

THE ROLE OF PERCEIVED VALUE IN MEDIATING THE EFFECT OF PACKAGING DESIGN AND BRAND IMAGE ON PURCHASE INTENTION OF PENTOLAN

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Abstract

The transformation of the culinary industry requires MSMEs, particularly in the street food sector, to adapt visually and strategically to modern consumer behaviour. This study aims to analyse the role of perceived value in mediating the effect of packaging design and brand image on the purchase intention of "PENTOLAN" products. The data were collected from 240 respondents and analysed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) to evaluate both the measurement and structural models. The findings demonstrate that packaging design and brand image have a positive and significant effect on perceived value. Interestingly, neither packaging design nor brand image directly and significantly influences purchase intention. Instead, perceived value acts as a full mediator, predominantly and significantly driving consumer purchase intention. Visual appeal and brand popularity will not directly trigger a transaction unless accompanied by an adequate assessment of value. These findings provide practical implications for culinary MSMEs seeking to design a holistic marketing strategy, in which aesthetic updates must be balanced with the rationality of price, portion, and taste quality.

Keywords: *packaging design, brand image, perceived value, purchase intention, street food*

INTRODUCTION

The transformation of the culinary industry, particularly the street food sector, has shifted the basis of competition from mere taste to a battle of visual elements and perceived value (C. Spence & Van Doorn, 2022; Su & Wang, 2024). This shift requires MSME players to adapt to modern consumer behaviour, which tends to be impulsive and highly responsive to external cues (Baltasar et al., 2025; Bitticaca et al., 2025). In this context, winning purchase intention becomes crucial as it is the primary predictor of business sustainability in a saturated market (Chaudhuri et al., 2021; Teng, 2025). This demand for visual adaptation empirically applies to the existence of local snacks such as *pentol*—one of the most common meat-based street foods in Indonesia—to remain relevant to market preferences. Recent studies confirm that Generation Z and Millennials are more likely to purchase snacks when they are attractively packaged (Andiani & Nailul, 2025; Belliza & Kusumawati, 2024). Therefore, for a product like "PENTOLAN", the main challenge no longer lies solely in product availability, but rather in strategic presentation to trigger a positive psychological response from the market (Marco Po & Tongam Sirait, 2025; Wiadi et al., 2023).

In efforts to influence such decisions, packaging design and brand image serve as key strategic assets, or "silent salespeople" (Betanursanti & Maldini, 2022). Effective packaging design through colour and typography has been shown to enhance visual appeal and differentiate products from competitors (Riswanto et al., 2025) while simultaneously triggering consumers' affective engagement (Su & Wang, 2024). Concurrently, a strong brand image plays a vital role in reducing perceived risk and building the credibility of new products (Jung et al., 2022). Empirical research confirms that a positive brand image is strongly correlated with consumer confidence, which in turn drives purchase intention (Suleman et al., 2023). Furthermore, in a highly competitive local market context, such as the student demographic in Makassar, building an excellent brand image has been proven essential for gaining positive consumer evaluations and satisfaction (Wijaya & Putra, 2023). The synergy between packaging aesthetics and a consistent brand image is believed to create a memorable experience (C. Spence & Van Doorn, 2022), enabling street food to become a competitive brand (Rehman & Elahi, 2024).

Although the roles of visuals and brand are vital, the current literature indicates a gap in the form of inconsistencies in the direct effect of these two variables on purchase intention (Liu et al., 2025; Rehman & Elahi, 2024; Su & Wang, 2024). Modern consumers conduct complex cognitive evaluations by weighing benefits and costs, known as perceived value (W. Wang et al., 2025). Attractive packaging will be effective only if consumers perceive a proportionate functional or emotional value (Xiao et al., 2025). Without a high perceived value, investments in luxurious designs may fail to convert into sales (Ton et al., 2024). Therefore, positioning perceived value as a mediating variable offers a novel explanation of the modernisation mechanism of traditional snacks in Indonesia (Haryati et al., 2025).

Although prior studies have established the importance of packaging design and brand image in shaping consumer responses, empirical findings remain inconsistent regarding their direct effects on purchase intention. This inconsistency suggests that consumers may not respond directly to visual and symbolic cues, but rather evaluate them through a cognitive appraisal process, commonly referred to as perceived value. However, existing studies have largely overlooked the mediating role of perceived value in explaining how these external cues translate into behavioural intention, particularly in the context of traditional food products.

