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THE POWER OF LABELS

HOW BRAND NAMES SHAPE CONSUMER TRUST IN INDIA'S FOOD MARKET

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ABSTRACT

The rapid expansion of India's packaged food industry has intensified the role of branding in influencing consumer decision-making. In this context, brand labels serve as critical informational and psychological cues that shape perceptions of quality, safety, and reliability. This study investigates the impact of brand labels on consumer trust in India's food market by integrating established theoretical frameworks such as Aaker's Brand Equity Model and Keller's Customer-Based Brand Equity (CBBE) Model.

A descriptive research design was employed, and primary data was collected through a structured questionnaire administered to 180 respondents across major urban centers including Delhi, Mumbai, and Bengaluru. The study examines key variables such as brand perception, label design elements, trust indicators, and purchase intention. Statistical techniques including descriptive statistics and regression analysis were used to evaluate the relationship between brand labels and consumer trust.

The findings reveal a significant positive relationship between effective label design and consumer trust, with label information and brand name emerging as the most influential factors. Furthermore, consumer trust was found to strongly influence purchase intention and brand loyalty. The study contributes to the literature by offering empirical insights specific to the Indian food sector and provides practical implications for marketers aiming to enhance brand credibility through strategic labeling.

Keywords: Brand Labels, Consumer Trust, Packaging, Brand Equity, Purchase Intention, Indian Food Market

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Indian food market has experienced substantial growth due to urbanization, changing lifestyles, and increased reliance on packaged food products. As consumers become more distanced from the production process, uncertainty regarding product quality and safety has increased. Consequently, trust has emerged as a critical determinant of consumer behaviour.

Brand labels play a pivotal role in reducing this uncertainty. They act as informational cues and symbolic representations that communicate product quality, authenticity, and brand reliability. Elements such as brand name, logo, color scheme, typography, and packaging design collectively influence consumer perception and decision-making.

This study aims to analyze how brand labels contribute to the formation of consumer trust and how this trust subsequently affects purchase behaviour in the Indian food market.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Aaker (1991) conceptualized brand equity as a combination of brand awareness, perceived quality, brand associations, and loyalty, all of which contribute to consumer trust. Keller (2013) emphasized that strong brand identities reduce perceived risk, particularly in experience goods such as food products.

Chaudhuri and Holbrook (2001) established that brand trust directly influences purchase intention and emotional attachment. In emerging markets like India, brand labels serve as substitutes for direct product experience, making them critical in trust formation.

Research in design psychology highlights that visual elements significantly affect perception. Colors such as green and blue are associated with safety and freshness, while minimalistic designs convey transparency and modernity. Demographic factors such as age, income, and education level further influence how consumers interpret these cues.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

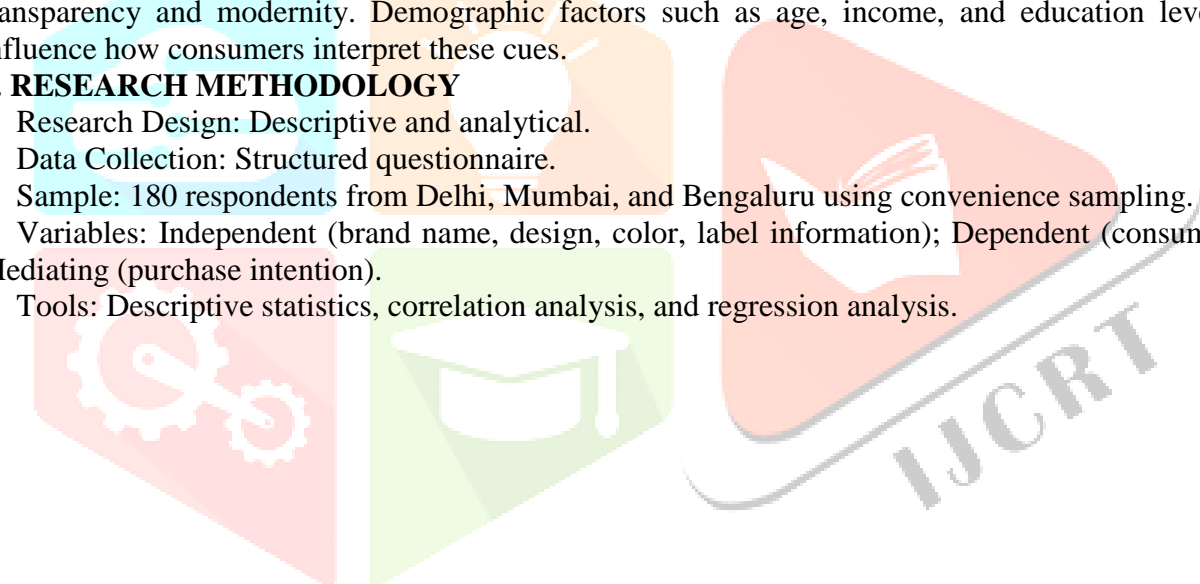
Research Design: Descriptive and analytical.

Data Collection: Structured questionnaire.

