CHILDREN'S PRODUCT PREFERENCE REGARDING TO PRODUCT PACKAGING ELEMENTS IN RELATION TO INDIVIDUAL CHARACTERISTICS

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Thesis
entitled

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CHILDREN'S PRODUCT PREFERENCE REGARDING TO PRODUCT PACKAGING ELEMENTS IN RELATION TO INDIVIDUAL CHARACTERISTICS

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to reveal how packaging elements and individual characteristics influence on Thai children's product preference and decision making. The results show that visual packaging elements such as cartoon characters, color, and size have strong impact on children's product classification. However when children are encouraged to choose preference product or make a purchase decision, they give more priority to verbal elements such as flavor and product ingredients. The influence of packaging elements on children is also varied by age. Younger children (age 7-8 years) pay attention to cartoon character and color. Many changes and cognitive development are found in children age 9 years. They can differentiate adult's products and children's products by cartoon characters. They show interest in more verbal elements such as flavor and product benefit. The older children in age 10-11 years tend to pay more attention on products information details such as toothpaste type, product instruction, and provided free gift. Slightly effect of gender have been found. In the preference product choosing and purchase decision stage, children are likely to choose product with cartoon character and color which represent their gender stereotype.

KEY WORDS: Children / Product Packaging / Packaging Elements / Marketing / Product Classification

144 pages

อิทธิพลขององค์ประกอบบรรจุภัณฑ์ของสินค้าและลักษณะของปัจเจกบุคคลที่มีผลต่อความชอบสินค้าของเด็ก

CHILDREN’S PRODUCT PREFERENCE REGARDING TO PRODUCT PACKAGING ELEMENTS IN RELATION TO INDIVIDUAL CHARACTERISTICS

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บทคัดย่อ

งานวิจัยนี้มุ่งหวังในการศึกษาอิทธิพลขององค์ประกอบบรรจุภัณฑ์ของสินค้าและลักษณะของปัจเจกบุคคลที่มีผลต่อความชอบสินค้าและการเลือกซื้อสินค้าของเด็กไทย ผลการศึกษาพบว่าในขั้นตอนการแบ่งกลุ่มสินค้าเด็กให้ความสำคัญกับองค์ประกอบบรรจุภัณฑ์ชนิดที่มองเห็น (Visual Packaging Elements) เช่น การ์ตูน สี และขนาด อย่างไรก็ดีในขั้นตอนการเลือกสินค้าที่ชอบ หรือการเลือกซื้อ เด็กให้ความสำคัญกับองค์ประกอบบรรจุภัณฑ์ชนิดที่แสดงในรูปตัวหนังสือ (Verbal Packaging Elements) มากขึ้น เช่น คำแสดงรสชาติ คำแสดงส่วนประกอบผลิตภัณฑ์ นอกจากนี้การศึกษาแสดงให้เห็นว่าอิทธิพลการองค์ประกอบบรรจุภัณฑ์มีการเปลี่ยนแปลงในเด็กแต่ละช่วงอายุ เด็กเล็ก (อายุ 7-8 ขวบ) ให้ความสนใจกับการ์ตูน และสี ของบรรจุภัณฑ์เป็นหลัก ในขณะที่เด็กอายุ 9 ขวบ แสดงการเปลี่ยนแปลงที่สำคัญในความเข้าใจต่อองค์ประกอบของบรรจุภัณฑ์ที่แสดงในรูปตัวหนังสือ เช่น แสดงรสชาติ คำแสดงประโยชน์ของผลิตภัณฑ์ เด็กในช่วงอายุนี้สามารถแยกแยะสินค้าของเด็กและของผู้ใหญ่ออกจากกันได้ โดยพิจารณาที่การ์ตูนบนบรรจุภัณฑ์ เด็กวัยโตขึ้น (อายุ 10-11 ขวบ) ให้ความสนใจและมีความเข้าในรายละเอียดของคำอธิบายตัวหนังสือบนบรรจุภัณฑ์มากขึ้น เช่น คำแสดงชนิดของยาสีฟัน คำอธิบายการใช้งาน คำอธิบายสินค้าของแถม ในส่วนของอิทธิพลจากเพศของเด็กต่อการเลือกสินค้า การศึกษานี้พบเพียงในขั้นตอนการเลือกสินค้า โดยเด็กมีแนวโน้มเลือกสินค้าที่มีการ์ตูนและสีแสดงเพศภาวะของตนเอง

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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

This chapter begins, it begins with explaining why children consumer is becoming powerful target segment among marketers and how important of product packaging as a marketing communication tool in children market. Then the gap of children's product packaging knowledge regarding to their product preference and decision making is revealed which brings about to research purposes and problems. And it is followed by describing about scope of the study in the last session.

1.1 Background of the Problem

1.1.1 Children as target consumer

Due to significant decrease of global fertility rate, children population is projected to increase by only 7% from 2015 to 2050 which effect to lower percentage of children to the total global population from 26% in 2015 to 21% in 2050 (World Bank Group, September 2015). Like Thailand, it expects that percentage of children populations to Thailand's total population are going to decrease from 18% in 2015 to 12.5 % in 2050 (World Bank Group, September 2015). Surprisingly, children are increasingly powerful in the market. There has been rising in marketing's awareness and targeting children as consumers (Trine et al., 2012; Chan, 2013; Castonguay, 2015; Nelson, et al., 2015; Taghavi and Seyedsalehi, 2015; Hémar-Nicolas et al., 2015). This is due to the recognition that children are actually three markets in one.

Firstly, children are customers in their own right (Pettersson and Fjellstrom, 2006). As parents strongly desire to prepare their children for adulthood, they give money to their children and let them spend by themselves (McNeal, 1987; Hill and Tilley, 2002).

Second, children have more autonomy (Hill and Tilley, 2002) and decision-making power within the family than in previous generations (Foxman, *et al.*, 1989; Nørgaard, *et al.*, 2007; Martensen and Gronholdt, 2008; Desai, 2008; Taghavi and Seyedsalehi, 2015). Because of time pressure, parents feel that they are neglecting their children and this guilt can play a role in substitute material goods for time spent with their children. So it follows that parents tend to give what children ask them to buy (Chaudhari and Marathe, 2007; Ishaque and Tufail, 2014).

‘‘Pester power’’ is a term commonly used to describe ‘‘children’s influence over adult purchasing through requests and demands for certain products’’ (Young, 2003; McDermott et al., 2006). This power can be differed by demographic variables (age, gender, etc.) and product categories (personal consumption products, financial resource-related products, etc.) (Flurry, 2006; Martensen and Gronholdt, 2008; Tanvi Desai, 2008; Guneri *et al.*, 2009; Ali and Batra, 2011; Kumar 2013). Not only pushing by the pester power, but children also shape buying pattern of their families; from vacation choices to car purchase to meal selection (Kunkel *et.al.*, 2004). Parents are likely to buy products for their children which they think their children will like it in order to avoid a mistake − a product that won’t be worn, used, or eaten (Young, 2003). That cause increasing in children’s share of purchasing power (McNeal, 2003; Cook, 2009; Alkibay, 2011).

Third reason for marketers’ increased interest in children as consumers is awareness that children contribute to a future market for all goods and services. Marketers recognize that brand loyalties and consumer habits formed when children are young and vulnerable will be carried through to adulthood (McNeal, 1987; McNeal, 2003; Chaudhari and Marathe, 2007).

1.1.2 Packaging as communication tool

There are several marketing techniques which have been widely used on products sold through store include; product packaging, shelf-talkers, dump-bins, end-of-aisle displays, bundling, product sampling and positioning of products on shelves and checkouts (Hawkes, 2004). Among all techniques, product packaging is the most readily meets the criterion of ‘child-oriented marketing’ due to the use of lettering, iconography and themes of interest to children, and cross-promotions such as tie-ins, competitions and premium offers that appeal to children (Mehta el. al., 2012). This is supported by Mehta el. al.'s study (2012) who investigated child-oriented products sold through supermarkets in South Australia, and they found that up to one hundred and fifty-seven discrete products were marketed to children via product packaging. The packaging can attract children's attention and does affect their product preferences of children in market place which consequence creates pester power (Gelprowic and Beharrell, 1994; Hill and Tilley, 2002; Ogba and Johnson, 2010; Taghavi and Seyedsalehi, 2015). Due to the aware of children's pester power, marketers intentionally target more children than parents in their design of product packaging (Ogba and Johnson, 2009).

Packaging elements are divided into two categories: visual elements (graphic, color, shape, and size) and verbal elements (product information, producer, country-of-origin and brand) (Gelperowic and Beharrell, 1994; Hill and Tilley, 2002; Silayoi and Speece, 2004; Kuvykaite et al., 2009; Ogba and Johnson, 2009). Different consumer groups show different degree of impact from each element. Children aged below 11 years old are likely to assess products and its packaging mainly on a visual level, in addition to verbal elements due to their limited abilities to process information (John, 1999). This concept of children's ability to process information mainly on a visual level is supported by McNeal and Ji (2003) who asked children to draw the memorial cereal box picture. The finding shows that children tend to give priority to visual components in their drawing such as brand visual characters rather than information such as nutrition information, and producer name. The verbal packaging element is founded to be more important for older children (age 11-16 years old) and crucial for adult consumer's purchase decision even if when the consumers are under time pressure (Kuvykaite et al., 2009).

In line with above assumption, young children's pester power can derive from an attraction to "nice looking" packaging (Gelprowic and Beharrell, 1994). Marketers therefore constantly use attractive visual imagery (Ogba and Johnson, 2010), recognizable characters (Hill and Tilley, 2002; Hémar-Nicolas, 2011; Steve Osborne, 2012), color and design (Tom et al., 1987; Marshall et al., 2006; Gollety and Guichard, 2011) to ensure their product stands out to children.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Numerous researchers have studied on impact of packaging elements on adult consumer's preference and purchasing decision. Some studies investigated all possible elements of package and their impact on overall purchase decision (Gelperowic and Beharrell, 1994; Sophonratana, 2003; Silayoi and Speece, 2004, Kuvykaite, et al. 2009), while some concentrate on separate elements such as graphic and brand of packaging and their impact on consumer behavior (Bloch, 1995; Madden, et al., 2000; Underwood, et al., 2001; Vila and Ampuero, 2007). However there have been few researches focused on packaging elements effect on children consumer's product preference and decision making (Ogba and Johnson, 2009; Hill and Tilley, 2002). Ogba and Johnson (2009) assessed the relationship between visual elements of packaging and children's product preference in parents' view by quantitative method. The result shows that packaging effects children's product preferences and influences their choice. However, Ogba and Johnson (2009) limit their finding regarding parents' interpretation and views of children's behavior rather than children's own view; so they recommend to further examine this research topic by directly involving children as participants rather than parents. Similar research on the effect of packaging elements on children's product preference was conducted by Hill and Tilley (2002). They studied packaging effect in children's own view by qualitative interviews focus groups. They focused on cereal market in UK. Nevertheless, no single approach for effectively marketing to children via packaging across countries can be created. So we are interested in apply this research concept in Thailand.

Literature review on the research question in Thailand context has shown that there have been no researches in Thailand studied packaging impact on children's product preference and decision making. It is found similar researches which studied on the impact of packaging design on adult consumers' purchasing decision (Sophonratana, 2003; Silayoi and Speece, 2004; Jittraporn L., 2005; Silayoi and Speece, 2007). This brings us to interest on studying effect of packaging on children's product preference and purchase decision making in the Thailand context.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

Taking into consideration that package can be treated as a set of various elements communicating different messages to consumers. This research is developed and tested in order to reveal packaging elements which are outstanding for children by their product classification and how such elements impact on their product preference and purchase decision making. In addition, referring to Bloch (1995) and Silayoi & Speece (2007), packaging influences to consumer's buying behavior also depends on his/her individual characteristics (gender, age, etc.). So another purpose of this research is to acquire comprehensive knowledge of children's product preference regarding to packaging elements in relation to their individual characteristics. More specific research objectives are following:

1) To examine what packaging elements are outstanding for children

2) To understand what and how product packaging elements effect children's product preference

3) To understand what and how product packaging elements effect children's product purchasing decision making

The gaining knowledge, about children customer response to product packaging, can help marketers to design more effective and efficient package for manufacturers or retailers. Then fully utilize packaging as the communication tools within market place.

1.4 Scope of the Study

This research adopts a qualitative approach "in-depth interview" which is most beneficial in order to examine depth information from children and identify underlying reasons behind their behaviour. Regarding to the research scope, we take a close look into 3 sessions hereinafter.

First, children in aged from 7 to 11 years old are participated. We are interested in children in this age because they develop understanding regarding to marketing concepts (John, 1999) and they have just become primary market for marketers (McNeal and Yeh, 1993). Children aged 7-11 years old are fall in to John's (1999) consumer socialization 'analytical stage'. Then they have dramatically growth in information processing abilities, results in a more sophisticated understanding of the marketplace, a more complex set of knowledge about concepts such as advertising and brands, and a new perspective that goes beyond their own feelings and motives. Besides, they have passed through consumer development stages falling into ‘assisted purchases stage’. In this stage, children start spending money on their own and turn their role to be the primary market (McNeal and Yeh, 1993).

Second, the interviews were conducted in Bangkok metropolitan region, Thailand. The views represent children consumers in an important middle-income country market where conditions are very competitive because of the rapid growth of modern retailing in Bangkok (Colliers International, 2013). Packaging plays a critical role in merchandising and communication; so it becomes one of the most important driver in the dynamic competitive environment for fast moving consumer goods (FMCG), (Vila and Ampuero, 2007; Kuvykaite *et al.,* 2009; Mahalik and Nambiara, 2010; Rundh, 2013, and Simms and Trott, 2014). This trend has fostered quite a lot of product and packaging innovation which is the keys to enhance competitiveness of products (Rungfapaisarn, 2002; Ahmed *et al.,* 2005; and Simms and Trott, 2014).

Third, children’s product samples that are selected as representatives are cereal and toothpaste. This is because these products are for children personal consumption and less expensive which children tend to have greater authority to buy themselves from their parents (Foxman et al., 1989; Labrecque and Ricard, 2001; Martensen and Gronholdt, 2008; Ali and Batra, 2011; Ogden, 2011; Chaudhary and Gupta 2012). And from market survey, cereal and toothpaste packaging design in Thailand market place has variety sets of packaging elements to study.

1.5 Organization of the study

This thesis consists of five chapters; each part reveals a stage of the research process. The content of each chapter is briefly outlined as following;

Chapter 1 – Introduces the study including; background of research problem, the problem statement, purpose of the study, scope of study.

Chapter 2 – Provides details of related theory and literature; including, children consumer, children’s influence on parents’ purchase decision, packaging as a marketing tool targeting children consumer, packaging element and its effect on children's product preference and decision making.

Chapter 3 – Gives details of research method, participated respondent, research tool, and data collection.

Chapter 4 – Reveals the results from the data collection, and data analysis.

Chapter 5 – Concludes the major finding of the study and discusses the research implication, limitations, and further research.