This study addresses this gap by positioning perceived value as a central mechanism linking packaging design and brand image to purchase intention. By focusing on the "PENTOLAN" brand as a representation of traditional street food modernisation, this research offers a novel perspective on how low-involvement, everyday food products can compete through value-driven strategies rather than purely aesthetic enhancement.

LITERATURE REVIEW & HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

Packaging Design and Perceived Value

Conceptually, packaging design is no longer merely a physical protector of a product; it has evolved into a strategic marketing tool, a "silent salesman," that determines the visual identity of a brand (Kotler & Keller, 2016; C. Spence & Van Doorn, 2022). In the context of culinary products, when intrinsic attributes such as taste cannot be directly evaluated prior to purchase, packaging design—which encompasses combinations of colour, graphics, and materials—functions as a primary extrinsic cue (Liu et al., 2025). This mechanism is grounded in Signalling Theory (M. Spence, 1973), wherein packaging elements are transmitted as quality "signals" by sellers to minimise buyer uncertainty. Aesthetically and professionally designed packaging serves as a heuristic shortcut, reducing perceived risk while building consumer trust in the product's hygiene and safety (Alamri et al., 2021; Ding et al., 2025). This phenomenon is further reinforced by recent findings, which demonstrate that evaluations of product quality, when supported by appropriate packaging, have a direct and notable influence on elevating consumer trust and overall satisfaction (Ardyan et al., 2023).

The positive visual signals from the packaging are directly converted by consumers into a high-value evaluation. Referring to the classical formulation by Zeithaml (1988), perceived value is formed from the consumer's assessment of the benefits received versus the sacrifices made. Sturdy and attractive packaging communicates that the product holds commensurate utilitarian value, while simultaneously fulfilling consumers' hedonic and social value needs (Javeed et al., 2022; Yum & Kim, 2024). Therefore, packaging aesthetics has become a key strategy for effectively convincing consumers of a product's value (Su & Wang, 2024). This causal relationship is strongly supported by recent empirical findings proving that the visual elements of packaging have a significant positive correlation with the formation of perceived value (W. Wang et al., 2025), and confirming that design improvements can directly elevate the product's value evaluation in the eyes of consumers (Adi Setiawan, 2025). Based on these theoretical rationalisations and empirical support, the first hypothesis is formulated as follows:

H1: Packaging design has a positive and significant effect on perceived value.

Brand Image and Perceived Value

In the competitive landscape of culinary MSMEs, the formation of positive perceptions through brand image becomes a strategic asset that differentiates products in the market and serves as the primary foundation for consumer evaluation. Based on the concept of *Customer-Based Brand Equity* (Keller, 1993), brand image is not limited to merely a logo; rather, it represents the entire association within consumer memory, which includes visual identity at the point of sale, brand personality, service consistency, and the assurance of benefits (Pandiangan et al., 2021). Referring to *Signalling Theory* (M. Spence, 1973), this comprehensive brand image functions as a crucial extrinsic signal for food products. Consumers tend to rely on this brand reputation as a guarantee when assessing taste quality, hygiene, and product safety before actually consuming the products (I Nyoman Tri Sutaguna et al., 2023).

This trust signal from the brand image is directly converted into perceived value in consumers' minds. When the target market recognises and trusts the "PENTOLAN" brand name—whether through exposure at the booth, banners, or social media—they will carry this trust into their overall evaluation of the product. A solid brand reputation has been shown to reduce perceived risk and enhance consumer confidence (Pratama et al., 2024; Weni & Surianto, 2025). Consequently, consumers will view the product as having utility commensurate with its price, even if the physical packaging is merely functional and simple. This confirms that brand name reputation significantly impacts the cognitive evaluation of consumer value, extending beyond mere assessment of physical attributes (Pratama et al., 2024). Based on these arguments, the second hypothesis is formulated as follows:

H2: Brand image has a positive and significant effect on perceived value.

Perceived Value and Purchase Intention

Perceived value is the most critical cognitive predictor determining the transition of consumer behavior from mere interest to an actual purchase intention. Based on utility theory and the *Means-End Chain Model* (Zeithaml, 1988), purchase intention is the ultimate result of a positive evaluation of the consequences of a purchase. Consumers will only be driven to make a transaction if they rationally believe that the total benefits received—such as taste quality, hygiene, and portion size—are commensurate with, or even exceed, the financial sacrifices they make.

