figure 20: Category Case 1 – Drawing of Oranges

Participant 1 and 6 both pointed out that in a retail store, where orange marmalade can be found in a big array of other marmalades and products, they would be confused and would look for drawings of oranges on the package to identify the orange marmalade.

Throughout the entire focus group session, *look* was an aspect of product packaging that was brought up over and over again. There are many network nodes connected to this category as can be seen in Figure 21 below.

Figure 21: Category Case 1 – Look

Words that were used to describe how the packaging looks are "cheap", "good", "nice", "high quality", "classy", "bad quality" and "shit". Furthermore the participants also had

different associations with some of the elements of product packaging. Most of the answers were given in response to the question "What comes to your mind when you look at the packaging?". Participants 4 and 6 suggested that the simple and white label with almost no details made Björnekulla's orange marmalade (Nr. 3) look cheap. In contrast to that, Participant 1 thought the shape made it cheap rather than the color. The participants also thought of the look of the package as good or nice for various reasons. For example, Participant 6 perceived the dark label of St. Dalfour's orange marmalade (Nr. 6) as better than the white label of Björnekulla's marmalade (Nr. 3). Participant 5 commented on the label of Den Gamle Fabrik's marmalade (Nr. 4), "...it's cleaner, it's nicer… every other marmalade just has too much text on it…". Additionally, the use of thicker and "classy" paper for the label made Önos Gunillas' package (Nr. 2) look classy and more expensive.The circular shape of the label on Den Gamle Fabrik's jar (Nr. 4) was also considered as classy. Participant 6 also found that the writing around the lid of St. Dalfour's marmalade (Nr. 6) made it look classier. Moreover, the participants also used the look of the package as an inference to quality, bad as well as high quality. Participant 4 explained his reason for choosing St. Dalfour's marmalade (Nr. 6) and how the brand fit to him, "...mine looked the highest quality and I like things that are high quality". To him the "...details… makes it look like an older brand". Contrary, the words "shit" and "bad quality" were used to describe the way Eldorado's marmalade jar (Nr. 1) looked. Lastly, there were also some associations that the participants had with the way the packaging looked. For example, the golden lid was associated with honey. Furthermore, the shape of the squeezable bottles (Nr. 7 and Nr. 8) also reminded the participants of honey. Participant 3 explained, "I've seen this shape for honey but I've never seen this shape before for jam". To Participant 2, the shape of the marmalade bag (Nr. 5) looked like a sausage.

The last category that emerged from the collected data includes the **aspects of product packaging that caught the participants' attention.** These are illustrated in Figure 22.
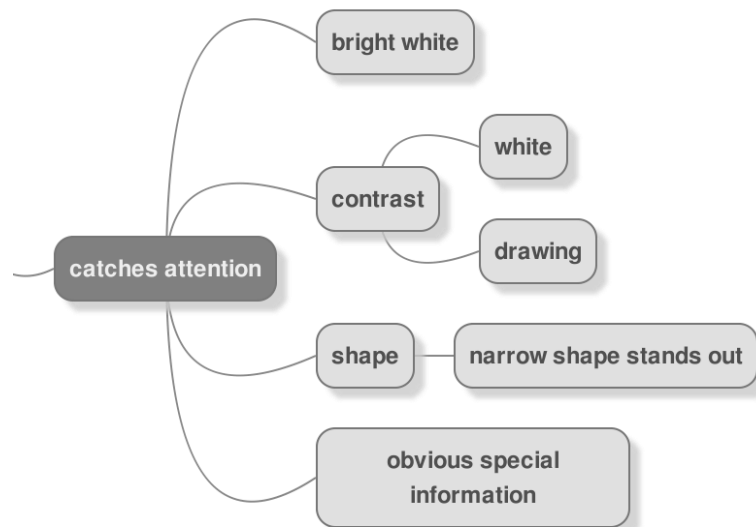

Figure 22: Category – Aspects that caught the Participant's Attention

Participant 6 explained, "If I went up to the shelf and did not instantly see one, I would just go for the one right in front of me". However, he stated that if there was one product that caught his eye, then he would choose that one. "Björnekulla (Nr. 3) caught my eye because it is bright white", he said. Contrast was also found to attract attention. Participant 3 compares Björnekulla's marmalade (Nr. 3) to that of Eldorado (Nr. 1), "this (Nr. 3) is white and with the drawing it makes more contrast and then there is more attention on this than on the other one (Nr. 1) which is almost the same color as the marmalade". Moreover, participants 4 and 5 mention shape as elements of packaging that would catch their attention. "St. Dalfour's marmalade (Nr. 6) is actually quite different compared to the other ones… it's narrow… it stands out slightly more." Furthermore, Participant 6 mentions that special information about defining attributes of a product should be made obvious. If that information was big enough to catch his eye he would be likely to consider a brand.

Summary

This summary highlights major points brought up by the participants in focus group 1. Various aspects were regarded as important for the purchase decision and the brand image. The look of product packaging was a major point of discussion. The participants used the look to infer an impression of the brand as well as the product. The way the participants perceived the look depended on the use and combination of product packaging elements. Shape and color were the elements that seemed to influence the perception of the package the most. Moreover, the design of the label also contributed to

an overall look. The look also influenced the participants' liking for the package. Packaging that attracted their attention facilitated their decision making process. Convenience, ease of use and handling were also considered when the participants made their decision.

5.2 Data Presentation: Focus Group 2 - Hair Repair Shampoo

This section contains the empirical data collected from focus group 2. Similarly to the previous focus group, the collected data from focus group 2 is also summarized and displayed in a network in order to give a compact and comprehensible overview over the data. Moreover, the data is presented in more detail.

Focus group 2 took place at the same place as focus group 1 on Sunday, May 18, 2014 at 4:30PM. The group discussion also lasted for one and a half hours. Eight students were invited. This was done in anticipation that some students might not show up since it was the weekend. In the end, only six of the invited students could participate. Similarly to focus group 1, drinks and snacks were offered to the participants in order to create an overall comfortable and casual atmosphere. In addition to that, the members of this focus group had already previously known each other as well. This also contributed to an interactive group discussion. In order to facilitate the data analysis later on, this focus group session was also videotaped and transcribed. All the participants were informed thereof beforehand and gave their consent. Additionally, the different brands of hair repair shampoo were given a random number, to help the discussion and the transcription of the video tape. In the data presentation, the hair repair shampoos will be referred to as "Nr. X". Figure 23, shown below, illustrates the various options of hair repair shampoos and the corresponding numbers.

(1=Garnier Fructis; 2=Schwarzkopf Gliss; 3=Wella Pro Series; 4=Syoss; 5=L'Oréal Elvital; 6=Pantene Pro-V; 7=Head & Shoulders; 8=Dove Hair Therapy)

Figure 23: Hair Repair Shampoo

Table 8 shows all participants and their chosen brands.

Table 8: Participants' Choice of Hair Repair Shampoo

Participant	Chosen Brand	Number
Participant 1	Pantene Pro-V	6
Participant 2	Schwarzkopf Gliss	2
Participant 3	Pantene Pro-V	6
Participant 4	L'Oréal Elvital	5
Participant 5	Head & Shoulders	7
Participant 6	Schwarzkopf Gliss	2

As already mentioned in the methodology chapter, the focus group session was divided into three parts. After choosing a brand of hair repair shampoo, the group discussion was initiated by a set of opening questions. Afterwards, the participants used the product packaging of the hair repair shampoos. Lastly, the participants discussed the usage of the package and whether or not there were any changes regarding their brand image after usage. Figure 24 shows the participants while giving the usage of the shampoo bottles a try.

Figure 24: Usage of Shampoo package

The summary and the display of the data collected from focus group 2 followed the same procedure as that of focus group 1. This involved reviewing the frame of reference to create categories that could help to sort the collected data. The same categories as for the data presentation of focus group 1 were used in order to facilitate the analysis and comparison of the different sets of data later on. However, new categories were created as they emerged from the data. After that the relevant statements and points raised by the participants were assigned to the fitting categories. Since this focus group yielded more data than the previous group, the network display created for this set of data was too large to fit on one page. Therefore it had to be split into Figure 25 and Figure 26. These are shown below.

Figure 25: Overview over Empirical Data of Focus Group 2 – Part 1

Figure 26: Overview over Empirical Data of Focus Group 2 – Part 2

As a reminder, the color dark grey in Figure 25 and Figure 26 represent the categories that were created based on the frame of reference. The statements or points raised by the participants during the discussion are colored in light grey. These are explanations, ideas, associations or feelings connected to the categories. Orange stands for aspects that were considered as negative by the participants.

In summary, categories that are connected to product packaging of hair repair shampoo and that seem to have influenced the participants purchase decision and their perceptions of a brand include:

- look
- material
- liking for the package
- convenience
- ease of use
- shape
- handling
- information
- graphics
- aspects of product packaging that caught the participants' attention
- connotation
- previous experience with the brand
- typeface

The *look* of a package was one of the reasons for participants to choose a brand. This category and the corresponding network nodes can be seen in Figure 27.
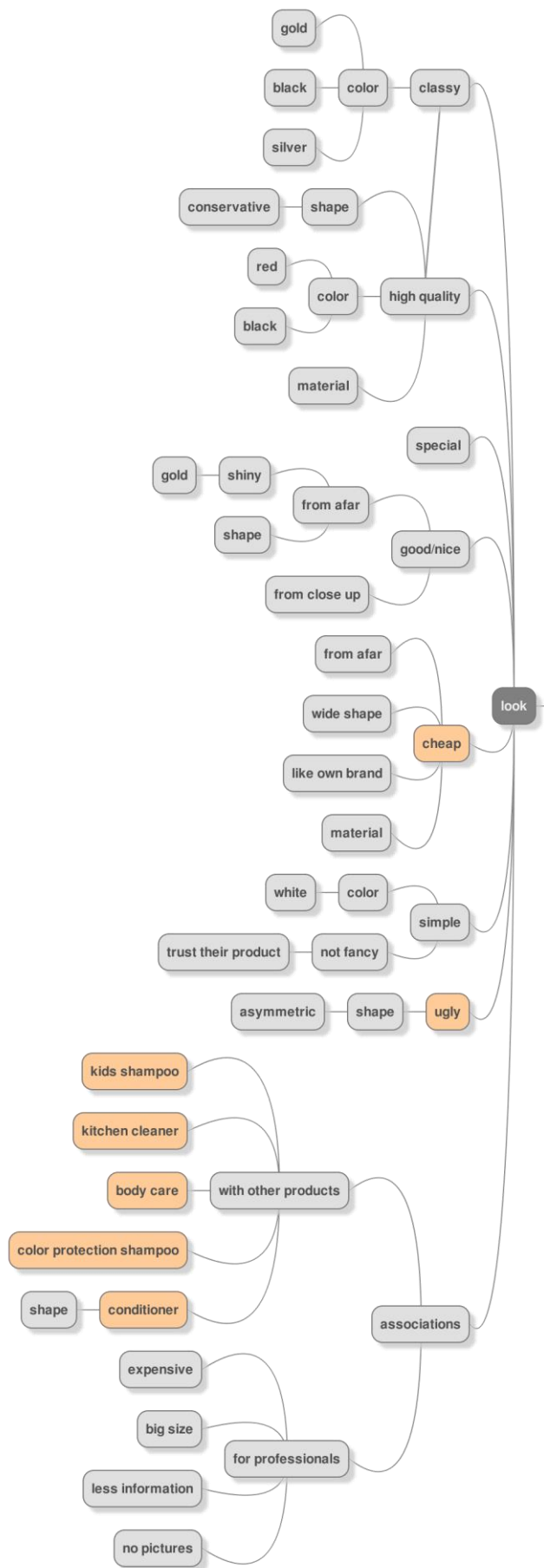
Figure 27: Category Case 2 – Look