CHAPTER II
THEORITICAL AND LITERATURE

This chapter is divided into five sections. First, it begins with briefing why children are increasing important consumer for marketers. Second, it provides a conceptual overview of consumer socialization, summarizing important theoretical views on cognitive and social development, which further develop to the three-stages of consumer socialization. These stages description identifies general characteristics of children's knowledge, skills, and reasoning; and specify ages at which these stages are likely to occur. After understand consumer development process, in the third section, it shows how children influence parents purchasing behavior. The variables – both demographic (e.g. age, gender, parent status, etc.) and product categories, impact children's degree of influence are reviewed. In the fourth section, 4P's marketing mix which are often applied toward children consumers are reviewed. Then it shows that packaging is one of the key marketing tools effectively used with children. Moreover packaging elements classifications are described. This helps us to identify scope of this study. In the final section, the details of each packaging elements effect to children consumer preference and purchasing decision are discussed.

2.1 Children as Consumer

2.1.1 Children consumer research

During 1910s, several goods arose in departments were increasing directed to and oriented toward the "child consumer" (Leach, 1993; Cook, 2004). Cook (2009), the US Associate Professor of Childhood Studies, studied history of the use of qualitative approaches in the study of children's consumption. He found that commercial knowledge during 1910s didn't make in systematic. It was only shared in the form of anecdote and caricature. Retailers, store buyers, manufacturers, advertisers and others built the child knowledge by observing, story-telling of, and attending to reports about, the behavior of mothers and children in stores. The information limit circulated among store employees and dry food trade by way of trade press (Cook, 2009).

In 1920s, as the market for children's goods expanded, new kinds of knowledge of "child psychology" – the studies about who children are or who they are said to be, socially and morally at various ages, gained in public popularity and eventually overtake anecdotal and local forms of knowledge (Houk, 2000; Encyclopedia of Children and Childhood in History and Society, 2008; Cook, 2009).

The first step in systemize knowledge about children's consumer behavior was begun in the 1930s (Jacobson, 2008; Cook, 2009). In 1938, Grumbine published article *"Reaching Juvenile Markets: How to Advertise, Sell and Merchandise through Boys and Girls"*. She applied psychological theories of "child development" to commercial contexts which translate a child's changing, age-sensitive abilities into commercial action. She extrapolated commercially relevant insights from psychology and applying them to theoretical children. However, Cook (2009) criticized that the knowledge couldn't be categorized as market research because children were not interviewed, observed or measured in any way for consumer research purposes. Throughout the 1940s and into the early 1950s, no significant attempts were made to know the child consumer in different than Grumbine's study (Cook, 2009).

Considering a child as the consumer by marketers began to take place in late 1950s (McNeal, 1987; John, 1999; Cook, 2009; Buckingham, 2011). Marketers gradually shifted their attention away from parents (that is always, mother), towards children themselves (Jacobson, 2008). All that changed with a phenomenon, the baby boom. When World War II ended in 1945, families started having babies that led to under-five population were 60 percent increase in 10 years. As these baby boomers reached age five to 12, their small amount of spending became very noticeable because of their substantially increased numbers (McNeal, 1987). In 1957, Gilbert published *"Advertising and Marketing to Young People"* wherein provides the outlines of a significant cultural shift in attitudes toward the relationship between children and the consumer marketplace. Like Grumbine's study, Gilbert utilized psychological and other literature to understand the minds of young people; however, unlike Grumbine, Gilbert conducted direct research with youth. In 1950s, there are found few children's consumer studies on the topics such as brand loyalty (Lester, 1955) and conspicuous consumption (Cook, 2009).

Further recognition of children as a consumer market followed in the 1960s, as researchers expanded their scope to include children's understanding of marketing and retail functions (Morley, 1968), influence on parents in purchasing decisions (Berry and Pollay 1968; Wells and LoSciuto 1966), and relative influence of parents and peers on consumption patterns (Cateora, 1963).

Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, the direct researches on children's consumer behavior remain restrained in both the academic and business worlds (Cook, 2009).

It was in 1990s that a significant knowledge break in the understanding of children took hold (John, 1999; Cook, 2009). Market researchers, brand managers, advertisers and others, found they were in a strong economic environment and a favorable social-moral climate as regards children in the commercial world. So they have pressed their efforts to devise and apply various research techniques in an effort to explore children's understandings of and feelings about consumer goods and messages (Calvert, 2008; Cook, 2009; Trine *et al.*, 2012; Euromonitor International, 2013; Chan, K., 2013). This turn of events was based largely on public policy concerns about marketing and advertising to children (John, 1999; Cook, 2003). In 1989, the United Nations adopted the Convention on the Rights of the Child, an agreement among most nations to recognize and treat children as persons with inherent rights. In the early 1990s, McNeal (1992), published books introducing the ''kids'' market which support the further generation of children consumers' research (Cook, 2009).

2.1.2 Three market in one

Children are unique and potential market. Unique, because they usually do not spend their own money but they might have high purchasing power back up. Potential, because of the number of children and amount of their spending, they are claimed as a promising market (Kurniawan and Haryanto, 2011). Children actually represent three different consumer markets (McNeal 1987; McNeal and Ji, 2003).

First, as primary market, children get authority from parents to spend their own money in order to satisfy their own needs and wants (Pettersson and Fjellstrom, 2006). Theoretically, children do not require money because the products and services that they may purchase are ordinarily provided by parents (McNeal; 1987). However, changing in lifestyle –increasing of smaller families, modern parenting style, higher disposable incomes, and busy lifestyles (Datamonitor, 2010), forces parents to strongly prepare their children to adulthood. Thus they encourage their children to become economically responsible as soon as possible (McNeal; 1987). This idea is supported by Hill and Tilley's (2002) study who reported that new family situations and the changing in external environment require children to become independent at an earlier age and adjust to adult lifestyles more expediently than their intellectual growth may be tolerate.

Second, as a market influencer children can influence their parents in the purchase decision of a product (Foxman, *et al*., 1989; Nørgaard, *et al*., 2007; Martensen and Gronholdt, 2008; Desai, 2008; Taghavi and Seyedsalehi, 2015). Due to busy lifestyle and time pressure, parents feel that they are neglecting their children and this guilt can play a role in substitute material goods for time spent with their children. So parents tend to give what children ask them to buy (Chaudhari and Marathe, 2007; Isin and Alkibay, 2011; Ishaque and Tufail, 2014). That cause increasing in children's influence on parent's purchase decision and lead to share of purchasing power (Morley, 1968; McNeal, 2003; Cook, 2009; Isin and Alkibay, 2011).

Third, as the future market for all products and services, children are the consumers when they grow up in the future (McNeal, 1987; McNeal, 2003). It is believed that companies can create relationships between brands and children consumers, so they are able to build brand loyalty from an early age (Chaudhari and Marathe, 2007). And because of their young age, they have a lifetime of future consumption ahead of them. According to Kurniawan and Haryanto (2011) study, it is identified that in children aged 12-14 years, their purchase decision are strongly influenced by the memory of the impression of consumption experience. This memory will create a long term memory called autobiographical memory in children. And this memory builds brand loyalty in early-stage.

2.1.3 Consumer Socialization

To understanding development of children's abilities as consumers, consumer socialization has been used as theoretical framework. "Consumer Socialization" was first defined in 1974 by Scott Ward as;

"The processes by which young people acquire skills, knowledge, and attitudes relevant to their functioning as consumers in the marketplace" (Ward, 1974).

This definition gave focus to a new generation of researchers and an emerging field of studying behavior of children.

Research in this field is primarily based on two models of human learning;

1) Cognitive development model
2) Social development model

(Piaget, 1936; Selman 1980; John, 1999; Ville and Tartas, 2010)

Cognitive development: The theories of cognitive development model view learning as a cognitive-psychological process of adjustment to one's environment, emphasizing the interaction of personal and environmental factors (Ginburg and Opper, 1988). These theories suggest that socialization is a function of qualitative changes in cognitive organization occurring between infancy and adulthood (Lawrence, 1969). Age-related improvements in cognitive abilities contribute to the development of consumer knowledge and decision-making skills (John, 1999; Ville and Tartas, 2010).

Social development: Social development model involves the ability to see perspectives beyond one's own. It is strongly related to purchase influence and negotiation skills of children toward parents (Selman, 1980; John, 1999). This model emphasizes sources of influence, commonly known as "socialization agents" (mass media, parents, school and peers) which convey norms, attitudes, motivations, and behaviors to the learners. Socialization is assumed to be taking place during person's interaction with these agents in various social situations (Garret and O'Keefe, 1972; Moschis and Churchill, 1987).

Stages of consumer socialization: The American researcher John (1999) has documented twenty-five years of accumulated international researches on children in relation to their role as consumers covering the period from 1974 to 1998. She found that consumer socialization studies occur in the context of cognitive and social developments (Piaget, 1936; Selman 1980; John, 1999; Ville and Tartas, 2010) so she has incorporated the findings into a general conceptual framework that conceives of consumer socialization as progressing through a series of three sequential stages capturing major cognitive shifts from preschool to adolescence, as explains details of each stages in Table 2.1.

1) Perceptual stage (3 to 7 years)
2) Analytical stage (7 to 11 years)
3) Reflective stage (11 to 16 years)

Table 2.1 Consumer Socialization Stages

Characteristics	**Perceptual stage, 3-7 years**	**Analytical stage, 7-11 years**	**Reflective stage, 11-16 years**
Knowledge structure:			
- *Orientation*	Concrete	Abstract	Abstract
- *Focus*	Perceptual features	Functional/Underlying features	Functional/Underlying features
- *Complexity*	Single dimension, Simple	Two or more dimensions Contingent (“if-then”)	Multi dimensions Contingent (“if-then”)
- *Perspective*	Egocentric (own perspective)	Dual perspectives (own + others)	Dual perspectives in social context
Decision-making and influence strategies:			
- *Orientation*	Expedient	Thoughtful	Strategic
- *Focus*	Perceptual features, Salient features	Functional/Underlying features, Relevant features	Functional/Underlying features, Relevant features
- *Complexity*	Single attributes Limited repertoire of strategies	Two or more attributes Expanded repertoire of strategies	Multiple attributes Completed repertoire of strategies
- *Adaptivity*	Emerging	Moderate	Fully developed
- *Perspective*	Egocentric	Dual perspectives	Dual perspectives in social context

Source: John (1999)

These stages, essentially defined in terms of age groups, include various dimensions that capture important shifts in knowledge development, decision-making skills and purchase influence strategies (John, 1999). Each stage is described in more detail as following.

Perceptual stage (ages 3–7): At this stage children focus on the immediate and easily discernable perceptual features of consumption. Their understanding is superficial based on single dimension and their consumer decision-making skills are "simple, expedient and egocentric". This is due to the constraints in encoding and organizing information. Moreover, the influence strategy is not adapted to different situations. They approach situations with egocentric perspective and don't take other person's perspective in modifying the strategy used to influence or negotiate for desired items (John 1999).

Analytical stage (ages 7–11): This stage encapsulates important developments in children's consumer socialization, reflecting advances in their cognitive and social development. It is characterized by transformations from perceptual to symbolic thought, single dimensional to more than one dimensional consideration, concrete to abstract reasoning, and egocentricity to the ability to extend beyond their own perspective. Children have developed their information processing abilities. Their consumer decision-making skills at this stage are described as being more adaptive and responsive. They have ability to think from the perspective of others (parent or friend) and adapt their influence strategy accordingly (John 1999).

Reflective stage (ages 11–16): The reflective stage involves increased sophistication in children's information processing and social skills and their knowledge about market-related concepts, such as branding and pricing. This stage is also associated with the development of greater reflective thinking and reasoning, with a growing social awareness and a more strategic perspective as children approach (John 1999).

2.2 Children Influence on Parent's Purchase Decision

The role of children on family decision making and their negotiation strategies have become an important issue of researches (Marquis, 2004; Kaur and Singh, 2006). Children not only make normal consumption decisions with their parents but they also ask their parents to buy the products they desire (Kaur and Singh, 2006; Ishaque and Tufail, 2014). Shim et al. (1995) reported that the more often parents take their children shopping, the more conscious on product information (e.g. brand, price) of children. Children learn from parents and at the same time they also influence their parents' buying decision.

Children use several persuasive and emotional strategies in order to persuade parents such as asking, begging, screaming, negotiating or convincing (Palan and Wilkes, 1997; John, 1999; Parker, 2001; Marquis, 2004; Marshall et al., 2006). "Pester power" or "nag factor" refers to children's ability to nag their parents into purchasing items (Young, 2003). This power is inversely proportionate to the time available with parents; decreasing in time children spend with parents, rising in amount of pester power (Soni and Upadhyaya, 2007). This supports study of Chaudhari and Marathe (2007) who reported that smaller families, modern parenting styles, higher disposable incomes, and busy lifestyles can lead parents to give what children ask them to buy, especially if their lifestyles cause them to feel that they are neglecting their children. This guilt can play a role in spending decisions as time-stressed parents substitute material goods for time spent with their children. This pester power marketing is unique because the marketing targets children, but the ultimate purchasers of the products are adult parents or caregivers as described in Figure 2.1 (Wilking, 2011).

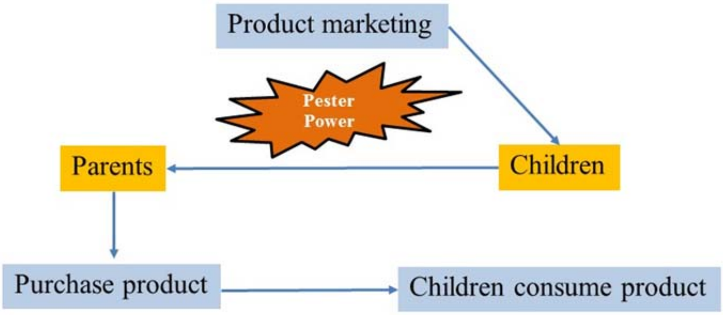


Figure 2.1 Typical pester power transaction

Source: Wilking (2011)

Not only insisting by children themselves, but it's also found that parents are likely to buy products which they think their child will like it in order to avoid a mistake − a product that won't be worn, used, or eaten (Young, 2003). Therefore, despite the fact that children are not the final decision maker, their influence cannot disregard.

From literature review, children's influence can differ by many variables.

1) Demographic: age, gender, culture, parent's employment status, number of children in family, parents' income, parents' status, parents' age, and family's employment status.

2) Product categories

2.2.1 Demographic variables

1) Age**:** Children age is considered to be very important variable that determine the extent of influence children have on parents buying decisions. As age increase, the influence of children on family purchase decision increases (Jenkins 1979; Moschis and Mitchell 1986). According to parents' perception, older children have significantly more influence on family decision making than younger children (Ward and Wackman 1972; Atkin 1978; Jenkins 1979; Moschis and Mitchell 1986; Darley and Lim 1986; Martensen and Gronholdt, 2008). This is due to the development in cognitive abilities of the child (Ali and Batra, 2011). When the children grow up, they enter into the analytical stage with respect to consumer skills and knowledge, and they develop further sophisticated influence strategy abilities (Moschis and Moore, 1979; John, 1999; Hota, 2001; McNeal & Yeh, 2003; Marquis, 2004; Martensen and Gronholdt, 2008). Their requests tend to be accepted by parents more because parents feel more confident in their decision-making abilities; thus parents believe that they make the rational decision (Ward and Wackman 1972).