In the street food industry, as with the "PENTOLAN" brand, where the target market tends to be highly price-sensitive, perceived value serves as the primary filter in decision-making. When consumers assess that the product offers an optimal balance between product quality and affordability, the psychological barriers to transacting will be dismantled (Yoga & Khoirunnisa, 2025). This causal relationship has been consistently demonstrated in the marketing literature. An empirical study by Debora & Aprianingsih (2023) indicates that perceived value exerts a dominant positive influence on purchase intention. This finding is reinforced by Lita et al. (2020), who assert that the higher the perceived value of the combination of quality and price, the stronger consumers' referential and transactional drives to purchase the product. Based on these theoretical confirmations and empirical support, the third hypothesis is formulated as follows:

H3: Perceived value has a positive and significant effect on purchase intention.

Packaging Design and Purchase Intention

Purchase intention is not merely a momentary transactional act, but rather a process of cognitive and affective evaluation that emerges after consumers receive marketing stimuli (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2007). In this context, packaging design serves as the primary visual stimulus that can trigger a direct purchase response, sometimes without going through a lengthy value-evaluation process. This phenomenon can be explained comprehensively within the *Stimulus-Organism-Response* (S-O-R) theoretical framework proposed by Mehrabian & Russell (1974). This theory asserts that physical environmental factors or *stimuli*—such as aesthetics, colour, and packaging cleanliness—can evoke positive emotional reactions in consumers (*organism*), which subsequently drive approach behaviour or the desire to transact (*response*). In the modern culinary landscape, this response is often impulsive; the probability of purchase increases significantly because consumers are highly responsive to visual elements and hygiene cues that are directly sensed (Debora & Aprianingsih, 2023; Ratasuk, 2023; Silvia & Fitrianty, 2025).

For street food products like "PENTOLAN", the packaging's physical appearance often becomes the main determinant of a "love at first sight" effect. Consumers can be driven to purchase simply by seeing clean, neat, and appetising packaging displayed at the outlet. This direct relationship is highly relevant in low-involvement product categories, where purchase decisions are often made very quickly (J. Wang et al., 2025). Creative and functional visual appeal has been empirically proven to enhance consumers' intrinsic motivation to try new products (Sancheti & Sharma, 2024). When this visual packaging stimulus successfully captivates consumers, it will directly activate the dimensions that form purchase intention (Ferdinand, 2014), ranging from transactional drive (a strong desire to buy) to exploratory drive (seeking further information about the product). Based on this line of reasoning and empirical support, the fourth hypothesis is formulated as follows:

H4: Packaging design has a positive and significant effect on purchase intention.

Brand Image and Purchase Intention

Brand image functions not only as a differentiating identity but also plays a fundamental role in mitigating consumer perceived risk, which culminates in the purchase decision. Particularly in the culinary product category, which is constantly confronted with risks related to health standards and taste consistency, the *Perceived Risk Theory* framework (Bauer, 1960) explains that consumers naturally always experience uncertainty prior to transacting. In

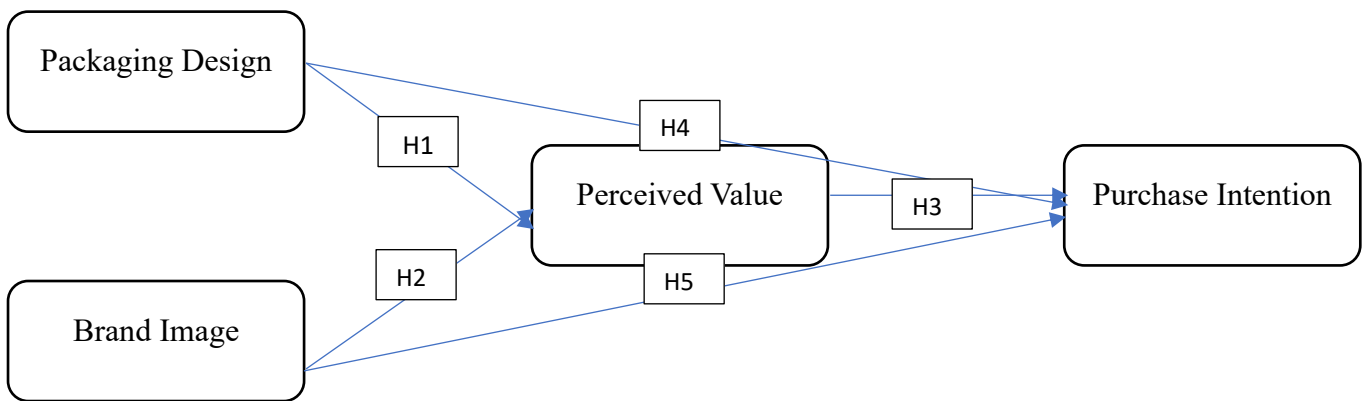
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this dilemma, a positive brand image—manifested through a good reputation, name recognition, and a track record of customer trust—serves as a highly effective risk-reduction mechanism. The credibility signal from this brand provides a psychological guarantee that can dispel consumer doubts.