The words that were used to describe the way the packages looked are "cheap", "high quality", "good", "nice", "classy", "special", "simple" and "ugly". Moreover, the participants also had different associations with the look of the packaging. Both, Participant 2 and Participant 6 agreed that Schwarzkopf Gliss' shampoo (Nr. 2) looked nice and classy and that this was their main reason for choosing this brand. Participant 6 explained that the use of the colors gold, black and silver made that shampoo look classy. For Participant 2 the shape and material as well as the color made her believe that the shampoo was of high quality. Additionally Participant 4 found the shape of L'Oréal Elvital (Nr. 5) and Schwarzkopf Gliss (Nr. 2) "conservative" and therefore they looked high quality. Compared to the orange of Garnier Fructis' shampoo (Nr. 1), the colors black (of Nr. 2) and red (of Nr. 3) made the package look more qualitative to Participant 2. Regarding the material, she could "feel" the quality. Moreover, she also described Schwarzkopf Gliss' shampoo (Nr. 2) as "special" and having it would make her special. Another shampoo, that of L'Oréal Elvital (Nr. 5), "looks nice from afar" due to its shape and the color gold. Moreover, it was shiny. Contrary, Participant 4 said that when looking at it close up, it had too much information as if "they're trying to prove something". Compared to that, Syoss' shampoo (Nr. 4) was perceived as cheap looking from afar but nice close up. It looked cheap due to the wide shape of the bottle. Additionally it seemed like an own brand to another participant. Some materials were also perceived as cheap looking, for example the transparent plastic of Syoss' bottle (Nr. 4). The "cheap" look was one of the reasons why the participants did not consider certain brands. Another word that was used to describe the look of product packaging was "simple". Participant 5 mentioned that if he did not know any brands, he would choose one that looked simple and white. To Participant 1, simple packaging also implies that the brand trusts its product and therefore does not need to add anything that makes it look fancy. Another reason for not choosing a particular brand is the "ugliness" of its appearance. The asymmetric shape of the bottle was seen as "ugly" by one of the participants.

The participants also had different associations with the look of the packages. Firstly, some of the hair repair shampoos were associated with other products such as kids shampoo, kitchen cleaner, body care products or color protection shampoos. L'Oréal Elvital's shampoo (Nr. 5) was confused with a conditioner due to the shape of its bottle. "Professionalism" was another association the participants had with two of the shampoos. Wella Pro Series' (Nr. 3) and Syoss' shampoo (Nr. 4) were thought of as products that were used by professional hairdressers. This was due to the big size of the packages and the relatively little amount of information as well as the lack of pictures on the bottles. Associating these two brands with professionalism made the participants think that the products might be expensive.

Material, as described under *look* was an element of packaging that was used to infer the quality of the product from. However, there are other aspects that are connected to material. Therefore, an additional **material** category, shown in Figure 28, was created in order to be able to describe and show the connections of these aspects.
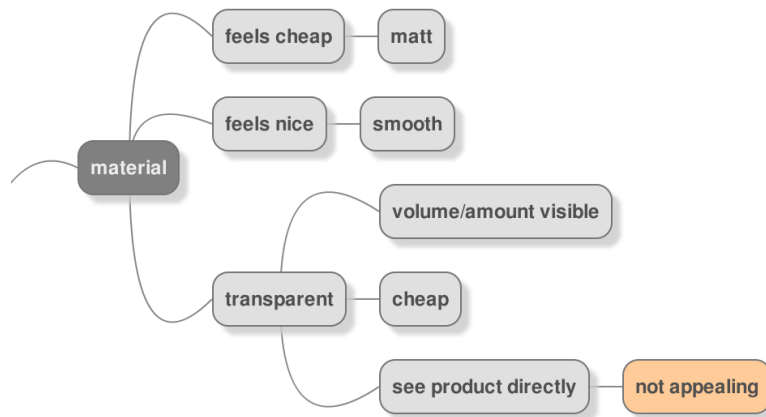

Figure 28: Category Case 2 – Material

As mentioned previously, Wella Pro Series' shampoo (Nr. 3) was associated with a professional hair shampoo due to the little amount of information and lack of pictures and therefore was thought to be expensive. Nevertheless, it was also perceived as cheap. Participant 6 described the material of the shampoo (Nr. 3) as "kinda cheap…" and explained "it's the feel of it… it feels cheap cause it's matt". Contrary, the "smooth" material of Schwarzkopf Gliss' shampoo (Nr. 2) felt nice. The transparent plastic that was used for the bottle of Syoss' shampoo (Nr. 4) was also perceived as cheap since it was directly clear that the bottle was made out of plastic material. Moreover, the transparent plastic also allowed the participants to see the shampoo directly. Participant 2 said that seeing the product directly was not always good. She states that if the product was not appealing to her, she would not buy it. In contrast to that, if the product was "hidden" she might be curious to try. Participant 6 added to that and mentioned he would be more influenced by the outside, if he did not know "what the actual stuff looks like". An advantage of the transparent material, however, was that the participants could see the amount of shampoo in the bottle.

The participants also brought up their *liking for the package* as one of the reasons for their brand choice. The connecting network nodes are shown below in Figure 29.
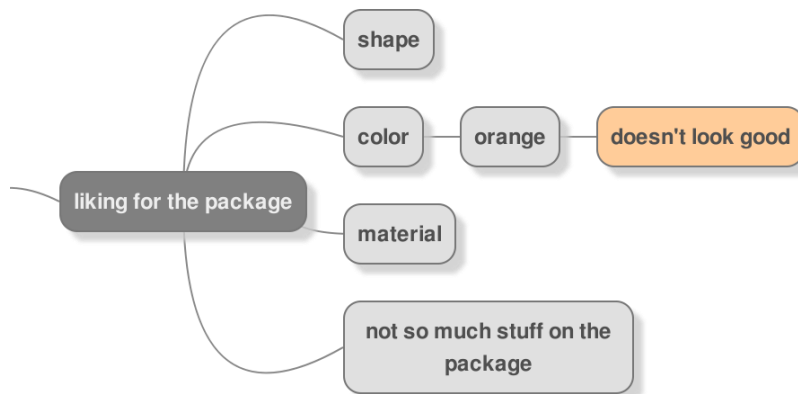

Figure 29: Category Case 2 – Liking for the Package

During the discussions, only two of the six participants specifically said that they liked the package of their shampoo choice. Participant 2's liking for the package was influenced by shape, color and material. As mentioned earlier these three elements of product packaging were also an indicator for quality. Participant 2, who used to buy Garnier Fructis shampoos when she was younger, commented on Garnier Fructis' hair repair shampoo (Nr. 1), "It is good but I don't like the colors". The color orange was specifically pointed out, "it looks not good". Moreover, Participant 5 emphasized that he liked the Head & Shoulders bottle since it did not have "so much stuff on it".

Convenience is another category that came up in the focus group. It is shown in Figure 30.
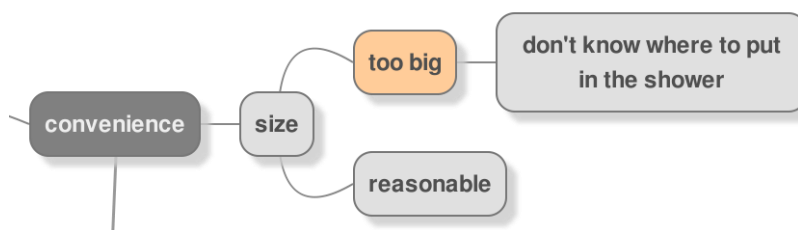
Figure 30: Category Case 2 – Convenience

The participants mentioned that the shampoo bottle needed to be convenient since they used their shampoos for multiple purposes, not just in the shower at home but also in the gym for example. A bottle that is "too big" would be "a nuisance for moving about!" whereas a reasonable sized bottle would be considered convenient. Moreover, bottles that are "too big", such as Syoss' (Nr. 4) and Wella Pro Series' shampoo (Nr. 3), "gotta be a nuisance" to keep in the shower. Participant 6 commented "Where are you gonna set that [in the shower]?".

Ease of use was also important to the participants. This category is illustrated in Figure 31.

Figure 31: Category Case 2 – Ease of Use

For the focus group participants, ease of use meant that the shampoo bottle could be placed upside down to "get the last wee dribbles" out 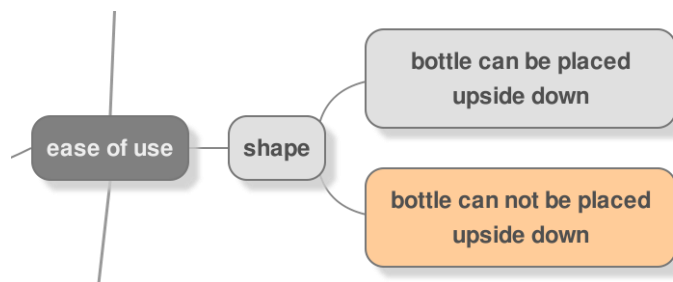of the bottle. This was connected to the shape. One of the participants pointed out that the lid of the Syoss and that of the Wella Pro Series bottle were too small in order to turn the bottle upside down. The bottle could not stand on the lid without falling over. This was perceived as negative. The lid of the L'Oréal Elvital bottle had "more surface" and could therefore be placed upside down without falling over. While testing the package of that shampoo, Participant 4 found out that it is even more stable upside down.