Moreover, study of Ali and Batra (2011) shows that with the increase of age of child, their impact on parent's selection of various items increases. For example, they found that children's impact on selection of shoes increases with age (3-6 yrs. < 7-11 yrs. < 12-16 yrs.). Likewise significant differences were found on selection of musical instruments and home appliances. Children between 3-6 years were found less impact on parent's selection of musical instruments and home appliances than children between 7-11 years and 12-16 years (Ali and Batra, 2011).

2) Gender: Findings show that there is no gender difference between boys and girls in the extent of their influence on parental purchases (Martensen and Gronholdt,

2008; Ewole *et.al.*, 2010). However, products requested by girls or boys when shopping with parents tend to vary by product categories (Oyewole *et.al.*, 2010; Alkibay, 2011). Girls influence dominates in products like clothes, bakery items, writing paper, and imported candy (McNeal & Yeh, 2003; Ali and Batra, 2011) whereas the boys influence dominates for products like toys, movie-CDs, videogames, and entertainment and fun items (McNeal & Yeh, 2003). Compared to girl, boys are more money-orientated and independent in their decision-making (Marquis, 2004).

Children's gender and parents' gender are also correlated in the purchase decision situation. In Lee and Collins (2000) study, fathers are more comfortable with their sons in purchase decisions as compared to the daughters. On the contrary, daughters help their mothers in taking purchase decisions, as the mothers feel more relaxed discussing various purchases with their daughters.

3) Culture: Since culture exerts considerable influence on the family unit, it is also likely that culture influence the socialization process of the children and their influence on parents' purchase decision (Wimalasiri, 2004; Meenakshi, 2007). This review classifies cultures which impact children's influence on parents' purchase decision into 2 types: nation and family style.

- Nation: The extent of children's influence on parents' purchase decision is differing across nations. Compare Western and Eastern nation's impact, Rose (1999) used the socialization theory to predict children's influence on family decision-making in the USA and Japan. He argued that consumer socialization should occur earlier in the USA than in Japan. Consequently, Japanese mothers would anticipate and tend to satisfy their children's needs more than United States' mothers do. So we can summarize from Rose's (1999) study that Eastern nation's children tend to influence family purchases relatively more, compare to children in Western nation.

There is the comparative research of children's influence on purchase decision in Malta (Europe continent) and the USA conducted by Williams *et al.*, (1999). The study shows that children in Malta exert greater influence than those in USA. This finding describe that this is because the possession of higher social power of Maltese children.

Meenakshi (2007) studied extent of influence of 8-14 years old child in parents' purchase decisions across nations in Asia region (Figure 2.2). It shown that in a child-centered culture nation such as Japan and Thailand society, children tend to highly affect family expenditures. When children are part of a family, their influence may or may not be felt. However, it is found that the child centeredness of mothers may increase their receptivity to the child.

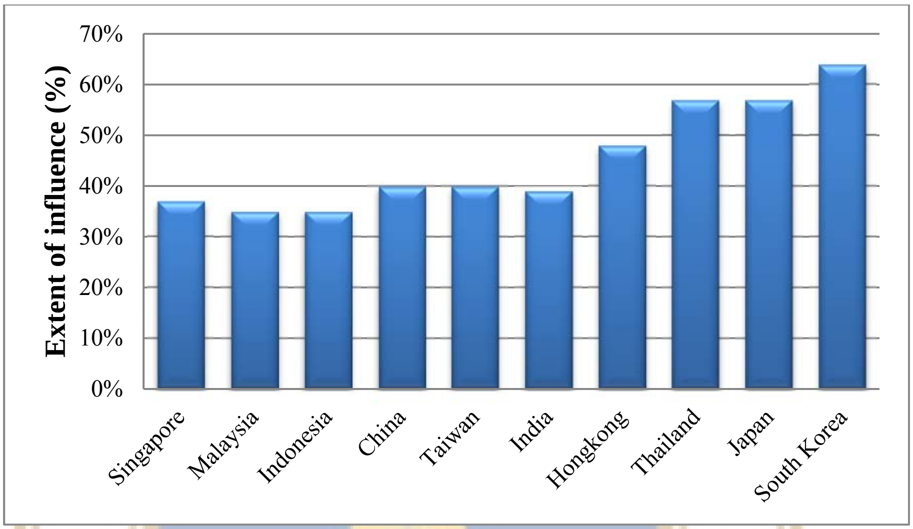


Figure 2.2 Extent of Influence of 8-14 years old in parents purchase decision across nations

Source: Meenakshi (2007)

- Family style: Parent's receptivity to children's influence depends on the general character of parent-child relationships. Children are likely to influence warmer parents (democratic and equalitarian) than cooler parents (autocratic and ignoring) (Baranowski 1978; Wisenblit *et al*., 2013). Compared to cooler parents, warmer parents offer children more opportunities to learn decision-making responsibilities, because they are more supportive of their children and share more affectionate relations with them (Elder, 1962; Peters, 1985). According to Carlson and Grossbart (1988), authoritative and permissive parents (who are warmer) communicate more with their children about consumption than authoritarian and neglecting parents (who are cooler). Their communication includes discussing consumption and co-shopping with children and focusing on their autonomous development and opinions about consumption.

In addition, parental style of family communication provides a means of understanding consumers. The socio- and concept-orientation are two patterns of parental communication styles that are likely to affect the perceived influence that children believe they hold. Parents with a socio-oriented communication style are characterized by monitoring and controlling children's consumer learning and behavior and seek to promote obedience. They do not discuss consumption activities and expect children to comply with established limitations. While parents with a concept-oriented communication style support children in developing their own skills and competences and encourage them to make decisions about purchase without opinions of others. They consult their children and value children's opinions in purchase decisions even for product that are not for children's consumption (Moschis and Moore, 1979; Rose *et al.,* 1999). Caruana and Vassallo (2003) investigated whether parental communication style affects children's perceived influence on purchases. Their results show that children of concept-oriented parents have an influence on purchase decisions, while those with socio-orientated parents do not. Since concept-oriented parents encourage children to develop their own skills and competence as consumers; so it is likely to result in higher yielding to demands by children.

4) Number of children in family: Isin and Alkibay (2011) studied impact of number of children in the family to the extent of children's influence on parents' purchase decision. Their study indicates that the more the number of the children in the family, the more restrictive and penalizing of the attitudes of the parents towards the children are. So it has tendency that children have less power toward on parents' purchase. On the contrary, with family with fewer children, there are increased in the influence of children (McNeal, 1992).

5) Family income: It has been shown that a child's influence on purchase decisions is greater with increased family income. This might be due to the lower financial risk incurred by higher income parents, and it appears that these parents might accept more to product suggestions from their child than lower income parents (Atkin, 1978; Jenkins, 1979; Beatty and Talpade, 1994). This is supported by Ali and Batra (2011) study, they concluded that mother's belonging to families with higher income pay a lesser extent of attention to the price of the products and involve the children on product purchases. On the other hand, for low income or high monetary outlay families, parents were shown to become more reluctant to yielding to a child's request (Poper, 1978).

6) Parents' status: It is found a direct relation between parents married life and children's influence. The single parents foster more household participation and self-reliance among their children, in compare to the couple (McNeal, 1992; Ali and Batra, 2011). I have been reported that children belonging to single parent families become estranged parents. Thus parents try to hold on to relationships with their children with increase children's bargaining for food treats that demonstrate continuing parental love (Hota and Charry, 2014).

7) Parents' age: The research show that parents' age also impact degree of child's influence on purchase decision. Young mothers involve their children only in the selection of their own products such as snack and local juice. But as the mother grows older, they involve their children in the selection of home related products such as musical instrument and home appliances as well (Ali and Batra, 2011).The result is further supported by the studies of Foxman *et al.* (1989) who investigated that children influence will be more in families having older parents. McNeal (1992) discovered that families dedicate to their career and postpone children in initial stage; hence they tend to give their children more importance and had a great respect for their opinions in latter stage (McNeal, 2007).

8) Parents' employment status: It is revealed that children have more influence in the families where both parents work, when compared to families where only one parent works (Kumar, 2013). Parents encourage more household participation of children (McNeal, 1992; Wimalasiri, 2004).

2.2.2 Product categories

From the literature review, there are two key perspectives which researchers use to classified products in lie with the purpose of study relation between product categories and children's influence on parental purchase decision.

The first is classified products by 'children involvement'; second is classified product by 'price'.

2.2.2.1 Product classification by children involvement

The degree and nature of children's influence depends on who is the user, what is the perceived importance of the product to the user and what is the extent of children’s involvement in the purchase decision (Beatty and Talpade, 1994; Foxman et al., 1989; Sharma and Dasgupta, 2009).

By the view of product classification by children involvement, the products and services for which the children have influence on parental purchase are classified into three groups (McNeal, 1992; Martensen and Gronholdt, 2008);

1) Products for children’s individual consumption

The products in this group have the following similar characters (Isin and Alkibay, 2011; Chaudhary and Gupta, 2012);

- Products and services which are for children’s individual consumption and which children can purchase directly with their pocket money; so they have high involvement in these products (Sharma and Dasgupta, 2009).
- They are not very expensive.
- The example of products in this group are; toys, children’s wear, snacks, cereal, juice, school supplies, toothpaste and soft drinks (Foxman et al., 1989; Mangleburg, 1990; Labrecque and Ricard, 2001; Kaur and Singh, 2006; Martensen and Gronholdt, 2008; Ali and Batra, 2011; Ogden, 2011; Basu, 2014).

For this group, children are the primary consumer. They seem to have high involvement and consequently children make the maximum effort and noise to influence their parents in product purchase decisions (Berey and Pollay, 1968; Burns and Harrison, 1985; Belch et al., 1985; Foxman et al., 1989; Mangleburg, 1990; Kaur and Singh, 2006). On the other hand, we can state that children have a greater influence on the purchase of the goods that they use and have comprehensive knowledge about. Thus, the factors such as the knowledge and the need of the children for the product to be purchased, influence their participation in the purchasing decisions (Tansujah et al., 1991; Chaudhary and Gupta, 2012).

2) Products for joint consumption

Products in this group have several commonalities as following (Isin and Alkibay, 2011; Chaudhary and Gupta, 2012);

- They are related to entire family usage involving in ‘high risk’ in the purchase.
- The decision of buying them requires more time and effort of the family members.

- Products and services for which children could have moderate to high interest but can exercise only limited influence (Sharma and Dasgupta, 2009).
- These are the products for which the buying frequency is very low (may be once in five-to-ten years).
- They are expensive products.
- The example of products in this group are; furniture, television, refrigerator, and car.

It has been claimed that products in this group are high-risk products related to the whole family because children have limited knowledge about them (Chaudhary and Gupta, 2012). So the children have low influence on the purchase this kind of products (Tansujah et al., 1991; Guven and Babaogul, 1997; Kanibir, 1995; Labrecque and Ricard, 2001; Kaur and Singh, 2006; Chaudhary and Gupta, 2012).

3) Products common to the whole family

Products in this group have similar as the second group mentioned before; however, they involve in low risk in their purchase.

- They are related to whole family usage involving in ‘low risk’ in the purchase.
- The decision power for making purchase is still with the parents but children are the decision makers or co-decision makers (Sharma and Dasgupta, 2009).
- They are expensive products.
- The example of products in this group are; family vacation, foodstuff, movie, eating out, spending the leisure times, and cable TV subscriptions (Mangleburg, 1990; Labrecque and Ricard, 2001; Kaur and Singh, 2006).

Children show moderate influence on decisions about products in this group as they are used for the whole family with low risk purchase; however, their influence is less in these decisions than in decisions for products for their own use in the first group (Belch et al., 1985; Darley and Lim, 1986; Ahuja and Stinson, 1993; Kaur and Singh, 2006).

2.2.2.2 Product classification by price

For this point of view, researchers consider the price of product and analyze the parents' perception on their child influence on purchase decision (Isin and Alkibay, 2011; Chaudhary and Gupta, 2012). Due to children's limited financial resource, they tend to have greater authority if products are less expensive. On the other hand, they have less influence on expensive products or the products related to financial terms such as (life insurance, car for family etc.) (Mangleburg, 1990).

The example of products in this group are; life insurance, car for family, television, and refrigerator.

In conclusion, finding indicated that children tend to have strong influence if the products are relevant to them or for their personal consumption and are less expensive (like toys, children's wear, snacks, cereal, juice, and soft drinks) (Foxman et al., 1989; Labrecque and Ricard, 2001; Kaur and Singh, 2006; Martensen and Gronholdt, 2008; Ali and Batra, 2011; Ogden, 2011; Basu, 2014). Moderate degree of influence is for family activities (e.g. vacations, family eat out decision-making and movies) (Labrecque and Ricard, 2001; Kaur and Singh, 2006). And the least influence on the expensive items (Labrecque and Ricard, 2001), products related to financial terms (e.g. life insurance, car for family etc.) (Mangleburg, 1990), and entire family usage with high risk purchase (television, refrigerator, car etc.) (Labrecque and Ricard, 2001; Kaur and Singh, 2006; Chaudhary and Gupta, 2012).

2.3 Marketing to Children

Marketing is to be viewed from the perspective of the target audience (The Public Health Advocacy Institute, 2013). As the extent of children's influence increases, children are becoming a part of most marketers' target audience even if they are not part of the target market (Dhobal, 1999). This makes more difficult for marketers to create the message for children's products as there are two recipients of the message; the first is obviously the child, and the second is the parents (Hill and Tilley, 2002; Cordy, 2004; The Public Health Advocacy Institute, 2013).

In a child's earliest years, he or she develops his or her own preferences, but with no purchasing power and only limited input, the child's parents choose the majority of products that children intake or use (Smith, 1997). Hence, for those children under six years of age who are yet to enjoy "self-purchasing independence," marketers must continue to appeal to both parents and children (Smith, 1997). Marketers must be aware of the factors that influence parents' purchases. Some of parents' objectives related to the following factors: cost, effort, nutrition, routine, conversation, and dining etiquette (Smith, 1997). Older children (age more than 6 years) develop money awareness and parents begin giving them money in a desire to please them more, so that they may self-purchasing independence spend on objects of their choice (McNeal, 1987). Marketers have to aware of the factors that influence children's purchases. The details of marketing tools targeting to children consumers and influence their behavior are reviewed in following sections.

2.3.1 Marketing mix in children market

According to literature review, marketers consistently address the four *p*'s marketing mix (product, price, place, and promotion) to create a favorable purchase environment and influence the preferences of children in the hope that it will generate the pester power and influence parents' purchase decisions (Chaudhari and Marathe, 2007). The details of each element have been reviewed.

2.3.1.1 Product and Packaging

1) Product: To appeal to children, most companies try to develop functional product attributes to response children's needs. For example cereal companies highlight its sweetened taste. Since the launch of Sugar Crisp by Post Cereals in the 1950s, presweetened cereals have emerged as children's preferred type of cereal (Bruce and Crawford, 1995).