In the context of the "PENTOLAN" product, the strength of the brand reputation embedded in consumers' minds—that this snack is delicious, hygienic, and highly sought after—can create a sense of trust that reassures consumers. The confidence derived from this reputation directly stimulates the behavioural drive to transact without requiring a lengthy consideration process, even when the physical identity on the packaging might be limited. This direct relationship is strongly confirmed by recent marketing literature. Empirical findings by Amaliyah & Kusuma (2025) conclude that a robust brand image acts as a guarantee of satisfaction that significantly boosts purchase intention. This is in line with the research by Pratama et al. (2024) in the MSME sector, which shows that the better consumers' perception of a brand's reputation, the higher their probability of completing a transaction. Based on these theoretical confirmations and empirical evidence, the fifth hypothesis is formulated as follows:

H5: Brand image has a positive and significant effect on purchase intention.



METHOD

Sample

The research data were collected via an online questionnaire using purposive sampling. To ensure data quality and alignment with the sampling criteria, the researchers employed a screening question about the purchasing experience with PENTOLAN products. Consequently, a final valid sample of 240 respondents met the criteria to proceed to the PLS-SEM analysis stage.

The demographic profile indicates that the sample was dominated by youth, primarily students. Specifically, the majority of respondents fell within the age ranges of 17–22 years (63.33%) and 23–28 years (30.83%), with their primary occupations being students (63.75%) and private-sector employees/civil servants (19.17%). In terms of gender distribution, female respondents (56.25%) were slightly higher than male respondents (43.75%). Furthermore, the purchase frequency data demonstrated excellent consumer retention, with the largest groups having purchased the product 2–3 times (32.50%) and more than 5 times (31.25%). Overall, these characteristics confirm that the sample is highly representative of the research context, given that young, active, and repeat consumers are the primary determinants of purchase intentions in the street food industry.

Measurement & Analysis

This study involves four main variables: packaging design, brand image, perceived value, and purchase intention. Instrumental variables for each variable were measured by adapting relevant indicators from the previous literature. Specifically, the packaging design variable was measured using two indicators adapted from Budiardjo (2016), while brand image was measured using three indicators from Garcia-Salirrosas et al. (2024). Furthermore, perceived value was measured using five indicators, following Zeithaml (1988) and Yum & Kim (2024), and the purchase intention variable was measured using three indicators from Novianti & Saputra (2023). All statement items in the instrument were evaluated using a 5-point Likert scale. For hypothesis testing and data analysis, this study employed the Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) approach, implemented in SmartPLS 4.1.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. Measurement Model Assessment

Variable	Loading Factor	AVE	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability
Packaging Design (X1)		0.697	0.566	0.821
X1.1	0.845			
X1.2	0.825			
Brand Image (X2)		0.522	0.547	0.765
X2.1	0.744			
X2.2	0.761			
X2.3	0.658			
Perceived Value (M)		0.521	0.769	0.844
M1.6	0.621			
M1.7	0.735			
M1.8	0.755			
M1.9	0.757			
M1.10	0.730			
Purchase Intention (Y)		0.562	0.607	0.792
Y1.1	0.812			
Y1.2	0.778			
Y1.3	0.650			

The first stage of the PLS-SEM analysis is the evaluation of the outer model (measurement model) to verify the instrument's feasibility. The data processing results show that the variable-forming indicators have loading factors varying from 0.621 to 0.845. Several items with values below 0.70 were deliberately not eliminated from the model. This decision was made based on literature recommendations (Hair et al., 2017, 2019), which allow indicators with loadings of 0.40–0.70 to be retained as long as the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for the respective construct meets the acceptable threshold. This confirms that the instrument used is sufficiently consistent in representing its latent variables (Henseler et al., 2009).