The *shape* of the shampoo bottles was also a major point of discussion. In general shape was connected to various other categories. That is why it has already been mentioned before. However, there were different aspects that could not be directly assigned to any of the other categories. Therefore shape was introduced as another category and can be seen in Figure 32 below.
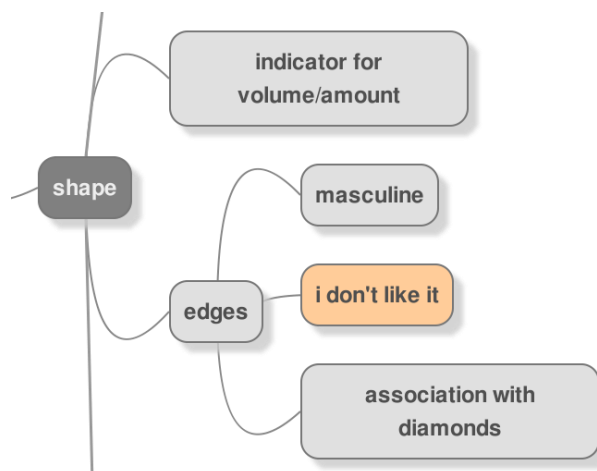

Figure 32: Category Case 2 – Shape

Firstly, the participants used shape as an indicator for the amount of shampoo inside the bottle. Participant 3 compared the Pantene Pro-V (Nr. 6) and Dove bottles (Nr. 8),

"Between these two, I think this one (Nr. 6) has more but it's the same [amount]". She explained that the shape of the Dove bottle (Nr. 8), which was wide at the bottom and rather narrow at the top, made it look smaller than the Pantene Pro-V bottle (Nr. 6). Participant 4 further compared the Dove bottle (Nr. 8) to that of L'Oréal Elvital (Nr. 5) and noticed that Nr. 5 looked bigger. He explained that the shape of bottle Nr. 5 was thin from the side but wide from the front. However, consumers would only see the front when looking at the shampoo shelf in a retail store. Participant 6 added, "By the time you pick it up, you're not looking at [the amount] anymore…". Furthermore, the angular shape of the Schwarzkopf Gliss bottle (Nr. 2) was pointed out specifically. Participant 5 said that he did not like the bottle because of its many edges. Participant 6, who seemed to like that bottle, associated the shape with diamonds. He further added that the edges made the bottle look "manly" and therefore would catch a man's eye.

Handling is a category that is related to shape. The connecting network nodes are shown in Figure 33.
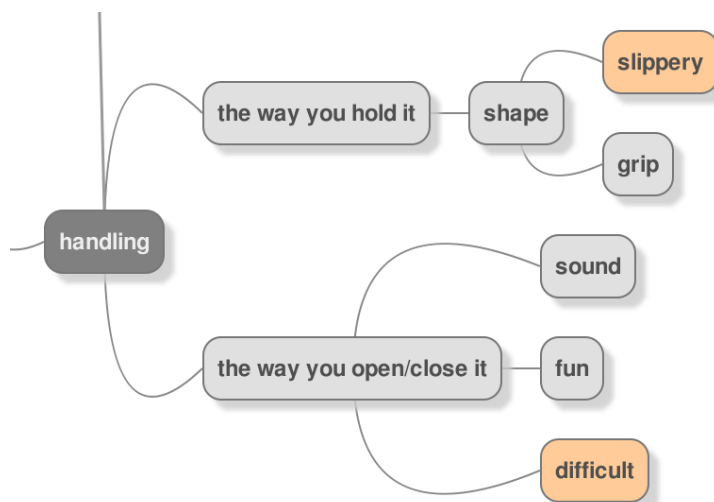
Figure 33: Category Case 2 – Handling

 Regarding handling, the participants only mentioned the way the bottles could be held and the way they could be opened. Handling is related to the shape as the shape determined the way the shampoo bottles were held. According to one of the participants "the way you hold it is important". This, among other factors, influenced her purchase decision. She described the L'Oréal Elvital bottle, saying that the vertical lines that were engraved in the material would give the bottle grip and make it less slippery. When using the bottle, she noticed that grabbing it from the side was slippery. Contrary, grabbing it from the front so that her fingers were placed on the vertical lines was "good". Another participant described the shape of the Dove bottle (Nr. 8) as "superbad". As it was wide at the bottom and narrow at the top, she thought, it would be slippery to grab when having wet hands. However, after using the bottle, she concluded that it was "not that slippery

actually". Another aspect that was brought up by Participant 6 is grip. He expected the angular shape of the Schwarzkopf Gliss bottle to provide grip. Yet, when he used the bottle the edges of the bottle did not matter at all since he grabbed the bottle from the top and not from the side as he thought he would.

The participants further discussed the way the bottles opened or closed. When asked "What comes to your mind when you look at the packaging?", Participant 4 pointed out "There is also the way you open it… the noise… they make beautiful noises". Moreover, to him, the Garnier Fructis shampoo (Nr. 1) looked like it would be fun to open. He found the green ball that was part of the lid "original". Contrary, Participant 6 argued "That's a nightmare to open". Similarly, Participant 2 added that it would be difficult for people with big hands to open that kind of lid. Otherwise, the opening process was "good" when she tested the packaging. To her it felt like "you can close it perfectly". In contrast to that Dove's shampoo bottle (Nr. 8) could be closed but still felt like it would open again. She further noticed the difference in the sound she could hear when closing the lids, "click click" for the Dove bottle (Nr. 8) and "clock clock" for the Garnier Fructis bottle (Nr. 1).

The participants also pointed out that ***information*** is an important element that influenced their purchase decision. This category and its network nodes can be seen in Figure 34 below.
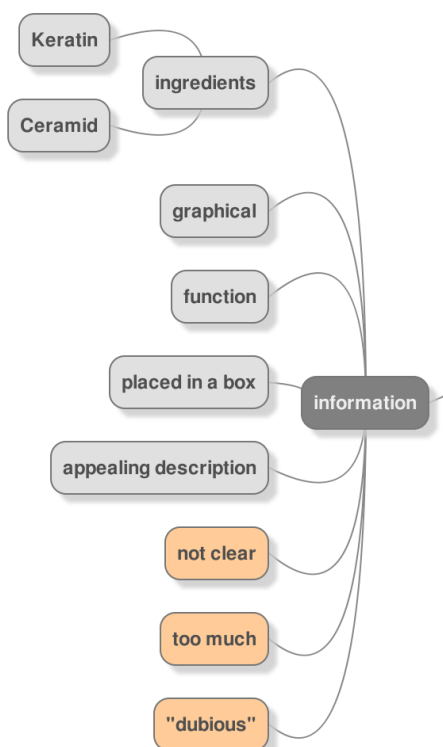

Figure 34: Category Case 2 – Information

Ingredients were one type of information that was needed to make a brand choice. Participant 6 looked for Keratin since he knew that this was good for hair. He therefore almost immediately narrowed his choices down to two brands, Schwarzkopf Gliss (Nr. 2) and L'Oréal Elvital (Nr. 5). He found the information he was looking for at once. The Schwarzkopf Gliss bottle contained a graphic representing a smoothed out strand of hair including the text "3x Liquid Keratin". The L'Oréal Elvital bottle had the information printed on the front of the bottle. However, there were other brands that contained Keratin as well. Participant 6 thought it was "good" that the Schwarzkopf Gliss (Nr. 2) bottle also provided a picture on the back, showing the hair before and after usage. "It looks like they're taking care of it", he said. Looking at the back of the L'Oréal Elvital bottle (Nr. 5) he noticed that the shampoo contained Ceramid as well, which he also knew was good for hair. He did not see this information when he was choosing. For another participant, it was important to find the information about the functions of the product, i.e. she was looking for the hair type the product was made for. "They have suit for different kind of hair and my hair belong to the dry one so I every time I search…", she told. For the brand she chose, the information on hair type was placed in a golden box on the front. Other participants added to that, saying that often brands placed the functions of their different shampoos at the same spot on the bottle. This would made it easier to find the right shampoo. Moreover, Participant 2 revealed that she would be willing to try something new, if among other aspects the "description on the packaging is appealing". However, if the information was not clear enough, she would choose another product. "Too much" information, nevertheless, was perceived as negative by other participants. One of them said, "It's like they're trying to prove something". Moreover, the participants also found some of the information dubious. To them Pantene Pro-V's claim that their shampoo could repair up to 99 percent hair damage was "bullshit". "I don't even know if they test that", commented one of the participants.

The *aspects that caught the participant's attention* also influenced purchase decision. As can be seen in Figure 35, these include color and shape for this focus group.
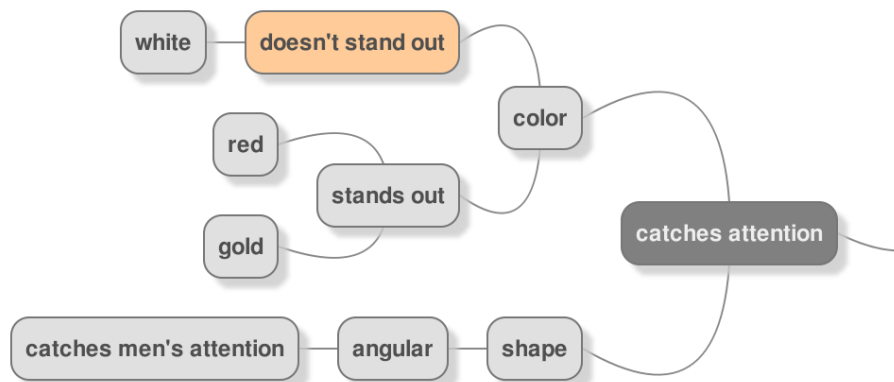
Figure 35: Category Case 2 – Aspects that caught the Participants' Attention

Color was one of the elements of packaging that attracted attention. Participant 4 explains, "And seeing the red, this is what I'm gonna look at first… it pops out from the others". He therefore first considered Wella Pro Series' shampoo (Nr. 3), the bottle of which was completely red. As this one, however, looked cheap, he then considered L'Oréal Elvital's shampoo (Nr. 5), the bottle of which was partly red and contained golden elements. Participant 2 added that "most of the products… the packaging are white" and therefore do not stand out and do not attract attention. However, the use of different colors for the packaging would make it noticeable. Shape was also mentioned as an element of product packaging that caught attention. Particularly, the angular shape of Schwarzkopf Gliss' shampoo bottle was described as manly and therefore would catch a man's eye.