Roberts (2005) introduced new marketing concept for children consumer based on "product with entertainment" or as called "eatertainment" for food product. Many researches supported this concept which describe that products marketed towards children have to be fun and excited in order to attract them (Poris, 2005; Mathiot, 2010; Osborne, 2012; Ville and Tartas, 2010). For example in food product, the food tastes good is no longer enough, it has to be fun as well. Children may respond to food products not necessarily because of the nutritious nature, but for the fun or perceived imaginary or actual entertainment to be enjoyed. Many companies develop their strategies based on this concept. They rarely talk about taste. Instead, they link the product to a desired emotional state (e.g. McDonald's campaign slogan, 'I'm lovin' It!'.

This marketing trend is characterized by several entertainment techniques, such as premium offers added to the purchase; licensed characters on packaging positioned towards the children (Osborne, 2012); the development of special children meals at restaurants; and finally the fun product designs which include play as added value, often incorporating unusual shapes and colors to attract young people (Roberts, 2005). Despite making the fun food more appealing by itself through looks and taste, play is also experienced on other levels in the consumption. First by interactive play with the product, through opening boxes or building something together, a second fun experience is reached through playing with friends as in talking and trading games or cards among them (Roberts, 2005).

2) Packaging: The goal of marketers is to position its brand within children's consideration sets so that when a child thinks of a product, he or she thinks of that particular brand. To accomplish this, marketers depend on several aspects of marketing, but no one area is as significant as packaging (McNeal and Ji, 2003). From the perspective of children consumers, the packaging has become the product because it is the first point of contact with the product (Hawkes, 2010). Marketer expect packaging to carry the majority of the workload in promoting product's image, and as result, packaging design has become huge industry (McNeal and Ji, 2003). Details of packaging toward children market are described in next section.

2.3.1.2 Price

It has been revealed that one of an important factor which influence children's choices is the price variable (Bakir and Palan, 2010). Children now have more influence and input in family's purchasing decisions than ever before, (Donohue, 1975; Schwentner, 1980; Brée, 1987; McNeal, 1992; Kaur and Singh, 2006; Ishaque and Tufail, 2014) yet, few studies concerning children as consumers deal with the price variable. And the field of children prices knowledge is totally blank of academic investigations (Damay et al., 2014). Damay et al. (2014) conducted the research on child-price relationship. They highlight a multi-dimensional decision-making process in which price plays an important role; however it is not the only factor considered.

The result shows that the majority of children tend to select a known brand, even if the product is more expensive. The finding is in line with Brée’s (1987) conclusions.

Price is likely to involve at several steps in a child’s decision-making process (Damay et al., 2014). Because a child is considered as prescriber, actual buyer or future consumer (McNeal, 1992), the study of their behavior-price relationship, and in particularly, his prices knowledge, appears relevant. Price may serve as a criterion for comparison, due to a budgetary limit or become a negotiation point with parents. In all cases, price is at least considered in part of children’s decision making (Damay et al., 2014). It has reported that marketing strategies appeal to children with routine “low” and special discounted prices for over-size amount of foods and beverages such as McDonald's Meal Deals and 7-11's Big Gulp oversized beverages (Samuels et al., 2003).

Understanding how children learn about prices is necessary because their knowledge in this area serves as a basis for their adult skills. The results show that when the education level is high, the children’s price responses increase. This result is explained by the relationship between education level and mathematical skills, as well as that between education level and age, which itself is linked indirectly to the commercial experience of the children. As children get older, they tend to have more money and also to experience different buying situations with products of varying prices (Damay et al., 2014).

2.3.1.3 Place

One of the objectives of a retail channel strategy is to maximize customer satisfaction by facilitate the ease of the buying process. The strategy is influenced by the target of the retailer (Coelho and Easingwood, 2003). For retailers selling products for children, the target consists of adults who are going to purchase the products and also for children who these products are designed. It shows the intent of the retailer to target children (that is the “child-adult couple”) and not the adults only. The choice of channel strategy is contributes to the differentiation between retailers who sell products for children. So it impact brand image and competitiveness of retailers (Ville, 2009).

From literature review, there are few researchers have tried to understand the perspectives of configuration and integration of the channel strategy for children. This is encouraged Faultrier *et at.*, (2014) to develop an approach at defining a retail channel strategy applied to children. They investigated physical surroundings features dedicated to children in various sales channels including; store, catalogue, call center, kiosk, mobile device (i.e. mobile application or mobile internet), web site and social network. They found that all revealed features are found only in store channel. According to Faultrier *et at.*, (2014), six out of twelve retail stores have child-oriented area in store; but confined to part of store ("*medium level of child orientation*"). For example; a children's area with furniture and equipment for artwork or to play games with (Ayadi, 2005). While they found only one from twelve retailers applies a child-friendly arrangement spread throughout the store ("*high level of child orientation*"). This included touch screens in every corner of the store (for interactive selection of clothes) and games (easels for drawing, pillows for fights); furniture figuring a canyon for the denim collection, portholes in the door of the dressing rooms and a sweet bar; no bright colors but a pink foot sizer painted on to the floor for the shoe size. All these components contribute to satisfy children (Wiener, 2004). However, five retailers made no consideration at all of children in the retail channels ("*low level of child orientation*") (Faultrier *et at.*, 2014). Apart from the store, Faultrier *et at.*, (2014) have not found any other retail channel showing specific designs for children. Web sites or mobile devices navigations are not adapted for children as no retailers of the sample have implemented large buttons, flat navigation based on tasks, limited choices of menus, even in a part of the screens. Bright colors or printable play activities are also missing. This preliminary exploration shows that retailers give no evidence of high channel child orientation, since eleven out of the twelve retailers are at a low or medium level. This suggests that targeting the child-adult couple seems to be relatively unexploited in terms of retail channel strategy.

Faultrier *et at.* (2014) study on children's perception toward traditional sale outlets (e.g. store) and online shopping. The study reveals that children age 6 to 12 years old prefer store than online shopping because products can be tried out and tested on-site, making the offline retail experience a fun activity. On the other hand, children express a very negative perception of e-retailing, which they often consider to be dishonest, offering limited choice at higher prices.

2.3.1.4 Promotions

Marketers consistently use techniques both above and below the line to influence the preferences of children in the hope that it will generate the pester power and influence parents’ purchase decisions (Chaudhari and Marathe, 2007. It is revealed that form of marketing targeting to children includes; television advertising, in-school marketing and kids club, product placements, internet, toys and products with brand logos, and youth-targeted promotions (e.g. cross-selling, tie-ins, and etc.)

1) Television Advertising

Children’s buying behavior is significantly influenced by their attitude towards the advertisement (Cowell, 2000; Chaudhari and Marathe, 2007; Lawlor and Prothero, 2008; Priya et al. 2010; Hye-Jin et al., 2014); but there are other influential factors like parental guidance and peer pressure, which are also responsible for framing their attitude towards advertisements as well as their buying behavior. As the child grows up, effect of peer pressure increases while parental influence is definitely there (Moore, 2004; Panwar and Agnihotri, 2005; Priya *et al.,* 2010). Their thought processes undergo drastic changes at very short intervals of time (especially between six and eight years) so advertisers will have to develop different marketing plans for different age groups in order to ensure a positive attitude towards the advertisement (Priya *et al.,* 2010).

The various elements of advertisements have to be carefully chosen in order to have the appropriate combination of credibility and entertainment. The credibility aspect of the advertisements has to be really focused upon to make the advertisements look believable and realistic. For the younger age group, the advertiser should consider the fact that, the parents, who are also viewing the commercials, may be giving their realistic viewpoint on the commercials, and given the child’s greater dependence on his parents for understanding the world. The advertisements have to be more credible. Whereas, for the older age groups, the marketer should communicate those story boards or visuals which are in tandem with similar information the child is getting from other sources especially peers. As the entertaining capability of the advertisement is welcome by all age groups, so advertisements should definitely be a source of entertainment by incorporating elements like jingles, animation and humor. Communication is more receptive by children, if it is presented in an entertaining manner (Priya *et al.,* 2010).

Endorsements by brand icons definitely play a role in the children’s buying decision process, but the extent of their role will depend on the way they are depicted. Their role as an entertainer varies across different age groups (Gunter and Furnham, 1998; Ghani and Zain, 2004; Priya *et al.,* 2010). For younger age group, depiction of brand icon may have a low impact, because of parental interventions. Whereas for the age group seven to nine, depiction of brand icon makes no impact on the formation of their attitude towards the advertisement. This can be attributed to the fast changing cognitive ability at this stage, as well as the failure of celebrities to meet the children's increased expectation of entertainment from the advertisements. For children in the age group nine to 11, both credibility and the entertaining capability of the advertisement will make a significant impact on the brand endorsement by the brand icon, hence brand icons play a major role for the older children hinting at their evolved cognitive development. However, cognitive defense of children against television commercials varies because of many environmental factors (Priya *et al.,* 2010). Hence, strong preference for the advertised products can differ among individuals in the same age group (Brucks *et al.,* 1988).

Children are easily get influenced by the presence of their favorite personality in the advertisement. They have their own role models and they try to mimic the advertisement as well as the action of their role model. These role models of children may be celebrities (Tom *et al.,* 1992; Klaus and Bailey, 2008; Chan *et al.,* 2013), film actor or actress, sportsman (Shuart, 2007; Hyman and Sierra, 2010), Athenian, VJ, etc. (Chaudhari and Marathe, 2007; Tingstad, 2007). Children's aspiration can be an imaginary figure in the advertisements. They are influenced by the characters in the folklores communicated to them by the elders in the family, where they listen to bedtime stories or watching popular folklore in animation form. Hence, these characters should be incorporated in the storyline of the advertisements for creating association with this audience (Priya *et al.,* 2010).

2) In-schools marketing and kids clubs

Marketing in schools is rapidly growing (Beder, 1998; Rodhain, 2002; Oplatka and Hemsley-Brown, 2004, 2007; Chaudhari and Marathe, 2007). And kids clubs, organized by retailers, producers and media outlets, have been proliferating (Thomson and Williams, 2014). For example, KFC fast-food restaurants create loyal customers through children's clubs and events. In Thailand, they arrange a singing contest, to gain children's support and local media coverage (Chaudhari and Marathe, 2007). These two marketing channels offer an opportunity to develop a more personal relationship with each child, get information about the children for marketing purposes that can be used for mailing lists and data bases, and to promote products to children of particular age groups and geographical locations (Chaudhari and Marathe, 2007).

3) Product placements in film and TV program

Product placement in film, on TV, and games, has become a common place marketing technique (Chaudhari and Marathe, 2007; Toomey and Francis, 2013). Product placement in films and television reaches millions consumers, over and over again. With the new technology such as interactive TV, which allow consumers to interact with TV commercials, product placement is playing more importance. TV producers are looking for new ways to integrate advertising and content. They try to increase viewers capability of immediately purchasing products featured on the program. Interactive TV allows users to order a pair of pants, merely by clicking on them (Chaudhari and Marathe, 2007).

4) Internet

New technologies such as internet, have provided new opportunities and channel that enable "new, personalized promotions" aimed at children (Austin and Reed, 1999; Chaudhari and Marathe, 2007; Liu, 2009; Lascu, 2013; Hye-Jin et al., 2014). Advertisers will be able to target children whenever they are and to transmit advertisements for products that are design specifically to attract children, children of certain gender, age, household income or with certain interest. Children as young as four are being targeted by advertisers on the internet and often the interaction with the children is not mediated by parents or teachers (Chaudhari and Marathe, 2007).

Moreover to apply internet technology, marketers can collect data about the viewing habits and specific interest of children. It extracts personal information from the children by getting them to fill out surveys before they can play and offering prizes. Marketers can use their acquired information to design their marketing messages and attractive features in programming and advertising (Chaudhari and Marathe, 2007).

5) Toys and product with brand logos

It has been revealed that companies promote their brand awareness and preferences to children by market branded toys and products. For example, the food companies have partnered with toy manufacturers to create toys that advertise food (Linke, 1999; Fonnesbaek and Andersen, 2005; Chaudhari and Marathe, 2007; Sparrman, 2009).

6) Youth-targeted promotions

Sales promotions are a used as marketing method for reaching children. They include cross-selling, tie-ins, premiums, and sweepstakes prizes. Cross-selling and tie-ins combine promotional efforts to sell a product. For example, some toothpaste packaging tie-ins the ongoing usage free gifts or samples of their products such as toothbrushes and bar soap. Therefore more effective since such interactions may occur frequently and with each use (Underwood, 1999).

Premiums and sweepstakes prizes have increased and are often used to attract to children's desires (Chaudhari and Marathe, 2007). Premiums provide something free with a purchase, whereas sweepstakes and contests promise opportunities to win free products. For example; fast food restaurants (e.g. McDonold) typically use premiums in children's meals, giving away simple toys. Sweetened cereals also commonly give premiums in the form of toys, cards or games. Premiums can increase short-term sales since children may desire the item over the food; and they also can help increase the image of that brand in children's minds (Chaudhari and Marathe, 2007).

2.3.2 Packaging as a marketing communication tools to children

From above description about four *p*’s marketing mix toward children market, we can find that marketers and researchers focus on two areas of the marketing mix which are: product & packaging, and promotion. These two elements supplement each other; promotions, in particular the advertising, aim to build brand recognition and positive brand associations, through the use of licensed characters, logos, and slogan (Connor, 2006); while packaging act as silent salesman which appeal to children at point of sell (Hill and Tilley, 2002; McNeal and Ji, 2002). However, this research interest in study on “packaging” due to it is claimed to be the most important marketing techniques effectively used for children’s products sold through store – the key channel strategy commonly used with children (Hawkes, 2004).

There are several marketing techniques which have been widely used on products sold through store include; product packaging, shelf-talkers, dump-bins, end-of-aisle displays, bundling, product sampling and positioning of products on shelves and checkouts (Hawkes, 2004). Among all techniques, product packaging is the most readily meets the criterion of “child-oriented marketing” due to the use of lettering, iconography and themes of interest to children, and cross-promotions such as tie-ins, competitions and premium offers that appeal to children (Mehta *el. al.*, 2012). This is supported by Mehta el. al.’s study (2012) who investigated child-oriented products sold through supermarkets in South Australia, and they found that up to one hundred and fifty-seven discrete products were marketed to children via product packaging. The packaging can attract children’s attention and affect their product preferences of children in store which consequence creates pester power (Gelprowic and Beharrell, 1994; Hill and Tilley, 2002; Ogba and Johnson, 2010; Taghavi and Seyedsalehi, 2015).

Marketers develop packaging from the perspective of target audiences; so for children products, they tend to design packaging regarding to both children and parents.

According to Gelprowic and Beharrell (1994) study, child pester power can derive from an attraction to packaging. They are drawn in by bright colors, a familiar spokes character or licensed character, a tie-in with a popular television program or movie, a toy premium or a code, or a game on the packaging. All features have nothing to do with the actual product contained inside the packaging (Gelperowic and Beharrell, 1994; Hawkes, 2010). Marketers constantly use attractive visual imagery; recognizable characters, color and design to ensure their product stand out to children. In addition, packaging also communicates its shape, size, weight, and texture through its tactility. It is expressed through the touch of the hand which has been described as the most intelligent part of the body (Sekuler and Blake, 1990). This is particularly significant in case of children, whose fingertips possess four times the sense receptors of adults (Thornbury and Mistretta, 1981), and who often handle packages with both hands. It’s observed by Rust (1993) that younger children are more likely than older ones to exhibit some sort of physical involvement with packaging beyond the functional contact required to pick up a package and place it in the shopping cart. Design packaging product as suitable for children is essential to avoid disappointment felt (Bix et al., 2009; Soldow, 1983).