Convergent validity was subsequently evaluated using AVE scores. All constructs in this study were proven to have exceeded the minimum requirement of 0.50 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Hair et al., 2017). In detail, the Packaging Design (X1) variable recorded the highest AVE score of 0.697, followed by Purchase Intention (Y) at 0.562, Brand Image (X2) at 0.522, and Perceived Value (M) at 0.521. This achievement strongly demonstrates that each constituent indicator exhibits a high level of convergent validity.

The final evaluation focused on the instrument's robustness through internal consistency reliability testing. The analysis results showed that this measurement model has solid reliability, as indicated by Composite Reliability (CR) values across all constructs ranging from 0.765 to 0.844. These figures are overall above the required ideal criterion of exceeding 0.70 (Bagozzi & Yi, 1988; Henseler et al., 2009). Although the resulting Cronbach's Alpha scores ranged from 0.547 to 0.769, this instrument remains methodologically sound in terms of reliability. Recent PLS-SEM literature (Hair et al., 2019) strongly recommends using Composite Reliability as the primary evaluation standard because this metric does not impose the assumption of equal weighting across indicators. In conclusion, the measurement model has fully met all feasibility prerequisites, allowing the analysis to proceed to the structural testing stage, or the inner model.

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Table 2. Heterotrait-monotrait-ratio (HTMT)

Heterotrait-monotrait ratio (HTMT)	X1	X2	M	Y
X1				
X2	0.531			
M	0.436	0.579		
Y	0.443	0.337	0.738	

To establish discriminant validity, the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) approach was utilised in this study. As detailed in Table 1, the HTMT values across all constructs range from 0.337 to 0.738. These figures are strictly below the recommended threshold of 0.90, confirming robust discriminant validity for the entire model. Unlike cases in which conceptual overlap might occur, these results indicate that the respondents could clearly distinguish among the four variables and that each construct empirically measures a unique phenomenon.

Table 3. Structural Model Evaluation (R², and f²)

Relationship	f ²	Construct	R ²
PD → PV	0.046	PV	0.182
BI → PV	0.115		
PV → PI	0.272		
PD → PI	0.021	PI	0.278
BI → PI	0.002		

Table 3 outlines the fundamental parameters utilised to evaluate the quality of the inner model. The coefficient of determination (R²) analysis indicates that packaging design and brand image concurrently account for 18.2% of the variance observed in perceived value. Furthermore, the integrated structural model successfully explains 27.8% of the overall variation concerning consumers' purchase intention toward PENTOLAN products.

Further assessment utilising the f-squared effect size metric reveals that the pathway connecting perceived value to purchase intention exerts the most substantial influence within the proposed framework (f² = 0.272). In stark contrast, the direct predictive power of both packaging design and brand image on purchase intention is notably negligible, yielding trivial F-squared values of 0.021 and 0.002, respectively. These statistical outcomes strongly imply that direct exposure to visual packaging or brand identity is insufficient to drive transactional behaviour independently. Instead, generating consumer purchase intention heavily necessitates the prior establishment of perceived value as a crucial psychological prerequisite.

Table 4. Structural Model Assessment

Hypotheses	Result	Note
H1: Packaging Design -> Perceived Value	0.007	Supported
H2: Brand Image -> Perceived Value	0.000	Supported
H3: Perceived Value -> Purchase Intention	0.000	Supported
H4: Packaging Design -> Purchase Intention	0.056	Not Supported
H5: Brand Image -> Purchase Intention	0.570	Not Supported

H1: The Effect of Packaging Design on Perceived Value

The test results show that the relationship between Packaging Design (X1) and Perceived Value (M) is statistically significant, evidenced by a *p-value* of 0.007, which is below the 0.05 significance threshold. This finding indicates that the better and more attractive the packaging design of PENTOLAN products, in terms of visual appeal, shape, and functionality, the higher the perceived value experienced by consumers. This aligns with the view in the marketing literature that the aesthetic and functional elements of packaging play a crucial role as communication tools that enhance consumers' assessment of a product's quality and value (Klimchuk & Krasovec, 2013). Therefore, H1 is supported.