The participants also purchased a certain brand because of their *previous experience with that brand.* The different points raised by the participants are illustrated in Figure 36.
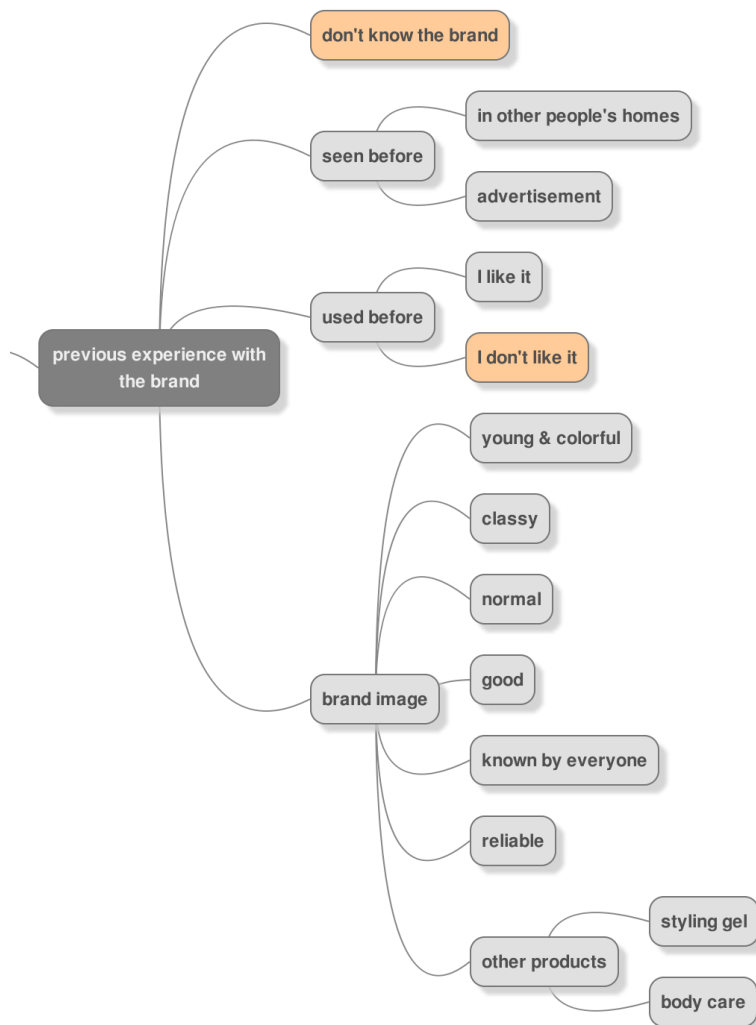
Figure 36: Category Case 2 – Previous Experience with the Brand

One of the participants revealed that he chose L'Oréal Elvital's hair repair shampoo because the colors attracted his attention and he knew the brand. He had seen "several girls having this shampoo in their bathrooms". This "affected [his] judgement in some way", even though he had never tried any L'Oréal products before. He thought it was a good brand. Contrary, he would not buy a brand that he did not know at all. Participant 3 said that advertisements play a big role for products such as shampoo, "I mean you want the brand because your friend or in the TV appears this [shampoo] with this girl with this nice hair. And after you think 'Oh I like this girl, I want to be with this nice hair'. And you go to the shop and you see the brand…". She confirmed that in general seeing a product in a TV advertisement would indirectly affect her. Other participants chose their shampoo based on whether they had used either the brand or the exact same product before. Participant 1 and 3 purchased Pantene Pro-V's shampoo (Nr. 6) because they used it

before and it was the one they liked the most. Contrary, they had already tried most of the brands for this focus group and since they did not like their shampoos, they did not want to buy any shampoos of those brands again. Similarly, Participant 2 had not previously used the Schwarzkopf Gliss hair repair shampoo (Nr. 2). However, she had purchased and tried other shampoos by Schwarzkopf Gliss and she liked them. Therefore, she wanted to try the one she chose (Nr. 2).

"Young and colorful", "good", "classy", "normal" and "reliable" were the adjectives used to describe some of the brand images. When asked how the chosen brands fit to them, the participants gave various answers and also included the type of people who would use the brands they did not choose. Garnier Fructis' shampoo (Nr. 1) was perceived as a shampoo for "young and colorful people". The Schwarzkopf Gliss shampoo (Nr. 2) was seen as "classy" and "for the classy people". Head & Shoulders (Nr. 7) was described as a "normal" but "good" brand. As mentioned above, L'Oréal was also considered as a "good" brand that everyone knows. "Reliable" was the word used when talking about Pantene Pro-V. Moreover, the brands were often associated with other products than shampoo. Especially Garnier Fructis reminded the participants more of styling gels and "stuff you get when you're like fourteen…". Dove was also rather associated with body care products, "When I think of the brand it's more like for body...".

The discussions also evolved around another category, *graphics.* The points brought up by the participants are shown in Figure 37.
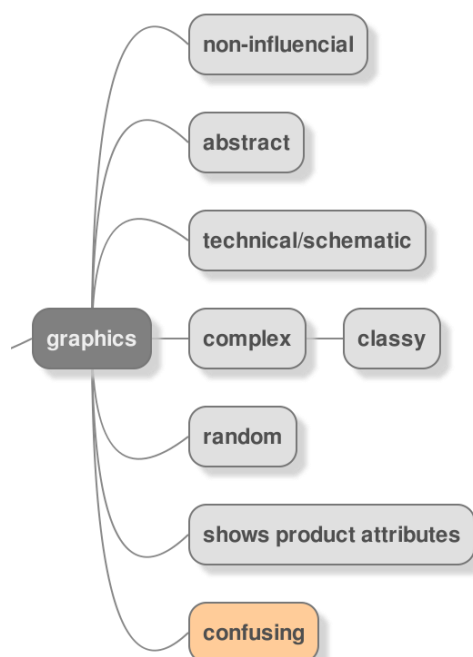

Figure 37: Category Case 2 – Graphics

When asking the participants to elaborate on the graphics found on the different shampoo bottles, most of them stated that the graphics such as pictures or symbols did not influence them in any way. Participant 3 answered, "I don't really pay attention" and that for shampoos the graphics did not matter. The graphics on the packaging of Garnier Fructis (Nr. 1) was described as "abstract" whereas the graphics on the bottle of the L'Oréal Elvital shampoo (Nr. 5) was seen as "technical" and "schematic", and more informational since the information about defining product attributes was placed within the graphic. The graphics on the Nr. 5 bottle were further described as "complex" and fitting to the classy look. To Participant 6, most of the graphics seemed to be "randomly" chosen. According to him, the only graphic that seemed to have anything to do with the actual product was seen on the Schwarzkopf Gliss bottle. It showed a smoothed out hair. Participant 2 added, "This kind of pictures… [I directly see that] it will protect my hair". Contrary, the picture on the Garnier Fructis bottle (Nr. 1) was confused with aloe vera. However, the participants did not know what it was supposed to be and why it was shown.

In response to the question "What do you think of the colors?", the participants mentioned the *connotation* with colors. This category can be seen in Figure 38 below.

Figure 38: Category Case 2 – Connotation

The only color the participants specifically had a connotation with was white. "White connotes cleanliness" and made them think "Oh, that's clean". Some participants added that white can be found in a lot of body care and dental products.

Another category that emerged during the focus group was *typeface.* The network nodes connected to this category can be found in Figure 39.

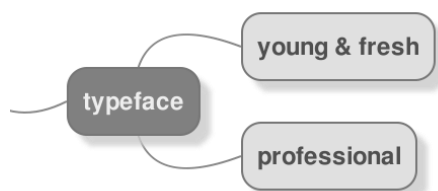

Figure 39: Category Case 2 – Typeface

The typeface used on the packaging of Garnier Fructis' shampoo was portrayed as "young and fresh". Syoss and Wella Pro Series used a more "professional" font on their packaging.

Summary

This summary highlights the most important points brought up in focus group 2. Several reasons were considered as influential for the purchase decision. The majority of the participants based their decision on their previous experience with the brand. This included the use of the exact same product or other products of the same brand. Additionally, seeing the brand in other people's homes or in advertisements also influenced their purchase decision. Not knowing the brand was given as reason for not considering a product. Furthermore, the liking for the packaging also contributed positively to brand choice. This aspect was connected to the look of the packages. Moreover, the look also influenced purchase decision as it gave an impression of the brand and product. In general, the way the participants perceived the look depended on the use and combination of the elements of product packaging. Worth mentioning is that the way the participants perceived the look of the Syoss bottle changed over the duration of the focus group. Shape, color and material were elements that were mentioned over and over again. Furthermore, the participants also thought of color and shape as elements that decided if a package attracted their attention. This was necessary for a brand to enter their consideration set. Information was another aspect pointed out by the participants. They emphasized that ingredients and functions of the product should be included. Moreover an appealing description of the product would potentially influence purchase decision positively.

Convenience, handling and ease of use were aspects that came up after the participants had closely looked at the packages and/or during the usage of the product packaging. These categories were mostly connected to size and shape. These aspects were not initially brought up as influencing purchase decision.

6 Data Analysis

This chapter contains the analysis of the empirical data presented in the previous chapter. Moreover, the data is compared to the frame of reference. First, a within-case analysis for case 1, orange marmalade, as well as case 2, hair repair shampoo, is conducted. Thereafter the data of both cases are compared to each other within a cross-case analysis. The aim is to detect similarities and differences between the cases. The analysis is done in order to be able to draw conclusions which then will be presented in the last chapter of this thesis.

6.1 Within-case Analysis - Case 1: Orange Marmalade

In this section the data analysis for case 1 is conducted. The empirical data regarding brand image is analyzed first. After that, the analysis focuses on purchase decision.

6.1.1 RQ1: Brand Image

Table 9 provides a summary of the parts of the frame of reference that concerns brand image. The empirical data is compared to this.

Table 9: Summarized Frame of Reference – Brand Image

Mediated Experience	• Elements of product packaging convey **functional** benefits.
	• Elements of product packaging convey **experiential** benefits.
Lived Experience	• Elements of product packaging convey **symbolic** benefits.

As displayed in Table 9 brand image can be influenced through product packaging via mediated and lived experiences as its elements convey functional, experiential and/or symbolic brand benefits. These experiences shape consumers' perception of the brand. (Underwood, 2003)

Table 10 shows whether or not previous findings and arguments could be supported with the evidence from the empirical data. A more detailed discussion and comparison of the frame of reference and literature with the collected data can be found below.