On the contrary, parents interpret and interact with product packaging differently than children. They are likely motivated to purchase a particular brand because their children ask for it, it is perceived to be of good quality, a good value, and it is appropriate for children (Gelperowic and Beharrell, 1994; The Public Health Advocacy Institute, 2013). Figure 2.3 represent source of influence on purchase decision of children and parents.

Marketers aware of these differences and try to include marketing messages on packaging that appeal to both parents and children. Table 2.2 shows example of features commonly found in food packaging. The Table reveals that marketers intentionally target more children than parents in their design of product packaging (Gelperowic and Beharrell, 1994; Ogba and Johnson, 2010).

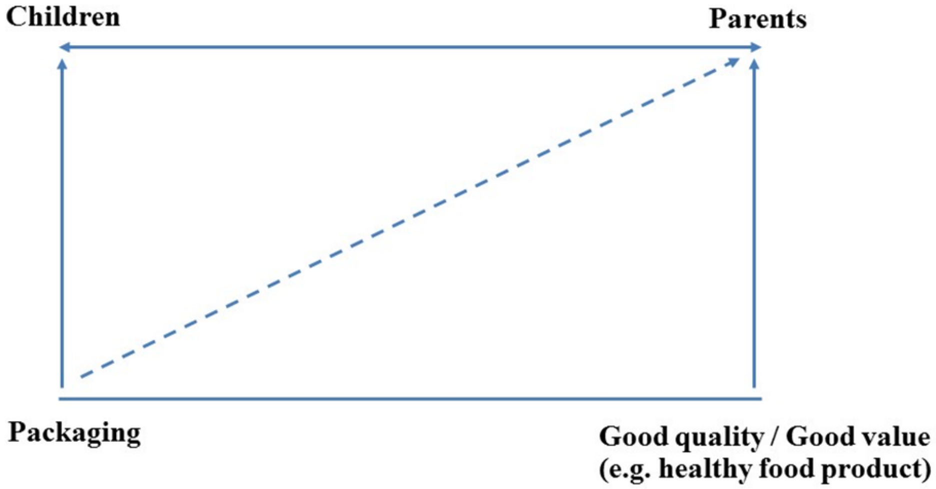


Figure 2.3 Simplified representation of source of influence on purchase decision

Source: Gelperowic and Beharrell (1994)

Table 2.2 Packaging features and the likely target audience

Packaging Features	Children-focused	Parent-focused
- Color	●	
- Spokes Characters	●	
- Cross-promotion (e.g. television shows and movie)	●	
- Size and shape	●	●
- Brand name	●	●
- Product name	●	●
- Sweepstakes	●	●
- Toy Premium	●	
- Codes to use on a website or with App	●	
- Interactive features (required the use of mobile phone)	●	
- Nutrition fact panel	●	
- Nutrition-related claims	●	●
- Point for use with a loyalty program	●	●
- Public relations features (cause marketing campaigns)	●	●
- Instant win game	●	●

Source: The Public Health Advocacy Institute, 2013

2.4 Packaging elements and influence on children's preference and purchase decision

2.4.1 Packaging elements

From literature review, researchers have talked about packaging elements which represent brand and package attributes in various aspects. Table 2.3 shows the findings from a number of studies classifying the elements of packaging.

Table 2.3 Packaging Elements

Authors	Main emphasis	Demographic Variables
Rettie & Brewer (2000)	They investigated the proper positioning of elements, which includes verbal on right-hand side and non-verbal on left hand side of the package.	Visual: Visual appeal, picture, etc. Verbal: Brand slogan
Kotler (2005)	Elements should be evaluated when employing packaging decision.	Size, form, material, color, text and brand

Table 2.3 Packaging Elements (cont.)

Authors	Main emphasis	Demographic Variables
Underwood (2003)	Elements in packaging design help the producer in creating and communicating brand identity.	Structural and Visual elements: Brand logo, color, fonts, material, pictorials, product description and shapes.
Smith and Taylor (2004)	Distinctive elements are considered by producers and designers when creating efficient packaging.	Form, size, color, graphics, material and flavor (Similar to Underwood (2003), in focusing on structural and visual rather than verbal elements of packaging)
Silayoi & Speece (2004; 2007)	They emphasized on consumer communication and branding. Visual elements are related to affective aspect of consumer's decision making process, while informational elements are related with cognitive ones.	Visual: Graphics, color, shape, and size Informational: Information provided and technology
Vila & Ampuero (2007)	Packaging is the key variable of positioning (product) in the marketing mix. Packaging plays an essential role when it comes to configuring the positioning of a food product.	Graphic components: Color, typography, shapes used, and image Structural components: Shape, size of the containers, and materials.
Butkeviciene *et al.* (2008)	They emphasized importance of packaging elements in communicating and influencing decision making process. Visual elements of the package transfer non-verbal informational and affect emotions. Verbal information, which is transferred with informational elements, affects cognitive orientation of consumer.	Non-verbal: Color, form, size, imageries, graphics, materials and smell Verbal: Product name, brand, producer/country, information, special offers, instruction of usage
Kuvykaite *et al.* (2009)	They gave detail of verbal and visual package elements and their impact on consumer's purchase decision. Taking into consideration involvement level, time pressure or individual characteristics of consumers, is necessary in order to implement efficient packaging decisions.	Visual: Graphic, color, size, form, and material Verbal: Product information, producer, country-of-origin and brand

While different studies classify packaging elements in different ways, there is broadly common treatment which these studies view packaging elements as; visual and verbal elements (Kuvykaite, et al., 2009). Except for price, "visual elements" are those that are referred to visual aspects and design elements. Thus, such visual elements can be distinguished as graphic, color, size, form, and material (Kuvykaite, *et al*., 2009). In respect of their psychological influence in aiding shoppers searching for a product to purchase. "Verbal elements" (so called "Informational elements") are literally expressed on the package, such as product information, producer, country-of-origin and brand name. Visual elements are related with affective aspects of a consumer‘s decision making process, while verbal elements are related with the cognitive ones (Silayoi & Speece, 2004; 2007). In practice, both elements combine and complement each other in helping to link and support brand identity (Rettie & Brewer, 2000).

According to Kuvykaite, *et al*. (2009), the impact of such package elements on consumers’ product preference purchase decisions can be also stronger or weaker depending on the consumer’s individual characteristics of consumers. Figure 2.4 has adapted in order to show simplified scheme of visual and verbal package elements impact on consumer’s purchase decisions, mediated by individual characteristics.

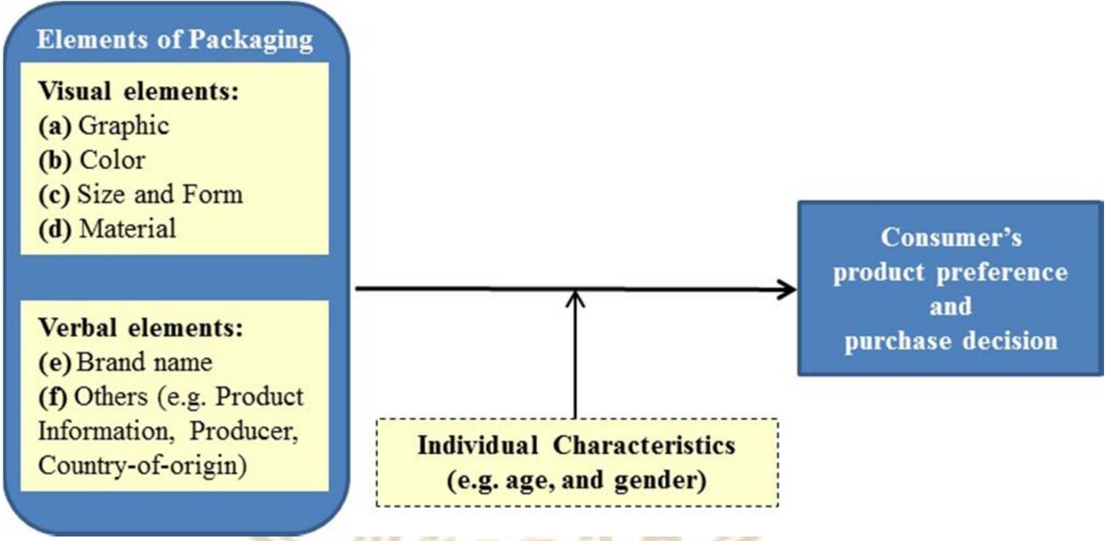

Elements of Packaging
Visual elements:
(a) Graphic
(b) Color
(c) Size and Form
(d) Material
Verbal elements:
(e) Brand name
(f) Others (e.g. Product Information, Producer, Country-of-origin)
Individual Characteristics
(e.g. age, and gender)
Consumer’s product preference and purchase decision

Figure 2.4 visual and verbal package elements impact on consumer’s purchase decisions

Source: adapted from Kuvykaite, et al. (2009)

2.4.2 The influence of packaging elements on children’s preference and purchase decision

This research has mainly focused on studying the effectiveness of key packaging elements in achieving the goal of communication with children customers. The emphasis of this study focuses on the effect of such elements on children’s preference and purchase decision.

Taking each of the main visual and verbal elements in turn, the key findings of the academic literatures regarding children consumers are as follows:

2.4.2.1 Influence of visual elements

Visual elements of packaging strongly effect children's purchasing decisions because they have less developed information processing capability, and this tends to make them evaluate products on the basis of visual level or the images used on the package, in addition to verbal elements (Dammler and Middelmann-Motz 2002; Taghavi and Seyedsalehi, 2015). According to Hota and Charry (2014), children across age-groups (6-11 years old) mainly recall visual elements of product packaging such as colors, images, brand logos, brand mascots, and licensed characters. These elements of packaging seem to be acting as cues of product memories encoded upon earlier encounters with the product for children. The visual elements of packaging attract children, give them a better feeling about the product, and hence play a very important role in their decision-making process (Taghavi and Seyedsalehi, 2015).

Considering the opinions of parents, the visual elements of packaging (e.g. images of cartoon characters, attractive colors, and impressive design) have a significant effect on themselves and children's purchasing decisions (Taghavi and Seyedsalehi, 2015). The findings support the results from Underwood et al. (2001), who found that consumers pay much attention to the visual elements of a product and are thus affected by these elements in their choices of products. Likewise, Silayoi and Speece (2007) have concluded that the design of packaging largely impacts consumer judgment.

According to Figure 2.4, visual elements are consisting of graphic, color, size and form, and material. Taking literature review into consideration of these visual classification perspectives. We can see that, except packaging material, other visual elements (graphic, color, size and form) have been reported to be important for children's product preference and decision making. Details of each element impacts are discuss as following.

1) Graphic (e.g. spokes-character)

Graphics includes layout, color combinations, typography, and product illustration, all of which create an image of product (Silayoi and Speece, 2004). The differential perception and the positioning of the graphics elements on a package make the difference and identify product when consumers scan a wide range of different package in the marketplace (Herrington and Capella, 1995).

From literature review, spokes-character (cartoon-like animal or person) is mostly graphic element which is frequently used to target children consumer. It acts as integral part of the brand characters, like the logo which always present on all brand's advertising media (Brée and Cegarra, 1994). Children infer brand image from brand characters (Hémar-Nicolas et al., 2015). According to Osborne (2012) and Hémar-Nicolas (2015) the spokes-characters can be both licensing well-known TV or film characters (such as Doramon) and company own characters (such as Kelloggs' Tony the Tiger). They make a package more fun and encourage children to play with the product (Osborne, 2012). The children' preferences for brands are in sync with, 'which of their favorite or popular cartoon characters' are associated with the brand (Christina, et al., 2010; Ogba and Johnson, 2010; Roberto, 2010; Hémar-Nicolas et al., 2015; Jose, 2014; Nelson et al., 2015). Roberto et al. (2010) argued that children better like the taste of food products which have images of cartoon characters on their package. Moreover, Powell et al. (2011) found that most children are attracted by chocolate ice cream with the images of cartoon characters on the package.

Character effect starts at early age, 4 years old (Nelson et al., 2015). When children were asked 'why they preferred chosen cartoon product?', most of them were not able to express clear reason for their choice. The most frequent response was "because I like them" or "Cause it's my favorite cartoon" or "I like the picture" (Nelson et al., 2015). The stated rationale for children's preference related to the character, primarily a single attribute, which can be described by the limited sort of reasoning and decision strategies typical of children in this perceptual stage (John, 1999).

This influence of the character due to media exposure is evident and explicit (Nelson et al., 2015). Their finding has shown that repeated exposures to characters and engagement with toy versions of favorite characters created stronger relationships of children with those characters (Calvert and Richards, 2014). Children view characters across several media such as television and video game. Recently there is increasing important role of video games (Nelson et al., 2015).

It is reported that children sometime are unable to associate the cartoon character with the brand or the product category. And children's loyalty to brands can shift with change of association of the cartoon characters (Jose, 2014). So it would be advisable for marketers to have long term association with the same character. It is emphasized key success factors of brand character; the ability to build a close relationship with children (Hémar-Nicolas, 2011). This would imprint the association of the brand with the character in the little minds of children and reinforce the brand recall (Jose, 2014). From McNeal and Ji (2003) study, spokes-characters are included in the children's drawings 37.6 percent when studied on children's visual memory of packaging. This is basic information to facilitate brand recall often leads to brand preference during purchase.

2) Color

In general, consumers use colors on packages for identification of brands (e.g. the color of red and Coca-Cola, gold/black and Duracell). Using color as a cue on packaging can be a potentially strong association, especially when it is unique to a particular brand (Grossman and Wisenblit, 1999). Young (2003) and Zeghache (2014) reported that color contrast has a positive impact on brand name recognition, and makes products visible and considered for purchase of children. However, it reveals slightly effect to children's product choice. For children, influences of metonymical logic (color of the component responsible for the flavor or object) and aesthetics (favorite color) dominate their choice. For example, a boy chose blue product due to it represents water (Gollety and Guichard, 2011). Moreover it has been found that children show understanding on color related with spokes-character or package to themselves ("the cartoon has a pink shirt, so do I") (Nelson et al., 2015).

According to Marshall *et al.* (2006), pre-school children make package selections based on favorite colors over shape or other contents in the packaging. According to many studies, colorful packaging, and attractive colors are strongly favored by children and fill them with excitement (Silayoi and Speece, 2004; and Marshall et al., 2006). Children are strongly attracted to bright colors (red in particular) and dismiss black which is considered to be sad color (Ezan and Lagier, 2009; Ogba and Johnson, 2010). Past research has noted that saturation or novelty color may attract children's attention (Devismes, 2000). For parents' point of view, they also believe that the use of attractive colors and shapes can affect their children's purchasing decisions (Ogba and Johnson, 2010). Children's color preference also differ with age, there is a tendency to move from warm to cool colors with increasing age (Burnham el al., 1963).