H2: The Effect of Brand Image on Perceived Value

The analysis shows that the effect of Brand Image (X2) on Perceived Value (M) is highly significant, indicated by a *p-value* of 0.000. This result demonstrates that a strong, positive image in consumers' minds greatly influences their perception of the product's value. In other words, when PENTOLAN successfully builds a credible and familiar reputation, consumers tend to evaluate the product as having greater utility than the costs incurred. This finding supports the view that brand equity and image are primary predictors of overall perceived value in consumers' eyes (Cretu & Brodie, 2007). Thus, H2 is supported.

H3: The Effect of Packaging Design on Purchase Intention

The test results for the direct path from Packaging Design (X1) to Purchase Intention (Y) show a *p-value* of 0.056. Because this value exceeds the 0.05 significance threshold, the direct relationship is considered insignificant. This means that visual appeal or packaging updates alone do not necessarily drive consumers to make a purchase unless accompanied by an in-depth evaluation of the product's value. This condition indicates the potential for full mediation, where the packaging design must first create a favourable perceived value to convert interest into actual purchase intention (Hair et al., 2019). Therefore, H3 is not supported.

H4: The Effect of Brand Image on Purchase Intention

In line with the previous finding, the analysis of the direct effect of Brand Image (X2) on Purchase Intention (Y) yields a *p-value* of 0.570 (> 0.05), indicating it is not significant. This finding asserts that the PENTOLAN name or brand alone is insufficient to directly trigger purchase intention without an intermediary factor. Consumers require the conviction that the product truly provides value or benefits (such as an appropriate price and good taste) before finally deciding to purchase. The rejection of this direct-underscore-effect hypothesis further strengthens the importance of the mediating variable in the research model. Hence, H4 is not supported.

H5: The Effect of Perceived Value on Purchase Intention

The test results show that Perceived Value (M) has a positive and highly significant effect on Purchase Intention (Y), evidenced by a *p-value* of 0.000. This means that the higher the perceived value to consumers, namely a favourable comparison between the quality of the snack received and the price paid, the greater their purchase intention for PENTOLAN products. Perceived value becomes the most vital component in consumer decision-making as it creates economic rationalisation and psychological satisfaction. This finding is consistent with the theoretical foundation of consumer behaviour, which positions perceived value as the primary determinant of purchase intention (Dodds et al., 1991; Zeithaml, 1988). Thus, H5 is supported.

CONCLUSION

The results of this study provide empirical evidence that the visual elements of packaging and brand reputation are highly crucial initial determinants in shaping consumers' cognitive evaluation of PENTOLAN products. Enhancements in the aesthetics and functionality of packaging design, accompanied by the formation of a positive brand image, can significantly boost perceived value among the target market. This indicates that a modern visual identity and a credible brand name make consumers feel they are receiving snack quality comparable to, or even exceeding, the price they paid. For business actors in the culinary sector, these findings imply the importance of investing in packaging updates and branding consistency as a strategic step to highlight product advantages, particularly to the youth consumer segment.

Furthermore, this research reveals a full mediation effect of the perceived value variable in linking product attributes to purchase intention. The analysis proves that neither the visual appeal of packaging nor brand popularity has the direct power to instantaneously trigger consumer purchase decisions. These initial attraction factors will only culminate in a transaction if consumers are convinced that PENTOLAN products truly offer adequate utility value. In this context, perceived value is not merely a complementary variable, but rather the primary validation mechanism for consumers' financial decisions. This provides a managerial implication: marketing campaigns cannot rely solely on aesthetic physical appearances or on merely going "viral"; they must also emphasise the rationality of price, portion, and taste assurance. Ultimately, this study concludes that high perceived value is the dominant driver of purchase intention. When the target market is convinced that PENTOLAN provides excellent *value for money*, their motivation and desire to try the product immediately will increase drastically. Therefore, street food marketing tactics in the digital era must be managed holistically. The use of practical packaging and the strengthening of brand awareness on social media must always be accompanied by a tangible commitment to delivering product quality. Broadly speaking, this research enriches consumer behaviour literature by proving that purchase intention is formed through a sequential process originating from external stimuli (packaging and brand), which are then processed into a favourable value evaluation for the consumer.

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