Table 10: Case 1 – RQ1 Comparison of Theory with Empirical Data

Theory	Supported
Product packaging influences brand image via **mediated experiences.**	Yes
Product packaging influences brand image via **lived experiences.**	Yes

Mediated Experiences

According to Underwood (2003) consumers can experience symbolism without actually purchasing or using a product. These mediated experiences can be gained through exposure to product packaging at the point of purchase. Therefore packaging can influence brand image via mediated experiences. (ibid)

The empirical data collected from focus group 1 showed that product packaging generated symbolism through its elements and influenced the formation of a brand image in the minds of the participants. "High quality", "class", "cheap", "homemade", "convenience" and "family" are the symbolic meanings that emerged from the collected data. One of the participants stated that Den Gamle Fabrik's marmalade seemed to be homemade and further explained that the label made it look that way, "... It is more simple and has no drawings. It is like the label you can put on in your home when you do it by your own. The circle is more classy". To her the brand was simple but classy and stood for products that were homemade. Another participant thought St. Dalfour's marmalade "... looked the highest quality". The details on the label made it look like an older brand that had been making marmalade for a long time. Participant 6 added that the "writing around the edge of the lid" made it classier as well. Participant 2 did not specify which element of the product packaging made it seem the best; however she thought the overall package looked nice. To all three participants the elements of product packaging conveyed a brand image of high quality and class. Another brand, Önos Gunillas, was also perceived as a classy and more expensive brand because of its label. Participant 2 explained, "... that's classy paper actually… Like it's a thicker paper so you'd think it's more expensive". Though he did not like the design of the label itself, he still thought of the brand positively. The brand image of Björnekulla was influenced through its label as well but also through its shape. It was perceived as "not the best but one of the cheaper ones". Participants 4

and 6 suggested the reason it looked "cheap" was because of the simple and white label with just "one picture of what it is and the rest kinda blank". Participant 1 argued it looked cheap because of the shape rather than the color. Furthermore, two of the participants perceived the squeezable bottles of Bob's and Garant's marmalade as easy to use. One of them explained "... it's easy… You can just squeeze it...". To them the squeezability of the bottle added functionality to the package and therefore made it easy to use. The squeezability of the bottle however also represented the symbolic utility of convenience. The two brands that offered the squeezable bottles were perceived as "simple and convenient". Another participant added, "I think they're more towards families and stuff. Cause kids can like squeeze them". To him, this indicated that the brands were considerate towards the need of families for convenience.

The evidence supports the argument that the symbolism generated by product packaging influences brand image via mediated experiences. In general, all the participants had some sort of brand image of all of the different brands by seeing the package. Most of them then based their brand choice on this image. The participants chose certain brands because the functional utility and symbolism of the chosen brands represented functional and symbolic brand benefits to them. Beginning with the purchase and the usage, their experiences with the product and its packaging were no longer mediated but lived experiences.

Lived Experiences

Lived experiences between a consumer and a brand come from their direct interaction with the product and its packaging (Underwood, 2003). Through the lived experiences the consumers can experience the functional, experiential and/or symbolic brand benefits. According to the frame of reference, product packaging can convey these benefits and therefore influences brand image as it resides in the home of consumers and continually communicates to them. (ibid) Moreover, Underwood suggests that the lived experiences between a consumer and a brand may be even more important than the mediated experiences in delivering symbolic meaning of a brand to the consumers.

Participant 5 had already expected Bob's squeezable bottle of marmalade to be easy to use when he first saw it, i.e. via the mediated experience. It can be said that, via the mediated experience, the package created an image of the functional benefit related to the lived experience. Using the bottle he experienced this benefit (ease of use) and found his perception of the brand (convenient) to be confirmed. Therefore, it can be said that product packaging influenced his brand image via the lived experience as it conveyed the functional benefit. Another participant discovered an additional functional feature of St.

Dalfour's package while interacting with the product. When opening the glass jar for the first time, he noticed a plastic seal around the lid. This plastic seal represented a safety feature that provided improved protection for the product. This additional functional benefit contributed to an enhanced brand image. It confirmed and added to St. Dalfour's image as a high quality and classy brand. This case as well shows that product packaging influences brand image via lived experiences.

As already illustrated when analyzing the empirical data concerning the mediated experiences, the participants all had a certain brand image of the different brands of marmalade. As each of them chose the brand they wanted to purchase, the symbolism conveyed through the package can be seen as symbolic benefits to them. However, these symbolic benefits were already delivered to them via the mediated experiences. There were no statements that indicated that the lived experiences with the product and its packaging conveyed any additional symbolic benefits. Therefore, the argument that lived experiences may be more important than mediated experiences in delivering symbolic brand meaning to consumers, cannot be supported.

The experiential benefits refer to the feelings related to the use of the product (Keller, 1993) These feelings can be evoked through sensory representations (e.g. images) of ideas, feelings and memories on the package (Yuille & Catchpole, 1977 cited in Underwood, 2003). The participants of this focus group did not perceive any experiential benefits through the packaging. None of them mentioned any ideas, feelings or memories that could be regarded as experiential benefits.

Summarized it can be said, that the participants experienced functional benefits via the lived experiences. However, symbolic and experiential benefits were not perceived via the lived experience. Nevertheless, Underwoods' (2003) argument that product packaging influences brand image via the lived experiences can be supported. Packaging does not necessary need to convey all three benefits via the lived experiences to influence brand image (ibid).

6.1.2 RQ2: Purchase Decision

Table 11 below provides a summary of the parts of the frame of reference concerning purchase decision. Additionally, Table 11 shows whether or not previous findings and arguments can be supported. This is based on the analysis and comparison with the empirical data below.

Table 11: Case 1 – RQ2 Comparison of Theory with Empirical Data

Package Design ✚	Liking for Package ✚	Communication through Package ✚	Usability of Package ✚
• Attraction of buyer	• Brand	• Color	• Ease of handling
• Communication to the buyer	• Country of origin	• Symbols/Logo	• Disposability
• Convenience in handling and using	• Color connotation	• Information about product	• Moisture protection
• Saleability of product	• Symbol connotation	• Brand image	• Protection from ultraviolet radiation
• Green aspect	• Size	• Shape	
	• Shape	• Size	
	• Convenience	• Graphics	
	• Color	• Label	
	• Associations	• Decorative design elements	

(●=supported, ●=could not be found in the empirical data, ●=additionally found in the empirical data)

As can be seen above, there are four aspects of product packaging that are said to influence purchase decision. These include package design, liking for package, communication through the package and usability of the package. (Agariya et al., 2012)

Package Design

According to Agariya et al. (2012) package design depends on the intended purpose of the package. These include attraction of the buyer, communication to the buyer, convenience in handling and using, saleability of product as well as green aspect. Aside from the green aspect, all the other aspects could be found in the collected data.

Attraction of the buyer was found to be one of the most important aspects. One of the participants explained, "If I went up to the shelf and did not instantly see one, I would just go for the one right in front of me". However, he stated that if there was one product that caught his eye, then he would choose that one. He chose Björnekulla's marmalade because the bright white of the label caught his eye. Contrast was also found to attract attention. The participants mentioned that if a package had more contrast than another, "then there is more attention" on the one with more contrast. Shape was also brought up as an element of product packaging that would catch the participants' attention. One of them explained, "St. Dalfour's marmalade (Nr. 6) is actually quite different compared to the other ones… it's narrow… it stands out slightly more". Furthermore, Participant 6 mentioned that special information about defining attributes of a product should be made obvious. If that information was big enough to catch his eye he would be likely to consider a brand.

Communication to the buyer was also an aspect that came up in the empirical data. However, since it includes a lot of aspects that would better fit to Agariya et al.'s 'Communication through Package'. This aspect will be analyzed in greater detail there.

Convenience in handling and using were aspects of product packaging that either motivated the participants to choose a product or to at least prefer one brand over another. Participant 3 said "the easy way to take the marmalade out" influenced her purchase decision. Another participant explained that the only reason he chose Bob's Squeezy marmalade was the ease of use and convenience. For him this packaging was convenient since there was no need to use a knife or spoon. Therefore the use was fast. Another element of packaging that was seen as convenient was size. Big packages were considered as convenient since they lasted longer and required fewer trips to the store.

According to Agariya et al. (2012) the goal of product packaging is not only to sell the product, but also to create desire for repeat purchase (saleability). The empirical data showed that the package itself did not influence the desire for repeat purchase. "I would only buy it if the actual marmalade was good. The packaging would have absolute no bearing whether I buy it again. I would not take it into consideration at all." This statement indicates that the product itself is more important than the packaging. Another participant supports this view, "... if it tastes bad, you change to another". However, Participant 4 stated that he used "the packaging as an idea of what you're gonna get inside" if he did not know the product.

All in all it can be confirmed that attraction of the buyer, communication to the buyer, convenience in handling and using influence purchase decision. Saleability only seems to play a role for initial purchases. The product itself is more important when it comes to repurchase. Therefore these aspects are all important when making packaging design decisions.

Liking for Package

Agariya et al. (2012) includes liking for the package as another aspect that influences purchase decision. Brand, country of origin, color connotation, symbol connotation and size are said to influence consumers' liking for the package (ibid). Only size could be found in the empirical data. Additionally, shape, convenience, associations and color emerged as aspects that contributed to the participants' liking for the package. It is important to mention that even though color was brought up by the participants, they did not have any connotations with any colors.

One of the participants said that she liked St. Dalfour's small jar because it fit better to her since she usually did not eat marmalade. "I picked that one because it's squeezy and I like squeezy ones", explained one of the participants when asked why he chose Bob's Squeezy marmalade. The convenience aspect of the package was the reasons why he liked it. Another participant also liked the convenience aspect of the package. She revealed that she liked wide pots because their shape provided a big opening which facilitated taking out the marmalade easily. Participants also liked the package because of the associations they had with certain packaging elements. Participant 2 explained, "I quite like it when there is just… when it almost looks like homemade". He associated the simple label with no drawings with homemade products. Another aspect that contributed to the participants liking for the package was the use of color to create contrast. "I think I prefer this black [lid] rather than the gold… because I think it makes more contrast… it looks nicer for me", was one of the explanations. One of the participants also mentioned that he liked it better when the colors fit the theme of the design, "[The Garant bottle] has a white top which I don't like. The white top looks a little odd. [Bob's marmalade] has an orange top. It seems to fit better to the theme".

All in all, only one of the aspects that are said to contribute to consumers' liking for the package brought up by Agariya et al. (2012) could be found in the empirical data. Nevertheless, as shown by the statements, liking for the package influenced purchase decision as participants picked a product based on their liking for the package. However, their liking for the package was influenced by other aspects than the ones given in the frame of reference.

Communication through Package

Communication through the package is also said to influence purchase decision. Messages are communicated through the use of color, symbols/logos, information about the product, brand image, shape and size. (Agariya et al., 2012) The collected data show that color, brand image, shape, information, graphics and size were used to communicate to the participants. Symbols/logos were not brought up. For this case, labels including the overall label design and material, as well as decorative design elements were also used by the participants to draw conclusions about the product.