3) Size and Form

For package size, form, and elongation effect children's product judgment and decisions, children tend to choose the products that have suitable size and convenient form for their use. They appear to use these elements as simplifying visual to make volume judgments. They considered suitable quantity judgement for themselves or for sharing with others. Generally, they perceive more elongated from of packaging to be larger. Some children chose packaging of cup instead of box because of convenient to use. Suitable size prevails more often over convenient form (Boonmattaya and Taweerutchana, 2013). Hawkes (2010) revealed that small and unusual packaging can attract children.

It has been revealed that packaging form is one of important criteria for children's product choice. And the packaging form is more important criteria for children than adults (Valajoozi and Zangi, 2016). Children chose the product because of favorite form or shape; for example, star, heart (Boonmattaya and Taweerutchana, 2013; Duff, 1999).

4) Material

Per literature review, there are no evidence on packaging material effect on children's product preference and decision making. So we can imply that when children encounter product packaging, they ignore its material and do not take it into consideration of decision making. However, in this study we also mark it in research question to be considered.

2.4.2.1 Influence of verbal elements

Most studies revealed that children tend to recall and show strong impact from only visual elements (e.g. color, characters, brand logo and etc.) regard to their product preference and decision making due to their limit of informational processing capability (Dammler and Middelmann-Motz 2002; Taghavi and Seyedsalehi, 2015). However Hota and Charry (2014) reported in different point of view. Their finding indicated that children would recall different elements of cereal packaging, whether visual elements, or other types such as informational elements. And there are no difference between the older (9-11 years old) and the younger children (6-9 years old). Surprisingly, both younger children and older children remember informational packaging elements, and in fact, younger children remember as many informational elements as older children (Hota and Charry, 2014)

Considering verbal elements effect in children's product preference and purchase decision is this study, most literatures focus on studying brand name. While there are rarely evidence of effect from other verbal elements (e.g. product information, producer, and country-of-origin). The details of each elements are discussed as following.

1) Brand name

Brand consists of several elements, including brand name (Keller, 2008). Brand name is any word, design, sound, shape, or color or a combination thereof used to distinguish the goods or services of a seller (Kerin and Sethuraman, 1998). The company with well-known brand name can more easily reach consumers than companies with less-known brand names. Bharedwaj *et al.* (1993) mention to brand name as means of differentiation and a way of suggesting quality. Similarly, Betts (1994) considers the main purpose of brand name is to convey particular features about a product and makes a product stand out against similar products marketed by the competitors. According to Keller (2008) brand name draws the attentions of the consumers by making products seem unique and memorable; thus, it builds brand awareness (Keller, 2008). Brand creates association of strength, uniqueness, and favorability in the minds of consumers (Heding et al., 2009).

Brands play a significant role in children's lives (Roper and Shah, 2007). Advertisements aim to make children choose one brand over the others so that children do not just request, say, a sweet drink, but rather they ask for a Coca-Cola (Ward et al., 1977; Wimalasiri, 2004). Research has shown that the use of brand names in marketing can better draw the attention of children to food product (Levin, 1998). Children's demands for products are based on their favorite brands (Maher, 2012). McNeal and Ji (2003) stated that when producers of food target young children as consumers, they aim to imprint the brand name on children's mind so that when children think of a particular product, they think of a particular brand name. Children's awareness to brand is increasing (Dotson and Hyatt, 2005). Dotson and Hyatt (2005) and Hill and Tilley (2002) concluded that most children are aware of brands when they go shopping. They even know about famous manufacturers (Hill and Tilley, 2002).

Children can identify corporate labels at 18 months old, identify the link between products and brand names at 20 months old, pick a brand at two or three years old (McNeal and Yeh, 1993), and buy a particular brand at the age of 5. Brand name effects brand perception of children. Robinson *et al.*'s (2007) revealed that a group of three to five-year-old children considered a food product in a branded box (McDonald) more delicious than the one in a plain box although both boxes had been filled with the same product.

On the contrary, some past research show no significant effect of brand name on children's decision. Taghavi and Seyedsalehi (2015) conduct research regarding to this effect in chocolate product. They argued that one reason why brand was found to have no effect on children's purchasing decision in their study is that chocolate products in Iran fail to target children and as a result children are not well aware of chocolate brands. This is described by Bhattacharyya and Kohli (2007) finding, children in the age range of 2.5-8 years only become brand-aware if brands target them. Another possible reason is that because the children in the study were between two and 12 years old, branded products were not important to them. According to John (1999), children acquire the ability to analyze things at the age of 11 (reflective stage) and thus begin to show more interest in branded products. Similarly, Chaplin and John (2005), conducted research on a group of children who were eight to 18 years old, they found that older children better appreciate and value brand names than the younger one.

From the point of view of parents, brand is also a key factor affecting their purchasing decisions. Levin and Levin (2010) stated that parents prefer branded food products to non-branded products, especially when it comes to purchasing the item for their children. Parents prefer to buy products which they know their children have a liking for.

2) Others

Per literature review, there has been little attempt to understand the influence of other verbal elements (except brand name) on children's product preference. From research on children's evoke set of packaging, shown that slogan (e.g. "They're great", "Can't get enough of"), names of producer, product information such as nutrition and health matters (e.g. Listing nutrition fact, ingredients), were much less important compared to brand name (McNeal and Ji, 2003). Same age-related effect was found, the older children (8-10 years old) are more likely to recall the slogan, producer, and nutrition information component than younger children (6 years old). It could be that more of the younger children are aware of these features, but there are in word form on the package rather than pictorial form, they are unable or unwilling to write down them. This cannot assume that less awareness of informational elements must be less preference to the product. Therefore, more studies are needed to confirm whether, these informational components presence on the product packaging effect children's product preference and decision making.

2.4.3 The influence of individual characteristics on children's preference and purchase decision

2.4.3.1 Age

Referring to Bloch (1995) and Silayoi & Speece (2007), packaging influences on consumer's behavior depending on his /her individual characteristics (e.g. gender, age). From literature review about this effect on children, it appeared that age is an important criterion in the choice of visuals (Ezan and Lagier, 2009) and verbal (McNeal and Ji, 2003). Regarding to Ezana and Lagier work, choice of an abstract or figurative visual for a brand may play a role in children, depending on the age of targeted children. For example, children's color preference develop and shift with age, showing a tendency to move from warm to cool colors with increasing age (Burnham el al., 1963).

For informational elements, it is also depending on age because of cognitive development. According to McNeal and Ji (2003), older children (fifth and third graders) would be more likely to include specific words, (e.g. "new", "open/close") in their drawing of packaging in the memory, than younger (6 years old).

According to Hota and Charry (2014), children across age-groups not only recall visual and child-oriented elements of product packaging, but they recall other type of packaging elements such as product information as well. The recall of visual elements is better in triggering a purchase influence motivation for the younger age-group (children aged six to nine years). When adding informational elements, it is not contributed to positively impact the purchase influence for younger children. However, in the older age children (children aged nine to 11 years), there are no decreasing effect on purchase influence when adding informational elements. This would suggest that it is merely the element overload that negatively influences the purchase motivation. It implies that visual and child-oriented elements have no more influence than information on children's intention to influence the purchase. This challenges previous findings (Hota and Charry, 2014). The lack of additional impact for the older children is justified by consumer socialization theory as they belonged to the latter part of the analytical stage. This is a period of significant development in consumer knowledge and skills, where products and brands are analyzed and discriminated on the basis of multiple dimensions (John, 1999, 2008). They are becoming capable of considering various factors in their decision process.

2.4.3.1 Gender

It was also reported the gender effect on child's product preference. It found that the gender of the child is important for the choice of visuals beyond the age 8-9. Ezana and Lagier's (2009) study shows clearly that some visuals are considered ‘‘for girls’’ whereas others are ‘‘for boys’’. Boonmattaya and Taweerutchana (2013) found that children chose products which represent their gender stereotype including colors, cartoon characters and shape. For example; pink and red are for girl and blue is for boy. The aesthetic perception is linked to the sexual identity of the children. It was also supported by Duff (1999) who studied on children soft-drink packaging preference. He found that younger children appreciate having their own individual cartoon with a straw but, for older boys, a can is preferred, whilst girls like the practicalities of reseal able bottles.

This study therefore questions that:

1) What types of packaging elements are outstanding for children and children use them to classify toothpastes/cereals into groups.

2) What types of visual packaging elements influence on children's toothpaste/cereal preferences and purchase decision making and how are their impact?

3) What types of verbal packaging elements influence on children's toothpaste/cereal preferences and purchase decision making and how are their impact?

4) How age effect children's toothpaste/cereal preferences and purchase decision making?

5) How gender effect children's toothpaste/cereal preferences and purchase decision making?

CHAPTER III
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter explains the research methodology adopted in this study. These include details of research methodology selection, respondents, data collection, and data analysis. Each is described in sections below.

3.1 Methodology Selection

A qualitative research method has been adopted in this study. This method is appropriate for doing research with children due to it enables the voice of the children participants to be heard (Greig et al., 2007). Children prove to be great sources of data – rich description in words and pictures that capture children's experiences and understanding rather than, abstract finding that often derive from numerical analysis, which is a key to qualitative methods (Kortesluoma et. al., 2003; Greig et al., 2007).

Children are also open and interested in becoming involved with the research process and; therefore, the nature of this participative approach of qualitative method works well with them (Greig et al., 2007). A number of researches no longer describe those who take part on research as 'subjects' but as 'participants'. Participation is more than involvement. It means immersing people in the focus of their enquiry, and involves them in data collecting and analysis (Greig et al., 2007).

Another reason that support the qualitative research method selection is the natural environments of the study such as school, and children community are ideal scenarios for qualitative study in children because it allows children most being themselves (Greig et al., 2007).

3.1.1 In-depth interview

There are a number of qualitative techniques which have been developed and proven effective in accomplishing marketing research with children. These techniques are including; ideation sessions, in-depth interviews, friendship triads, mini-groups, focus groups (standard groups and peer leader groups), stacked groups (Blackwell, 1988).

This study chooses in-depth interview method. Compare to other techniques which intent to understand children group behavior or individual behavior influenced by group (Malhotra, 2004), the in-depth interview provides valuable individual, independent, in-depth insight and understanding which is not influenced by the interaction dynamics of the group discussion process (Blackwell, 1988; Malhotra, 2004). Therefore, it is well suited to this study because it aims to explore children's individual information regard to product preference and product choice. The information about children's subjective experiences can be attained through an informal conversation with the child (Docherty and Sandelowski; 1999; Mayall, 2000; Kortesluoma et al., 2003). This method is an effective method enabling children to communicate in their own terms (Barker and Weller, 2003). Besides, another advantage of in-depth interview is the faster process compare to group interview. In-depth interviews can enable the recruiting and scheduling process easier and faster (Azzara, 2010). The interviews with children may range from 15-30 minutes in length, depending upon the age of the children being interviewed (Blackwell, 1988).

However, there are some limitations that exist in in-depth interview method with children, like the challenges in training interviewers. In order to make the person feel comfortable and interested about the topic researcher is talking, interviewers must use effective interview techniques like body language and friendly speaking. It is difficult to train interviewers since it's rather than knowledge; but experience brings benefit to the interview (Mayall, 2000; Kellett and Ding, 2004). Besides, there are things have to aware when conduct research with children. The challenge for searchers is to develop research strategies that are 'fair and respectful', it is significant to treat children as active participants, rather than mere respondents (Morrow and Richards, 1996). It is significant to give them an opportunity to explain their reasons in the interviewing process. Their emotion have to be concern, so that they will not feel like been force giving the right answer (Gill et at., 2008)

3.2 Participated Respondents

This qualitative study use ‘purposeful or criterion-based sampling strategy’, which samples have the characteristics relevant to the research questions (Nastasi, 2003). This study gives importance to a qualitative method based on interviews with age specific, children aged 7 to 11. At this age they are capable of formalizing their desires and acts. They are competent to judge the symbolical and aesthetic dimension of objects (Belk et al., 1984; John, 1999). And children start spending money on their own; therefore, they become primary market for marketers (McNeal and Yeh, 2003).

From literature review, the practical size of a participants for qualitative interviews with children is good enough if ranging from 20–40 (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Kuzel 1992; Mason, 2002). And the participant size 30 is originally decided as an ideal number of respondents before conducting the research by apply ‘rules of thumb based on the in-depth interview, data collection method’ (Nastasi, 2003). However this research has been conduct until semantic saturation was reached. Then a total of 39 children were participated.

Moreover, to answer research question regard to gender influence on children’s product preference and choice, gender is also taken into consideration while selecting the participants. We tried to even out the proportion of girls and boys. The participants are comprised of 20 males and 19 females. Children participant details are shown in Appendix A and Appendix B. The interviews were started on October 2014 and finished on November 2014.

3.3 Research Tools

There are two key research tools are mentioned in this section; product sample and interview guide.

3.3.1 Product samples

Toothpaste and cereal products have been chosen as product representative. Both product specific to children and product specific to adults are mixed up in order to investigate children’s understanding on product classification. The total 39 toothpaste products (See Appendix C) and 29 cereal products (See Appendix D) are incorporated.

To select the toothpastes/cereals incorporated into this research, market observation, product selection criteria and product samples gathering have been done as following details.

Market observation: Several product observations were done in hypermarkets and supermarkets in Bangkok and perimeter area; including, Tesco Lotus, Big C, Tops, Gourmet, Villa Market, Max Value during 1st to 31st of July 2014.

Product Sample selection criteria: Cereal and toothpaste products were selected as representatives. Refer to Chapter 2, these products are generally used for children's personal consumption and less expensive which children tend to have greater authority from their parents to buy themselves (Foxman et al., 1989; Labrecque and Ricard, 2001; Hill and Tilley, 2002; Martensen and Gronholdt, 2008; Ali and Batra, 2011; Ogden, 2011; Chaudhary and Gupta 2012). And from the market observation, the cereal and toothpaste are consumer products which are generally place on sale in every supermarket and hypermarket, even small to large and even middle-class to high-class. Another reason of choosing cereal and toothpaste is due to their packaging has variety sets of packaging elements to study as shown in Figure 3.1 and Figure 3.2.