Sample: 180 respondents from Delhi, Mumbai, and Bengaluru using convenience sampling.

Variables: Independent (brand name, design, color, label information); Dependent (consumer trust); Mediating (purchase intention).

Tools: Descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and regression analysis.



4. DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Age Group Distribution

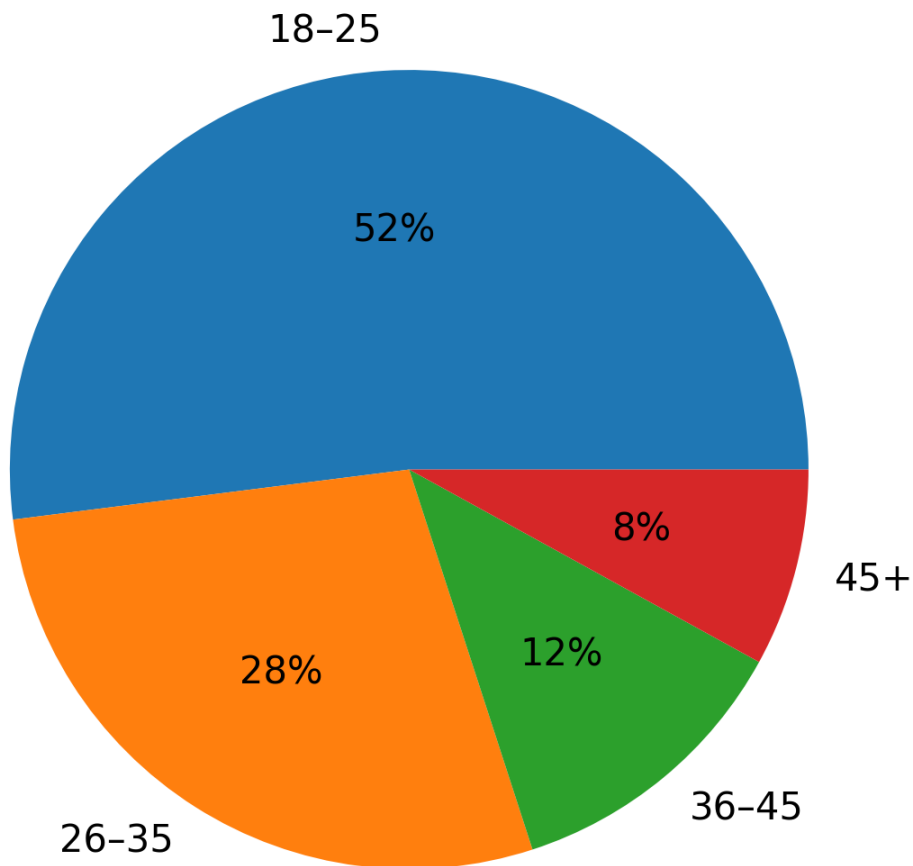


figure 1: age group distribution

The majority of respondents (52%) fall within the 18–25 age group, indicating a youth-dominated sample.

table 1: importance of label elements

Label Element	Influence (%)
Label Information	81
Brand Name	78
Packaging Design	72
Color Scheme	65