One of the participants chose Björnekulla's marmalade because he was looking for one that "was not the cheapest but one of the cheapest". He explained that the white label made it look cheap. Another participant added that it was because of the shape rather than the color. However, the empirical data also shows that color communicated negatively to the participants. "This label is bad because it is yellow and it makes no

contrast… you can feel that it is not that qualitative", was how one of the participants explained why Eldorado's marmalade seemed to be bad quality. Participant 1 chose Den Gamle Fabrik's marmalade because of her image of the brand. Though she did not know their orange marmalade, she recognized the brand, "I like it... This is the only one I know…It is not cheap and not expensive but it is good". Two other participants added that information on the package was important to them. However, they did not refer to any of the marmalade options. To Participant 2, one of the most important features of product package was information about the ingredients. Similarly, Participant 4 appreciated it if the package had more information on it, "I prefer if it's more on it so I can figure out what's inside. If it's like E-numbers and stuff then I'll read it and I'm gonna figure out what's in it that I don't want. So if there is more stuff to tell you what's exactly in it, then it's better". Furthermore, graphics were found to be used for the identification of similar products. Participant 1 and 6 both pointed out that in a retail store, where orange marmalade can be found in a big array of other marmalades and products, they would be confused and would look for drawings of oranges on the package to identify the orange marmalade. Moreover, the participants also used size as an inference to quality, "If you say things are higher quality, you get less". Since St. Dalfour's glass jar was relatively small compared to the other marmalade options, it was regarded as more qualitative. Labels and decorative design elements were also seen as communicating high quality to the participants. One of the participants said that St. Dalfour looked like an older brand, "... the details and stuff like that … like they've been making it for a long time". Participant 6 further added, "... the writing around the edge of the lid… makes it classier as well". Furthermore, the thick paper used for Önos Gunilla's label was thought to be classy. Participant 6 explained, "You'd think it's more expensive". The shape and the design of the label on Den Gamle Fabrik's marmalade communicated class and that the product was homemade. Participant 3 described, "This brand seems to be homemade… because of the label. It is more simple and has no drawings. It is like the label you put on in your home when you do it by your own. The circle is more classy".

As can be seen from all the statements, different factors were used for the communication through product packaging. It can also be confirmed that communication through the package influences purchase decision. However, the empirical data shows that communication through package can be perceived negatively. This can influences purchase decision negatively.

Usability of Package

According to Agariya et al. (2012), purchase decision is influenced by the usability of the package. Ease of handling, disposability, moisture protection and protection from

ultraviolet radiation contribute to the usability of the package. (ibid) Handling was the only aspect that could be found in the collected data.

In general, packaging that was easy to use was perceived as positive. Participant 5 explained, "expected [Bob's Squeezy marmalade] to be easy and fast... That is why I picked it". "Awkward" handling of product packaging was a point that was regarded as negative by the participants. Participant 5 even said that this was a reason why he did not purchase Bob's original orange marmalade in the bag. He explicitly said, "I thought it'd be awkward. That's why I didn't buy that". More specifically the marmalade bag was regarded as "awkward" since it would be difficult to store as it would fall over and leak in the fridge. As illustrated here, the empirical data showed that the participants considered the usability of the package when choosing a product. It can be said that usability of the package influences purchase decision. However, it is important to mention that difficulties in handling the package can influence purchase decision negatively.

To sum it up, Agariya et al.'s (2012) framework can be supported. The empirical data has shown that package design, communication through the package, liking for the package as well as usability of the package influence purchase decision. Some of the brand choices were made based on one of these, but most of the brand choices were based on a combination of these points. Moreover, the participants also based their purchase decision upon a brand image that was shaped by the communication through the package. Communication through the package can therefore be seen as a major influence in the decision making process. It is also necessary to mention that not all the aspects concerning package design, communication through the package, liking for the package and usability of the package, as described by Agariya et al. (2012) have been found in the empirical data. However, new aspects have emerged from the data that was not included in the frame of reference.

6.2 Within-case Analysis - Case 2: Hair Repair Shampoo

In this section the data analysis for case 2 is conducted. Following the same procedure as for the analysis of case 1, this empirical data regarding brand image is analyzed first. After that, the analysis focuses on purchase decision.

6.2.1 RQ1: Brand Image

The part of the frame of reference that concerns brand image can be found in Table 9 in the previous section. Underwood (2003) argues that product packaging influences brand image via mediated as well as lived experiences. Product packaging can convey

functional, experiential and/or symbolic benefits to the consumer via these experiences (ibid).

Table 12 shows whether or not previous findings and arguments could be supported with the evidence from the empirical data. A more detailed discussion and comparison of the frame of reference and literature with the collected data can be found below.

Table 12: Case 2 – RQ1 Comparison of Theory with Empirical Data

Theory	Supported
Product packaging influences brand image via **mediated experiences.**	Yes
Product packaging influences brand image via **lived experiences.**	Yes

Mediated Experiences

As already explained in the analysis of case 1, consumers can experience symbolism without actually purchasing or using a product. These mediated experiences can be gained through exposure to product packaging at the point of purchase. (Underwood, 2003) Based on Underwood (2003), the frame of reference indicates that packaging can influence brand image via mediated experiences.

The empirical data collected from focus group 2 illustrated that brand image was influenced by the symbolism conveyed through the elements of packaging. The symbolic meanings that could be found in the empirical data include "high quality", "class", "professionalism", "uniqueness", "youth" as well as "cheap". The participants, who did not choose a product because they had previously known the brand, all put emphasis on high quality and class. They used the look of the package to infer this information. Colors, shape, and material were seen as indicators for quality and class. Participant 6 commented on Schwarzkopf Gliss hair repair shampoo, "This just looks top-end… I think it looks classy. It's all black and gold and silver". Moreover, the "conservative shape" of Schwarzkopf Gliss and L'Oréal Elvital was also considered to be classy and high quality. Participant 2 summarized, "...shape, and the [material] and the color… makes me think that it is high quality". Due to the big size of the packages and the relatively little amount of information as well as the lack of pictures on the bottles and the typeface used, two of the

shampoos symbolized "professionalism". They were seen as shampoos that were used by professional hairdressers. "Uniqueness" was another symbol perceived by one of the participants. She described the Schwarzkopf Gliss shampoo as "special" and having it would make her special. The color and typeface used on Garnier Fructis' shampoo stood for "youth". However, the look of some of the shampoos also stood for something that was "cheap". This was due to the transparent plastic and wide shape of the bottle.

With evidence from the collected data, the argument that product packaging can convey symbolism via the mediated experiences and therefore shape consumers' perception of the brand can be supported.

Lived Experiences

According to Underwood (2003), packaging can deliver functional, experiential and/or symbolic brand benefits to the consumers as they interact with the product and its packaging in their homes. These lived experiences are said to influence brand image as well (ibid). Moreover, Underwood (2003) suggests that the lived experiences between a consumer and a brand may be even more important than the mediated experiences in delivering symbolic meaning of a brand to the consumers.

While interacting with the shampoos, the participants noticed that, because of their shape, some of them could be placed upside down to "get the last wee dribbles" out of the bottle. Being able to place the bottle upside down was described as "good". To them this was an important characteristic of the package and represented ease of use and convenience. Their lived experience with the package revealed this functional benefit to them and therefore enhanced their brand image.

The empirical data further show that the lived experience changed the symbolic meaning of the Syoss shampoo. It was perceived as a "cheap" brand, "almost like an own brand". However, while interacting with the package, i.e. through the lived experience, the brand was perceived as a "professional" and more qualitative brand. One of the participants explained, "The first feeling is like, it's not very good. But when you pay attention on the thing that is written [on the label]... also the shape and all... you feel it is better". Another participant added, "... the more I look at it, I think it would be more like a salon shampoo". Also the typeface used on the bottle was perceived as professional as the participants interacted with the bottle throughout the focus group session. This indicates that the participants' lived experience with the Syoss bottle therefore influenced their brand image positively. One of the participants revealed, "when I take a shower, I use it... and I have nothing to do while I take the shower, so I look at the packaging and ok, I feel 'Yeah, it's good'". Moreover, if the packaging is "good", she would feel, " Ok, the quality is better"

than a product with "bad packaging". It can be said that packaging indirectly influenced how she evaluated the product itself. The lived experience with the product and its packaging in this case reinforced her brand image of quality and influenced her evaluation of the product itself.

The experiential benefits refer to the feelings related to the use of the product. Experiential benefits are said to meet experiential needs for sensory pleasure for example. (Keller, 1993) When examining the Garnier Fructis bottle, one of the participants mentioned that it looked like it "would be fun to open". To him, the green ball that was part of the lid was "original". He further added that it was not only about the way it feels when opening the lid but also about the sound it makes, "They make beautiful noises!". The package of Garnier Fructis provided a fun experience to him. Here it can be said that the package conveyed an experiential benefit and therefore shaped his brand image.

To sum it up, the shampoo packages conveyed functional, symbolic as well as experiential benefits to the participants via the lived experiences. These experiences influenced the participants brand image. Therefore, Underwood's argument that product packaging influences brand image via lived experiences can be supported.

6.2.2 RQ2: Purchase Decision

Table 13 illustrates the parts of the frame of reference that were used to analyze the empirical data concerning purchase decision. Moreover, Table 13 shows whether or not previous findings and arguments can be supported. This is based on the analysis and comparison with the empirical data below.

Table 13: Case 2 – RQ2 Comparison of Theory with Empirical Data

Package Design **✚**	Liking for Package **✚**	Communication through Package **✚**	Usability of Package **▬**
• Attraction of buyer	• Brand	• Color	• Ease of handling
• Communication to the buyer	• Country of origin	• Symbols/Logo	• Disposability
• Convenience in handling and using	• Color connotation	• Information about product	• Moisture protection
• Saleability of product	• Symbol connotation	• Brand image	• Protection from ultraviolet radiation
• Green aspect	• Size	• Shape	
	• Shape	• Size	
	• Color	• Material	
	• Material		

(⬤=supported, ⬤=could not be found in the empirical data, ⬤=additionally found in the empirical data)

As can be seen above, there are four aspects of product packaging that are said to influence purchase decision. These include package design, liking for package, communication through the package and usability of the package. (Agariya et al., 2012)

Package Design

According to Agariya et al. (2012) package design depends on the intended purpose of the package. These include attraction of the buyer, communication to the buyer, convenience in handling and using, saleability of product as well as green aspect (ibid). Except for the green aspect, all the other aspects could be found in the collected data.

Color was one of the elements of packaging that attracted attention. Participant 4 explains, "And seeing the red, this is what I'm gonna look at first… it pops out from the others". He therefore first considered Wella Pro Series' shampoo and L'Oréal Elvital's shampoo. The brands were only considered because of the capability of their packages to attract his attention. Participant 2 added that "most of the products… the packaging are white" and therefore do not stand out and do not attract attention. However, the use of different colors for the packaging would make it noticeable. Shape was also mentioned as an element of product packaging that caught attention. Particularly, the angular shape of Schwarzkopf Gliss' shampoo bottle was described as manly and therefore would catch a man's eye.

Communication to the buyer was also an aspect that came up in the empirical data. However, since it includes a lot of aspects that would better fit to Agariya et al.'s 'Communication through Package', this aspect will be analyzed in greater detail there.

Convenience in handling and using were brought up as the participants interacted with the products. According to one of the participants, a bottle that was "too big" would be a "nuisance for moving about". A reasonable size would be more convenient to him since he would not only use it at home but also take it to the gym. This statement indicates that he considered the size when making the purchase decision.