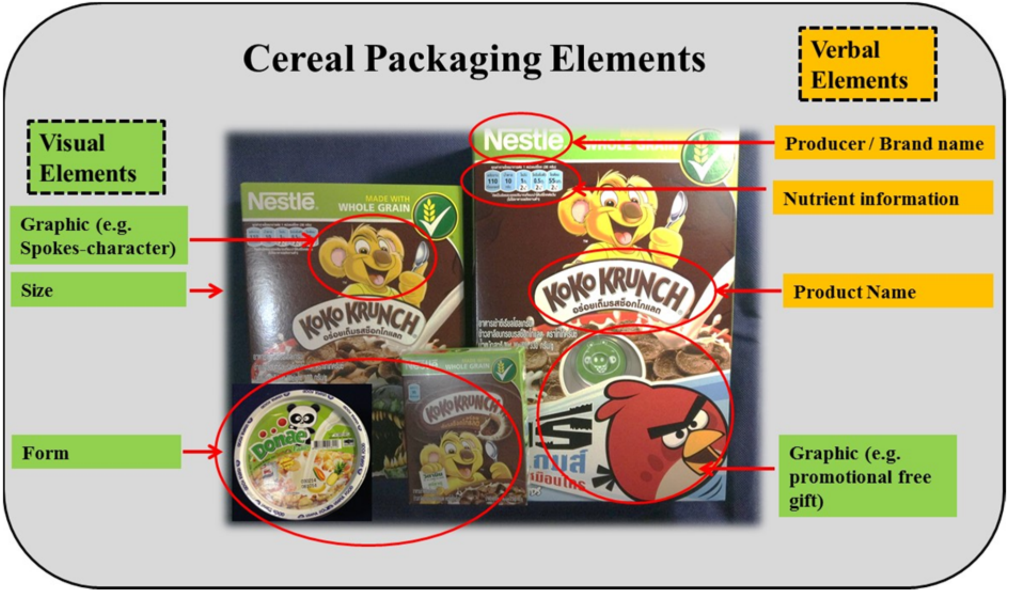

Cereal Packaging Elements
Verbal Elements
Visual Elements
Graphic (e.g. Spokes-character)
Size
Form
Producer / Brand name
Nutrient information
Product Name
Graphic (e.g. promotional free gift)

Figure 3.1 Cereal Packaging Elements

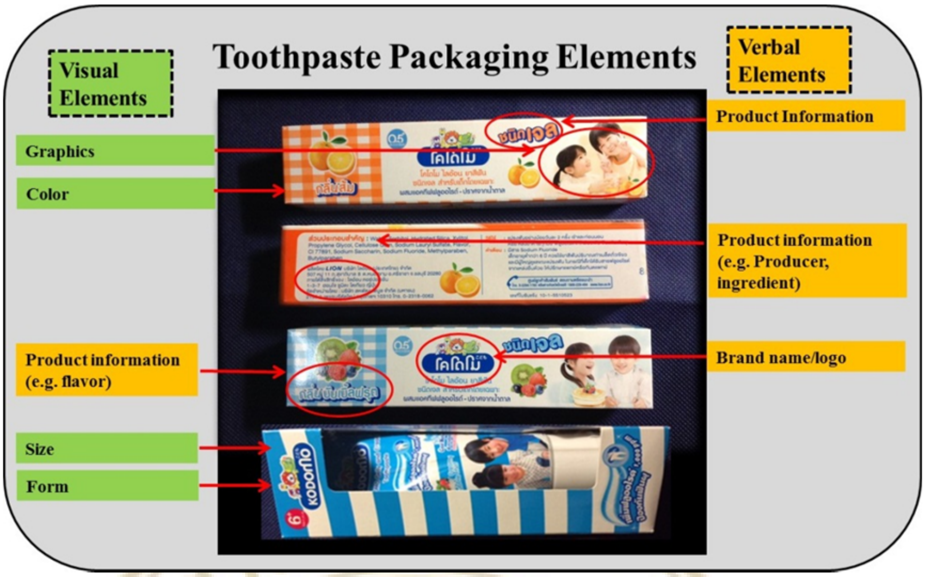

Toothpaste Packaging Elements
Visual Elements
Verbal Elements
Graphics
Color
Product information (e.g. flavor)
Size
Form
Product Information
Product information (e.g. Producer, ingredient)
Brand name/logo

Figure 3.2 Toothpaste Packaging Elements

Another reason of choosing the toothpaste as children product representative is to study gender effect on children's product preference. Cereal tends to be 'genderless' in order to appeal to the largest number of potential consumer (McNeal and Ji, 2003), while there are found some gender-specific on toothpaste packaging as shown in Figure 3.3. According to McNeal and Ji (2003), on occasion, a gender-specific brand of cereal is introduced, but none are presented in the children-oriented cereals that we found in the marketplaces we observed.

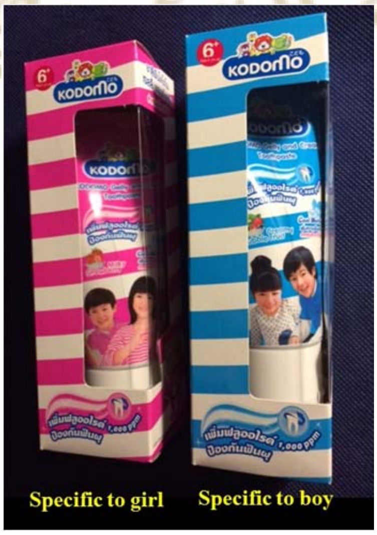

KODOMO
KODOMO
Specific to girl
Specific to boy

Figure 3.3 Gender-specific of toothpaste product

Product samples gathering: The children-specific product of cereals and toothpastes in variety brand and packaging designs have been gathered from several supermarkets and hypermarkets until there are not new packaging elements found. 39 of toothpastes and 29 of cereals are gathered up. Researcher has periodically (weekly) observed new products in the supermarket during the research period in order to ensure product packaging designs are always up to date (See Appendix C and Appendix D).

3.3.2 Interview guide

The interview guide is drawn up based on theoretical and concepts described in literature review. It is used as a tool to conduct interview in order to answer the research questions identified in Chapter 2. The interview guide used open-ended questions which provide greater freedom to the respondents, which they can answer in their own terminology rather than the limited set options in close-ended questions (Walker, 1988). It's believed that these kinds of questions give an opportunity to collect authentic information of people's experiences with the surroundings (Silverman, 2000) and encourages the interviewee to go deeper into their thought levels (Crouch and Housden, 2003) (See Appendix E).

The interview guide is divided into four parts namely:

1) Introduction and warm up

The first section aims to engage child in a warm, friendly manner with simple, general "get acquainted" by asking general questions such as "What is your name?" and "How old are you?". This particular section is important as it helps to develop the compatible level with the respondents prior to exploring the reason for concern (Aldgate and Bradley, 2004). According to Rapley (2004) and Blackwell (1988), interviewers must establish a relaxed and persuading relationship with the interviewees. Besides some questions such as "Do you always go to shopping?", "Who you go with?" are generated for investigating children's shopping behavior which would help the researcher to understand the children background; so effectively, evaluate research results.

2) Packaging classification

This section mainly asks questions with regard to reasons behind children's product classification activities. It aims to extract information related to key packaging elements which are outstand for children in particular age and gender.

3) Packaging elements effect children's preference

This section mainly asks questions with regard to reasons behind children's product preference with regard to packaging elements.

4) Key packaging elements effect children's purchase decision.

This section mainly asks questions with regard to reasons behind children's purchase decision making of product with regard to packaging elements.

To ensure the effectiveness of the interview guide, a pilot test was carried out with five children in various ages: two of 7-year children, one 8-year child, and two 11-year children.From this pilot test, the interview guide has been slightly modified:

1) Breaking activities or sentence to be short and simple.

It is recommended by Greig et al. (2007) that to improve validity of qualitative research questions, the events or issue should be broken into manageable units. This is due to children are unable to keep two concept in mind at once.

2) Adjusting terminology to be easier for children to understand and to draw their attention.

It was fond that children, in particular, the young children (age 7 years) compare fantasy stories such as game with research activity. So the terminology of interview guide have been adjust to present interview activity as a game in order to draw children's attention for example;

"Today I will have shopping game to play with you. Would you like to join?"

"Let start our game…"

"Which one is the winner (means, most favorite)"

3.4 Data Collection

Following the interview guide, children were asked questions face to face under relax environment. Interviews took place at:

1) Children's home in Bangkok province

2) Playground at Central Bangna department store, Bangkok province

The respondents were randomly chosen from children who are participated in crossword contest.

3) Amnuayvit School, Samutprakarn province

3.1) Amnuayvit School is private school for kindergarten to junior high school level. It is middle-class school which credit fee for primary school level is 25,000 – 30,000 baht per year.

3.2) The respondents were chosen to join research by the school head master based on the children who are in primary school level (age 7-11 years old) and who are head of class.

The questions are asked based on the respondents reply and interview guide acted as reminder instead of strict questions (Malhotra, 2004). The guide is set up in stages but the interviewer can be flexible regarding following the exact order. Each child that participated was parental or teacher consent, either by a permission slip, or verbal by the researcher. The interview with children lasted within 30 minutes. The longer time can make children lost concentration and feel exhausted (Blackwell, 1988).

It was planned to ask questions to each child regarding to his/her product classification and preference to both toothpastes and cereals. However, in the situation of research field interview, the method has been adopted. Interviewed children at their home encouraged more relaxed mood and tone, in compare to interviewed children at school or playground. So five children who were interviewed at their home have times and were able to be asked the questions regarding to both toothpastes and cereals. While, interviewed children at playground and school had time constraint due to short time allowance from their parents and teachers for their children to participate. So the researches in each children participants were conducted randomly with either toothpastes or cereals; comprising 19 children with toothpastes, and 15 children with cereals. Combining data from all interviews we can summarize that there are 24 data acquired from interviews with toothpaste (See Appendix A) and 20 data acquired from interviews with cereal (See Appendix B).

The interviews were VDO recorded, given that parents had previously been informed and had accepted this protocol. This allow researcher to repeat and gain more understanding on children's response. Children occasionally express emotional feeling behaviorally through body language rather than in details verbal expression (Greig et al., 2007). Therefore, observing children's interaction or response during interview produce deeper understanding on research questions.

The research design included three steps with specific and complementary objectives. We introduce hereafter a short description of each stage, its main objective and the research methods used.

3.4.1 The first step: packaging element categories

The first step is intended to find what packaging elements are outstand for children when they confront with several products with the same attribute; however, different looking in marketplace.

Cereal and toothpaste products are introduced to a child. And he/she is encouraged to classify presenting cereals and toothpastes taking into consideration the products' appearances in his/her perspective. This section is open-ended style; child could classify the products independently without any conceptual idea.

3.4.2 The second step: influencing elements of the packaging

This step is intended to explore influential packaging elements that effect children's product preference.

Child is encouraged to select the one favorite product among each classified groups in the first step. When child is scoped to choose one product from each group, the common elements which are high degree of influence would be revealed.

3.4.3 The third step: ultimate key element effecting to product's purchasing decision making

This final step is intended to find out the key packaging elements that influence children's buying decision-making. This is simulation method of shopping in the marketplace which one made a decision to buy the most preferable product.

The child is finally asked to choose only one product which he/she would buy back. This is to find the ultimate packaging element which most effect on children's preference and then lead to their buying decision making.

3.5 Validity

To reduce bias, and increase reliability and validity of the study, “data triangulation” has been applied. According to Denzin (1970), the triangulation of data sources is similar to purposeful sampling in that “researchers explicitly search for many different data sources as possible which bear upon the event under analysis”. The data sources can be triangulated via data collected at different perspectives; different time, different places, and/or different people. This study use data triangulation according to place. The data were collected at 3 different places including home, school, and playground. This allow researcher to seek convergence among different sources of information to form implication and conclusion of the study (Creswell and Miller, 2000).

3.6 Data Analysis

When the process of data collection finished, we got research results in form of texts. In this study, there are two sources of texts materials: interview transcript, and VDO material. In this case the video material is treated as text, because the categories have to be defined as text. A direct coding of video material without referring to language is, at the moment, no t possible (Mayring, 2014).

The texts materials have been then analyzed by using “summative content analysis”. It starts with the counting of words or manifest content, and then extends the analysis to include latent meanings and themes. According to Zhang and Wildemuth (2005), this approach seems quantitative in the early stages, but its goal is to explore the usage of the words/indicators in an inductive manner.

CHAPTER IV
RESULTS

This chapter provides results based on data acquired from the interviews and observations. The data are obtained from 39 children and used to test the research questions in Chapter 2 that consider on children's product classification, product preference and product purchase decision making regarding to product's packaging elements and children's individual characteristics.

The results comprised of two main sections as followed.

1. Children's product classification
2. Children's product preference and purchase decision making

4.1 Children's Product Classification

Prior formal interview began; interviews were kicked off with questions related to children and/or their shopping behavior. Then interview related to this study's objective started with asking children to group the cereal and/or toothpaste freely. This intends to understand that how children group the products. And what packaging elements are outstanding for children and they pay attentions when they go to shopping.

4.1.1 Toothpaste classification

It is revealed 3 classification patterns of toothpaste including the product classification by; graphic, color and flavor. According to literature review, graphic and color can be classified as visual elements; while, flavor can be classified as verbal or informational packaging elements as summarized in Figure 4.1.

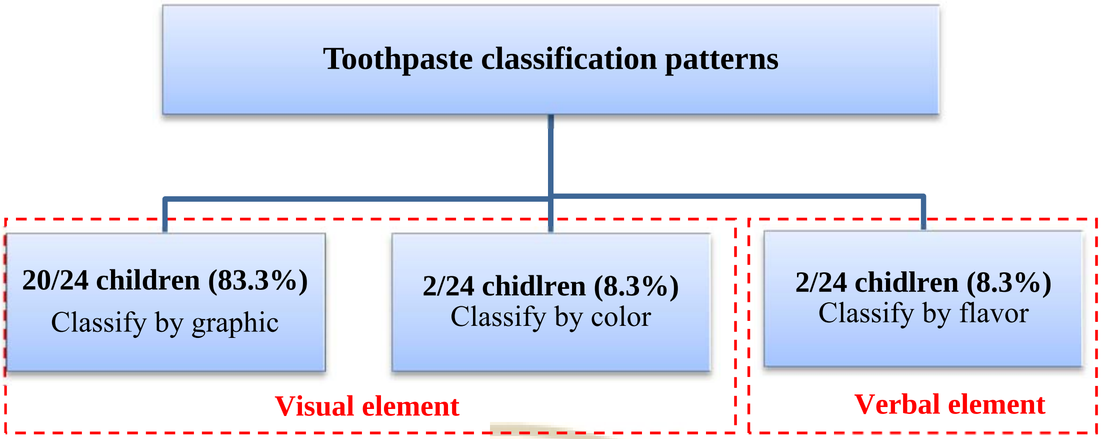

Toothpaste classification patterns
20/24 children (83.3%)
Classify by graphic
2/24 chidlren (8.3%)
Classify by color
2/24 chidlren (8.3%)
Classify by flavor
Visual element
Verbal element

Figure 4.1 **Toothpaste classification patterns**

4.1.1.1 Classified by graphic

The toothpaste classification by graphic is the most frequently revealed pattern among children in age 7-11 years. Table 4.1 shows the results of toothpaste classification of 20 out of 24 (83 percent) children who classify toothpaste by consider graphic as criteria.