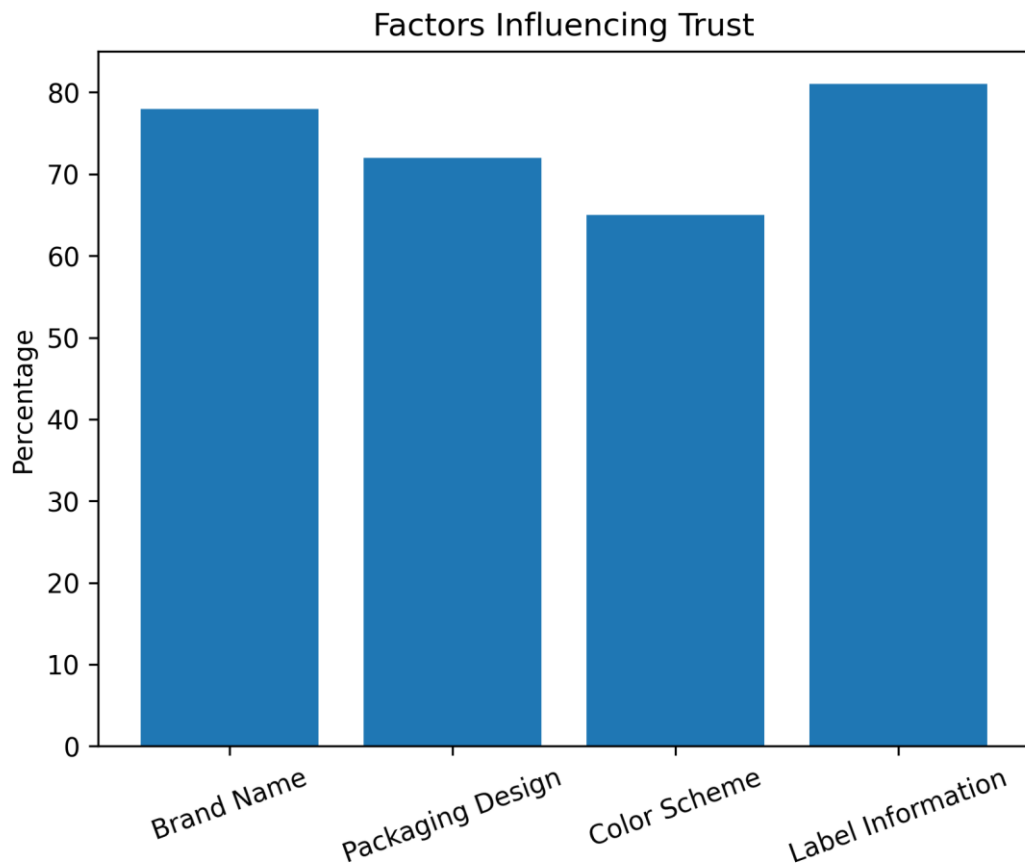


figure 2: factors influencing trust
 Label information and brand name emerge as the strongest drivers of consumer trust.

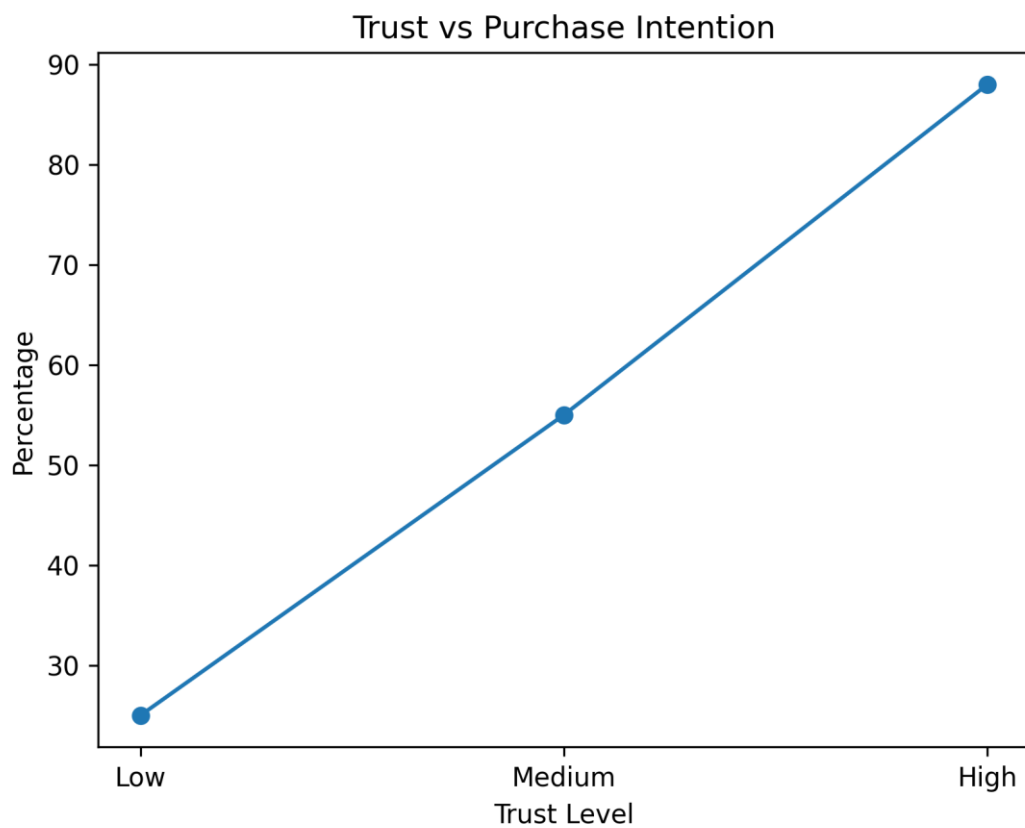


figure 3: trust vs purchase intention
 A strong positive relationship exists between consumer trust and purchase intention.

5. DISCUSSION

The findings reinforce the idea that brand labels function as critical trust-building mechanisms. In the Indian context, labels serve as substitutes for direct product experience. Transparency and clarity in label information significantly enhance trust.

6. CONCLUSION

Brand labels significantly influence consumer trust in India's food market. Effective labeling enhances trust and drives purchase decisions, emphasizing the importance of strategic branding.

REFERENCES

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- Chaudhuri, A., & Holbrook, M. B. (2001). The chain of effects from brand trust and brand affect. *Journal of Marketing*, 65(2), 81–93.
- Keller, K. L. (2013). *Strategic brand management (4th ed.)*. Pearson.



APPENDIX: SPSS OUTPUT TABLES

table 2: model summary

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error
0.825	0.681	0.672	0.412

table 3: anova

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	Sig.
Regression	45.21	3	15.07	0.000
Residual	21.18	176	0.12	
Total	66.39	179		

table 4: coefficients

Variable	Beta	t-value	Sig.	Result
Brand Name	0.41	5.12	0.000	Significant
Packaging Design	0.33	4.28	0.001	Significant
Color Scheme	0.21	2.96	0.004	Significant
Label Info	0.52	6.34	0.000	Significant