According to Agariya et al. (2012) the goal of product packaging is not only to sell the product, but also to create desire for repeat purchase (saleability). The empirical data showed that the package itself could influence the desire for repeat purchase. As two of the participants mentioned, they did not care about the shampoo itself and would therefore repurchase a shampoo because of the way it looks. Other participants however thought that the product was more important than the package, "I care more about the soap inside. Of course, if it has high quality, I don't care about the packaging". She added

that "if the shampoo is high quality, the packaging is good. They will fit the high quality…". This means that she used the package as an indicator for product quality.

All in all it can be confirmed that attraction of the buyer, communication to the buyer and convenience in handling and using influence purchase decision. Saleability only seems to play a role when the participants did not care about the actual product at all. These participants based their purchase decision solely on the way the package looked to them. Therefore these aspects are all important when making decisions regarding package design.

Liking for Package

Liking for Package is also an aspect which is said to influence a consumer's purchase decision. This aspect is influenced by brand, country of origin, color connotation, symbol connotation and size of the package. (Agariya et al., 2012) Only size could be found in the collected data. However, new aspects were brought up. These include color, shape and material. Though colors were brought up, the participants did not have any connotations with any colors.

Participant 2's liking for the package of Schwarzkopf Gliss was influenced by shape, color and material. Her liking for the package was among others a reason for purchase. She further commented on Garnier Fructis' hair repair shampoo, "I don't like the colors". The color orange was specifically pointed out, "it looks not good". Another Participant did not like the package of Syoss and Wella Pro Series because of the size. More specifically, he said that "they're too big". As can be concluded from these statements, shape, color, material and size contributed both negatively and positively to the participants' liking for the package. All in all, Agariya et al.'s argument that liking for the package influences purchase decision can be supported.

Communication through Package

According to Agariya et al. (2012), communication through the package is another aspect that influences purchase decision. Color, symbols/logos, information about the product, brand image, shape and size are used to communicate through the package (ibid). The empirical data shows that participants used color, shape, material, brand image, size as well as information on the package to draw conclusions about the product and brand.

The reason why Participants 2 and 6 chose Schwarzkopf Gliss' shampoo was because it looked classy. This look was achieved through the use of the colors gold, black, and silver as well as the shape. Participant 2 added that both the material and the color made her believe that the shampoo was of high quality. Moreover, she stated that she also chose

the product because she knew the brand, "I used this brand before and I like it". Another participant chose L'Oréal Elvital's shampoo because he thought it was a good brand. Furthermore, he recognized the package of the shampoo as he had already seen it in several people's home. Information communicated on the package was also an important factor in influencing purchase decision. One of the participants looked for the ingredient Keratin since he knew that it was good for hair. He therefore almost immediately narrowed his choices down to two brands, Schwarzkopf Gliss and L'Oréal Elvital, as he saw the information on the bottles. Other examples of information that the participants regarded as positive and useful include information about hair type and the functions of the product as well as appealing descriptions. Moreover, the big size of the Syoss and Wella Pro Series bottle were regarded as "professional". Due to the big size and the relatively little amount of information on the package, the participants assumed these shampoos were meant for professional hairdressers.

All in all, the argument that communication through the package influences purchase decision can be supported. However, communication through the package did not seem to play a role when the participants had already tried a product. Even though two of the participants had similar perceptions of the brand compared to the other participants, they chose their products based on whether or not they liked the product itself. "I choose that [shampoo] based on my experience. That's all. No shape, no stuff… this one because that's what I usually use", said one of them. She had already tried most of the shampoo options but did not like the products.

Usability of Package

Purchase decision is influenced by the usability of the package. Ease of handling, disposability, moisture protection and protection from ultraviolet radiation contribute to the usability of the package. (Agariya et al., 2012) Only handling was mentioned as an aspect that contributed to the usability of the package. The participants talked about the "way you hold it" and the "way you open it". They mentioned that it was easier if the bottle was not slippery and the lid was easy to open. However handling was not mentioned as a reason why they did or did not purchased a particular brand. Other factors seemed to have played a more important role for this focus group. Therefore the argument that purchase decision is influenced by the usability of the package cannot be supported. In this group, usability of the package did not influence purchase decision.

To sum it up, Agariya et al.'s (2012) framework can be partly supported. The empirical data has shown that package design, communication through the package as well as liking for the package influenced purchase decision. However, usability of the package did

not influence purchase decision. Moreover, the participants also based their purchase decision upon a brand image that was shaped by the communication through the package. Communication through the package can therefore be seen as a major influence in the decision making process. It is also necessary to mention that not all the aspects concerning package design, communication through the package, liking for the package and usability of the package, as described by Agariya et al. (2012), have been found in the empirical data. However, new aspects have emerged from the data that was not included in the frame of reference.

6.3 Cross-case Analysis

This section contains the cross-case analysis of the two case studies. The results from both cases are compared in order to identify similarities and differences. Firstly, the focus of the cross-case analysis will be on brand image. Secondly, the cases will be compared regarding purchase decision.

6.3.1 RQ1: Brand Image

In the previous two sections, data from both cases, concerning brand image, were compared to the frame of reference individually. The analysis shows that there are similarities as well as differences between the two cases.

In both cases the empirical data support Underwood's (2003) argument that product packaging influences brand image via *mediated experiences*. The participants of both focus groups could experience symbolism without interacting with the product. The symbolism conveyed through the elements of package were found to influence their perception of the brand and ultimately their purchase decision. In case 1 shape, color, label design and material as well as decorative design element were elements that shaped the participants' perception of the brand. Symbolism conveyed through these elements included high quality, class, cheap, homemade, and family. Moreover the functionality of packaging, particularly perceived ease of use conveyed the symbolic utility of convenience and was also found to contribute to the formation of a brand image. In case 2 shape, material, color, size, graphics and typeface as well as information on the package were elements that conveyed high quality, class, professionalism, uniqueness, youth and cheap to the participants.

Underwood (2003) further states that packaging influences brand image via consumers' *lived experiences* with a product and its packaging as it resides in their homes and continually communicates to them. Product packaging can influence brand image because it can convey functional, experiential and/or symbolic benefits (ibid). In both

cases, the empirical data supports the argument that packaging influences brand image via lived experiences. In case 1 the participants realized functional benefits via the lived experiences. Firstly, the functional benefits that were expected due to the exposure to the package via the mediate experiences were confirmed. Secondly, the participants discovered additional functional benefits they had not expected. These experiences confirmed and contributed to an enhanced brand image. The analysis of case 1 however shows that packaging did not convey any symbolic or experiential benefits via lived experiences. In case 2 the participants noticed functional benefits that they had not anticipated via the mediated experiences. These benefits contributed to an enhanced brand image. In contrast to case 1, the empirical data from case 2 also showed that packaging conveyed symbolic and experiential benefits via lived experiences as well. For one of the brands, the symbolic meaning changed positively as the participants interacted with the product and its packaging. Moreover, the lived experiences were also found to reinforce brand image and to influence the evaluation of the actual product. Product packaging was also found to convey experiential benefits to the participants of focus group 2 and therefore influenced brand image via the lived experiences.

6.3.2 RQ2: Purchase Decision

In this section of the cross-case analysis, the empirical data concerning purchase decision will be compared. The analysis shows that there are similarities as well as differences between the cases.

According to Agariya et al. (2012) package design, liking for package, communication through the package and usability of the package influence purchase decision. The empirical data from case 1 showed that all four aspects can influence purchase decision. However, the collected data from case 2 only supports the argument that package design, liking for package and communication through the package influence purchase decision. Usability of the package was found to not influence purchase decision.

Regarding *package design*, attraction of the buyer through the package was found to influence purchase decision. Evidence from the empirical data can be found in both cases. Color and shape were found as elements of packaging that attracted attention in both case studies. These elements attracted attention as they made the package stood out among other packages. In case 1, the use of color to create contrast was particularly pointed out. Another element that was not found in case 2, was obvious information about defining product attributes on the package. This was also said to attract attention. Convenience in handling and using was also found to influence purchase decision in both cases. This aspect was connected to size. In case 1 the functionality of the package also

contributed to convenience in handling and using, and therefore to purchase decision. The role of packaging in selling the product and creating desire for repeat purchase (saleability) was brought up in both cases. However, the empirical data from case 1 showed that product packaging only played a role in influencing first time purchases as it gave an idea about the product. The product itself was more important to create desire for repeat purchases. Contrary, product packaging was found to be able to create desire for repeat purchases in case 2. This was the case as some of the participants did not care about the actual product at all. Lastly, the green aspect was not brought up in any of the cases. It could therefore not be evaluated whether or not this aspect influences purchase decision.

The empirical data from both cases also supported the argument that ***liking for the package*** influences purchase decision. Brand, country of origin, color connotation and symbol connotation were not found as aspects that influenced liking for the package. Only size was found in the empirical data from case 1 as well as case 2. However, new aspects emerged from the empirical data. Shape, color, convenience, and associations were found to contribute to liking for the package in case 1. In case 2 shape, color, and material influenced liking for the package. Color was listed as a new aspect that emerged from the data because the participants did not have any connotations with the colors.

Communication through the package was found to influence purchase decision. Evidence that support this can be found in both cases. Color, shape, size, information about the product as well as brand image were found to be used to communicate through the package. Symbols and logos were not found in the empirical data of either case. Additionally, graphics, labels, and decorative design elements emerged from the collected data from case 1. These elements were used to draw conclusions about the product. Through these elements the package conveyed high quality, class, and professionalism. In case 2, material was also found. All the aspects brought up in case 2 conveyed high quality, class, cheap as well as low quality. In both cases, communication through the package was an important factor in influencing purchase decision since the participants used the packaging elements as clues to draw conclusions about the brand and the product.

The argument that ***usability of package*** influences purchase decision could only be supported with the empirical data of case 1. Usability of package did not influence the purchase decision of the participants in case 2. Disposability, moisture protection, and protection from ultraviolet radiation were not mentioned as contributing to the usability of packages in either of the cases. Ease of handling was brought up in both cases. In case 1, ease of handling was found to influence the usability of the packages positively as well

as negatively. Moreover, the usability was brought up as a reason for or against purchase. Contrary, in case 2, ease of handling contributed to the usability of packages. However, usability of the package itself was not found to be a determining factor in the purchase decision process.

7 Conclusion

This chapter presents the findings and conclusions of this study. The purpose of this study was to gain a deeper understanding of the influence of product packaging on brand image and purchase decision. To explore this topic, two research questions were posed. These are answered in the following sections. Moreover, general conclusions, theoretical and managerial implications as well as implications for future research are included in this chapter. This chapter ends with the limitations of this study.

7.1 Conclusions for Research Questions and Problem Discussion

In this section the two research questions will be answered. Thereafter conclusions concerning the problem discussion will be presented.

7.1.1 RQ1: How does product packaging influence brand image?

Underwood (2003) forwards product packaging as a product-related attribute that influences brand image as it conveys functional, experiential and/or symbolic brand benefits to the consumers via both mediated and lived experiences.

Both cases showed clearly that packaging plays a role in creating or shaping brand image via mediated experiences. From looking at the shampoo and marmalade packages the participants of both focus groups got an idea of the product and the brand. The different use and combination of the elements of product packaging conveyed symbolic brand meanings to the participants. Moreover, the packages also revealed the functional benefits associated with the lived experience to the participants via their mediated experience with the product and its packaging.

Based on the empirical data, however, the role of product packaging in communicating the brand benefits via the lived experience is not clear. Only the functional benefits were gained via the lived experience in both cases. Regarding orange marmalade, the participants did not perceive or gain any symbolic or experiential benefits via the lived experiences. In this case, the orange marmalade itself seemed to have a more important influence on the brand image. Repeat purchases would only be considered, if the marmalade met expectations. The participants mentioned more than once that they used packaging solely to get an idea about the product itself. However, packaging seemed to play a greater role via the lived experience in case 2. There the participants gained functional, symbolic as well as experiential benefits through the interaction with the shampoo and its packaging. Moreover, the lived experience with one of the shampoos and its packaging was found to change the symbolic meaning of the brand positively.

Similarly to case 1, however, some of the participants regarded the shampoo itself as more important than its packaging. Nevertheless, other participants revealed that they considered repeat purchases based on the packaging alone, since they did not care about the product itself.

From this it can be concluded that product packaging plays an important role at the point of purchase where consumers use the elements of packaging as clues to infer information about the product and the brand. The communicative role of product packaging in the homes of consumers, however, seems to vary depending on the product. Moreover, the product itself must not be forgotten. The two cases show that the product itself will always contribute to the perception of the brand as well. However, packaging may have a more influencing role in shaping brand image when the consumers do not care about the product itself.

7.1.2 RQ2: How does product packaging influence purchase decision?

According to Agariya et al. (2012) package design, liking for package, communication through the package and the usability of the package influence purchase decision. Moreover, his research finds that buyer attract in package design is of great importance. Additionally, branded products are said to have a greater influence on the purchase decision than packaging. Regarding the communication through product packaging, the shape of the package is significant. (ibid)

The empirical data from both cases showed that product packaging influenced the participants' purchase decision due to various reasons. These included the packages' capability to attract the participants' attention, communication through the package, convenience in handling and using, and the participants' liking for the package.

In accordance with Agariya et al. (2012), the packages' capability to attract attention was found as one of the two most important aspects that influenced purchase decision. Communication through the package emerged as the other important aspect. Usability of the package however, was only important in the marmalade case, where functionality of the squeezable bottle was mentioned as a reason for purchase.

The collected data showed that only when a package could attract the participants' attention, it was brought into their consideration set. Color and shape were two packaging elements that seemed to have the most power in attracting attention. The communication through the package was then an important factor in influencing the participants purchase decision. Packaging elements that seemed to be critical attributes in the communication through packaging include color, information on the package, size, and shape, as already

found out by Agariya et al. (2012). The participants used these packaging elements to infer information about the product and the brand. When they did not have any previous experiences with the brand, their purchase decision was often found to be based on the brand image that was communicated through the package. Contrary, when the participants had already known of a brand or used product of that brand before, the brand seemed to be of more importance than its packaging. This finding was revealed through the empirical data from case 1 and supports Agariya et al.'s (2012) findings. Together with the importance of buyer attraction in package design and the communication through the package, liking for package and convenience in handling and using also contributed to the participants' purchase decision.

In conclusion it can be said that product packaging influences purchase decision in two ways. Firstly, it should be seen as a means to break through the visual clutter at a retail store. Secondly, the role of product packaging as a sales representative to persuade consumers to choose a particular brand is one of its most critical functions.

7.1.3 General Conclusions

As stated in the first chapter "people buy things not only for what they can do, but also for what they mean" (Levy, 1959, p. 118). Often the attitudes, ideas and feelings that consumers have about brands are crucial to them in choosing and sticking to the brands that seem most appropriate (Gardner & Levy, 1955).

This study has shown that what people think about a brand and its product - the brand image, is closely connected to them deciding whether or not they want to purchase a product. More specifically, consumers seem to use product packaging as a clue to infer information about the product and the brand before making a decision. Whether or not it is intended by the companies, packaging communicates to the consumers at the point of purchase. As Silayoi & Speece (2007) said, packaging cannot escape performing the commercial function as it is "one of the product attributes perceived by consumers" (p. 1498). In general, brand image communicated through product packaging plays a critical role in the purchase decision making process. Elements of product packaging that seem to be the most important ones in the communication through packaging include among others color, shape, and material. Moreover, though unclear, the findings of this study suggest that product packaging may continue to influence brand image as the consumers interact with a product and its packaging after purchase.

However, this study also shows that products can only be considered if they are seen. In the words of Young (2010), "unseen is unsold" (p. 46). The empirical data suggests that buyer attraction in package design is of great importance. The use of color to create

contrast, and the use of shapes seem to attract attention the most. This also corresponds to Young's (2010) findings in *Winning at the two moments of truth.* Only packages that break through the visual clutter at a retail store have the chance to communicate to the consumers. A product that is never seen can never be heard and never be sold.

7.2 Theoretical Implications

The main purpose of this study was to gain a deeper understanding of the influence of product packaging on brand image as well as purchase decision. To explore this topic, two research questions were posed and answered by collecting and analyzing empirical data based on the frame of reference.

Many previous studies in the area of product packaging concentrate on examining the role of single packaging elements in brand communication. Examples include Underwood & Klein's (2002) study on the effects of product pictures on consumer response to the brand, or Little & Orth's (2013) study on the effects of package visuals and haptics on brand evaluation. This study examined product packaging from a broader perspective to understand how product packaging influences brand image and how that connects to purchase decision.

Generally, the findings of this study correspond with theory concerning the communicative role of product packaging via the mediated experience. It remains unclear to what extend packaging plays a role in shaping consumers' brand image via the lived experience. Moreover, concerning the influence of package design, liking for the package, communication through package, and usability for package on purchase decision, the findings also largely correspond with theory. However, new aspects that contribute to liking for the package and communication through the package emerged from this study. These aspects, shown in Table 11 and Table 13, may be interesting for further research.

7.3 Managerial Implications

The findings of this study provide implications for marketers. Product packaging is an important role regarding fast-moving consumer goods. Products in this category are often similar and the choice is vast. Often these products are only distinguishable due to their product packaging and the brand image. The role of product packaging as a means of differentiation and as a brand communication vehicle therefore has long been recognized. However, packaging can only function as a brand communication vehicle if it is seen. Packages therefore need to stand out. This should be kept in mind when making decisions regarding package design. The use of colors to create contrast as well as the use of unique shapes can contribute to the visibility of packages on a shelf in a crowded

retail store. Moreover, managers need to keep in mind that consumers infer information about the product and the brand through product packaging, and tend to choose and stick to those that fit to them. This means that packages should be designed in a way that communicates the appropriate messages to the target groups.

7.4 Implications for Future Research

As this study focused on the broader perspective of product packaging and its influence on brand image as well as purchase decision, not all areas could be covered in detail. Further research could focus on the following areas:

- The role of product packaging in brand communication via lived experiences
- Experiential benefits conveyed through the use of packaging elements

7.5 Limitations of the Research

The fact that the focus group participants were all students at Luleå University of Technology could present a limitation for this study. Even though personalities, age, gender, and nationalities varied, the opinions of the focus group participants could still be biased as they are all students. Moreover, this study only focused on two cases. The findings of this study are therefore limited to the two product groups that were investigated.

As this study is a qualitative one, the findings may be influenced by the researchers as collection and analysis of the data were subject to the researchers' interpretation. Other researchers may have interpreted the data differently. Furthermore, using a case study research method could be partly regarded as a limitation for this study as analytical generalizations can be made but not statistical ones.

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Appendix

Interview Guide

Opening Questions	Item in Frame of Reference*
● Which of the products did you choose to buy? ○ Why did you choose it?	
● What is your reason for not choosing one of the other products? ○ What about the other products refrained you from choosing them?	

Questions regarding Product Packaging	Item in Frame of Reference *

● What comes to your mind when you look at the packaging?
    ○ What are your thoughts & feelings?
    ○ What do you associate with the packaging? Does it remind you of anything?
	● Lived & mediated experiences
	● Functional, experiential & symbolic benefits

● What about the packaging influenced your decision? ○ Why do you think it influenced you?	● Elements of packaging ● Package design, liking for package, communication through package, usability of package ● Functional, experiential & symbolic benefits

If it does not come up in the discussion:
● What do you think of the color?
    ○ What do you associate with it?
● What do you think of the shape?
    ○ What do you associate with it?
● What do you think of the logo?
    ○ What do you associate with it?
● What do you think of the symbols?
    ○ What do you associate with it?
	● Elements of packaging
	● Package design, liking for package, communication through package, usability of package
	● Functional, experiential &

● What do you think of the material? 　　○ What do you associate with it? ● What do you think of the size? 　　○ What do you associate with it? ● What do you think of the graphics/product pictures on the packaging? 　　○ What do you associate with it? ● etc.	symbolic benefits
● How do you think it feels like to use this product?	● Functional, experiential benefits
● Do you find the package appealing? 　　○ What about it is appealing?	● Package design, liking for package
● Which feature of product packaging is most important to you? 　　○ Why? 　　○ Was anything missing that you were looking for?	
● Did anything about the package catch your attention? 　　○ What?	● Elements of packaging

Questions regarding Brand Image	Item in Frame of Reference *
● Do you know or have you had any previous experiences with any of the brands? 　　○ What do you think of that brand? Why do you think that way?	● Mediated & lived experiences ● Brand Image
● What do you think of the brand you've chosen? 　　○ Do you know the brand or have you had any previous experiences with the chosen brand? 　　○ Why do you think that way? 　　○ What about the chosen brand makes you think that way? 　　○ What do you think of the other brands? Why?	● Mediated & lived experiences ● Brand Image
● How does the chosen brand fit to you?	● Brand image/self-image congruity

Questions after usage	Item in Frame of Reference*

● How did it feel to use the product?
   ○ What did you expect it would feel like?
   ○ What are the differences in your expectations and how it actually felt to use it?
   ○ What did you like about using it?
   ○ What did you dislike about using it?
   ○ How was the handling?
	● Functional, experiential benefits

● After using the product, do you think differently about the brand?
   ○ If yes, why?
   ○ If no, why not?
   ○ Is your perception of the brand better than before using it?
   ○ Is your perception of the brand worse than before using it?
	● Brand image

● Would you buy it again? ○ Why?	

Questions after usage | Item in Frame of Reference*