Table 4.1 **Children's toothpaste classification by the graphic**

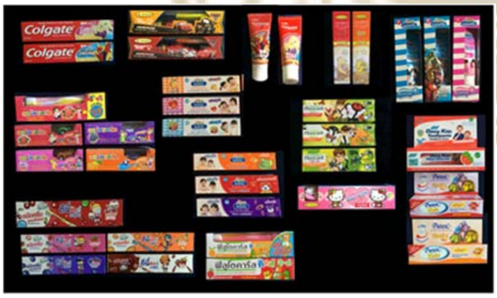
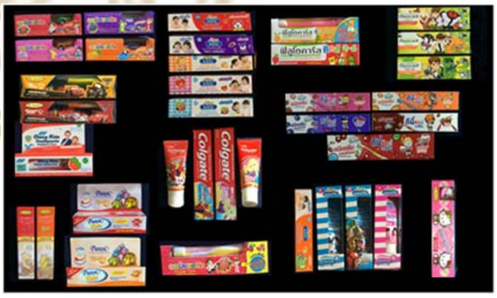
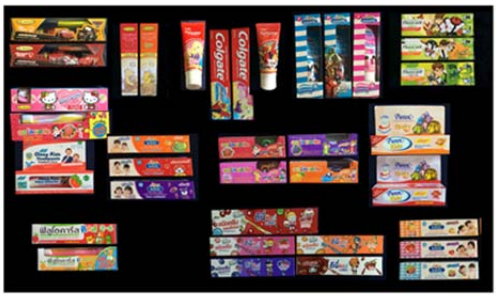
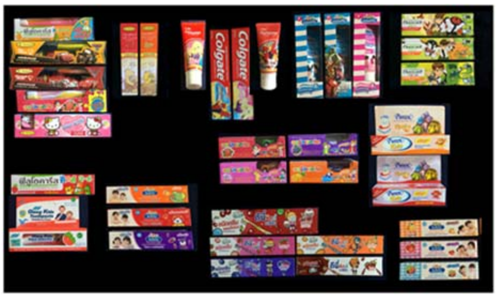
7-year children	
Respondent 1 (Boy) 	**Respondent 2** (Boy) 
Respondent 3 (Boy) 	**Respondent 4** (Boy) 

Table 4.1 Children's toothpaste classification by the graphic (cont.)

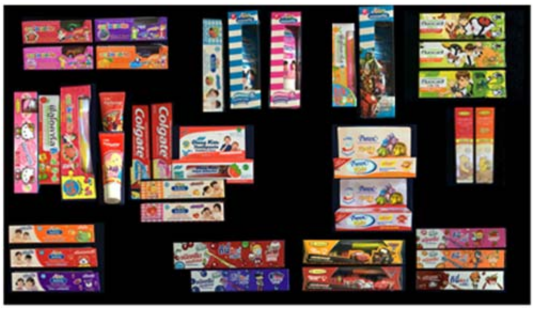
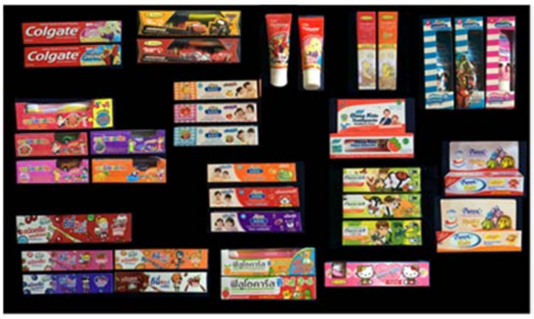
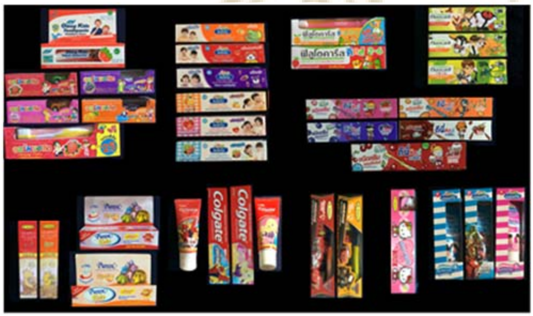
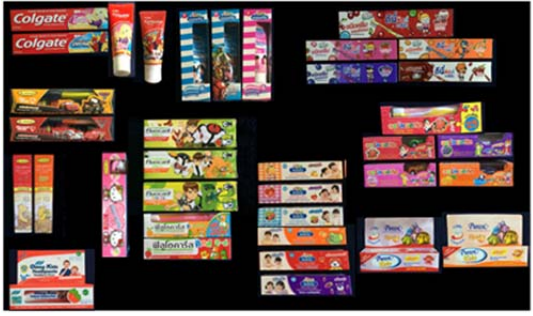
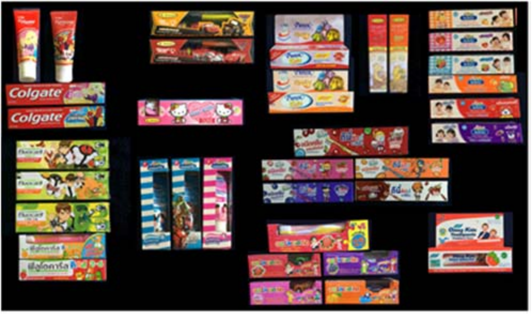
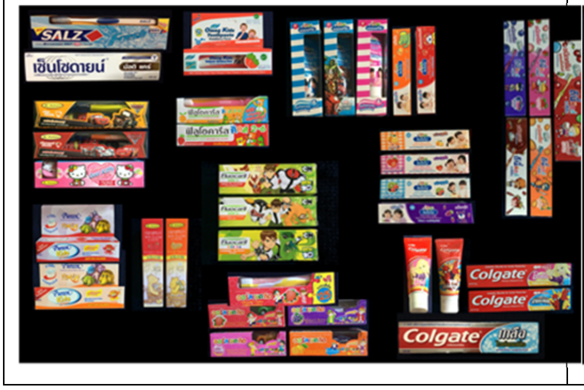
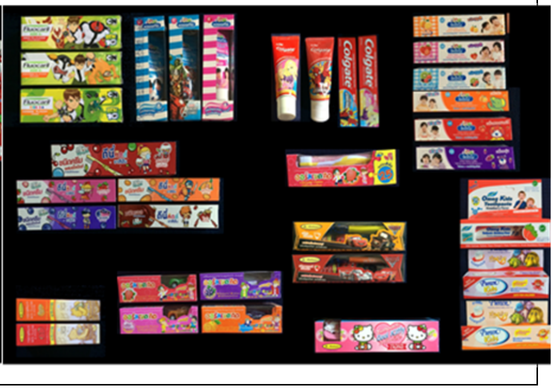
Respondent 5 (Girl)	**Respondent 6** (Girl)
	
8-year children	
Respondent 7 (Boy)	
	
9-year children	
Respondent 10 (Boy)	**Respondent 11** (Boy)
	
Respondent 12 (Boy)	**Respondent 13** (Girl)
	

Table 4.1 Children's toothpaste classification by the graphic (cont.)

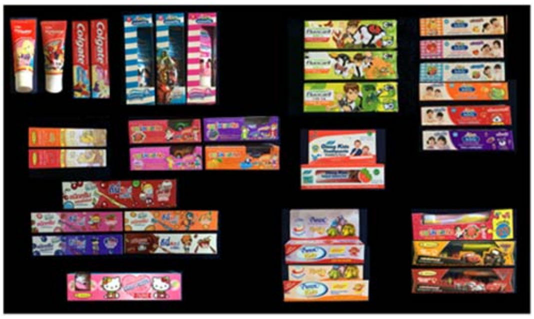
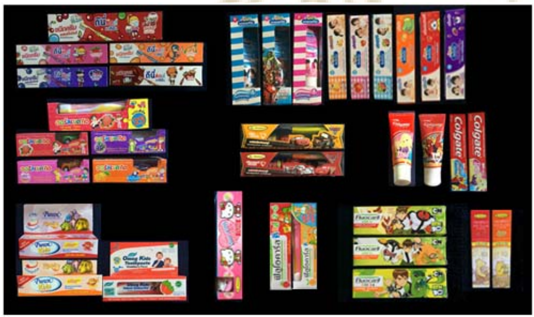
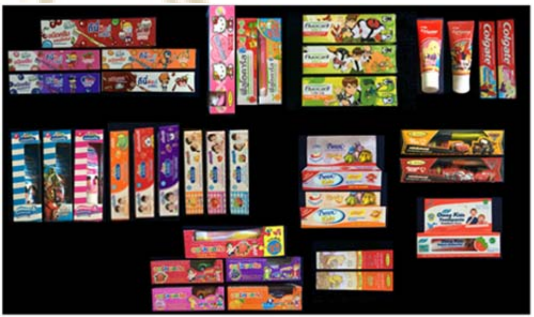
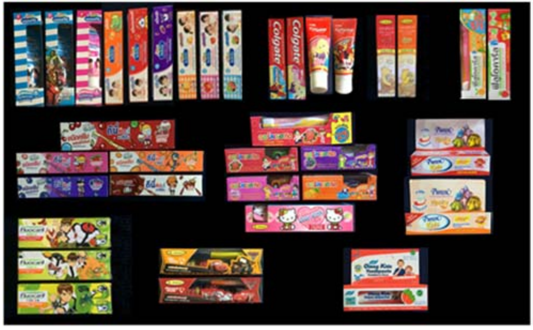
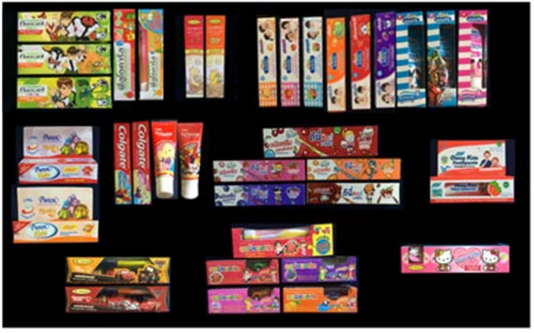
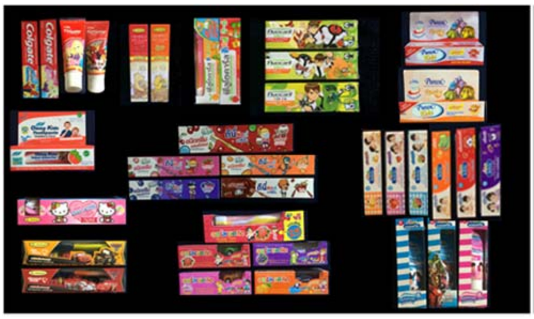
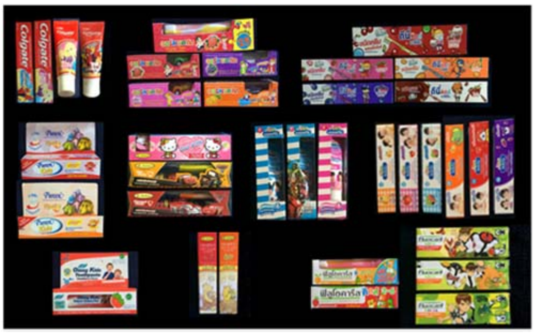
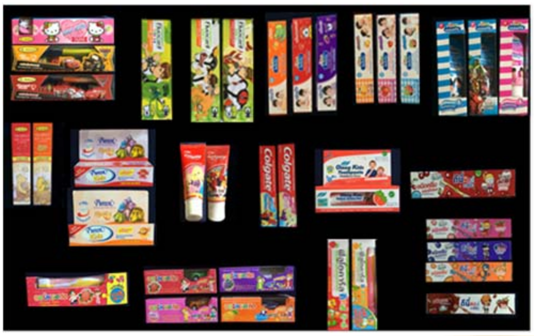
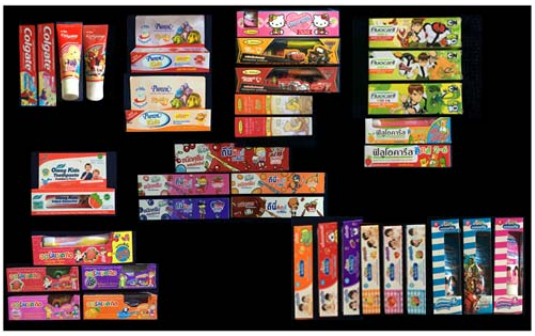
Respondent 14 (Girl) 	
10-year children	
Respondent 17 (Boy) 	**Respondent 18** (Girl) 
11-year children	
Respondent 19 (Boy) 	**Respondent 20** (Boy) 
Respondent 21 (Boy) 	**Respondent 22** (Girl) 

Table 4.1 Children's toothpaste classification by the graphic (cont.)

Respondent 23 (Girl)	**Respondent 24** (Girl)
	

The children's answers to interview and observations show that children group toothpaste by considering key graphic on packaging including: brand logo, cartoon characters, pictures, and packaging design. Each of them used several types of graphic in complement for their product classification. For example, the Respondent 3 (Boy, 7 years old) said that he grouped toothpaste which had the same brand logo, same cartoons, and same packaging design, together.

"Respondent 3: I consider brand logo and cartoon on packaging. Like this group, they all have 'CAR' cartoons, so they should be together.

Researcher: Anything else which you pay attention?

Respondent 3: I also consider packaging design. These products (Kodomo toothpaste) have the transparent box which I can see toothpaste product inside. So I group them in same group."

1) Brand logo

Most children answered that they grouped the toothpastes which are same brand together. They aware of and differentiate brand by brand logo.

"I group by brand considering logo here (point to Kodomo logo)." (Respondent 18: Girl, 10 years old)

"I group by their brands considering the alphabets here (point to the Kodomo logo)…". (Respondent 13: Girl, 9 years old)

Table 4.2 shows pictures of toothpaste's brand logos found in this research. It is observed that toothpaste's brand logos are always designed from its brand name. Some are presented both in Thai and English; while some are only in English. Children show awareness and call out brand names of all children-specific toothpaste brands which have its brand logos in Thai such as ‘Colgate’, and ‘Kodomo’; we will call later “familiar brand”. On the contrary, children didn’t aware of both children-specific brands which their logo presented in only English and adult-specific brand (e.g. Salz, Sensodyne); we will call later “unfamiliar brand”. For example, the Respondent 7 (Boy, 8 years old) said that he knew all brands; except, St.Andrew and Pureen.

“I group by its brand. I know every brand here; except, these two. (Pointed to ‘St. Andrew’ and ‘Pureen’)” (Respondent 7: Boy, 8 years old)

Moreover, because of limitation of children’s English language skill, some of them confused on differentiation of brand names which have similar spelling. So they thought the similar-name toothpastes were the same brand.

“All products in this group have the same words. This is “Omeg” and this is “Oral…”. (Respondent 7: Boy, 8 years old)

Table 4.2 Toothpaste brand logos

Toothpaste brand	English	Thai
D-nee Kids	D-nee Kids	ดีนี่คิดส์
Kodomo	KODOMO	โคโดโม
Fluocaril	Fluocaril	ฟลูโอคารีล
Colgate	Colgate	คอลเกต
Oralmed Kid	ORALMED KID	ออรัลเมดคิด
St.Andrews	St. Andrews®	-
Pureen	Pureen	-
Omeg Kids	Omeg Kids Toothpaste	-
Salz	SALZ	ซอลส์
Sensodyne	SENSODYNE®	เซ็นโซดายน์®

As mentioned that children recognize brand by brand logo which presented in Thai (e.g. D-nee Kids, Kodomo, Fluocaril, Colgate, and Oralmed Kids). It is found that children use the familiar-brand logo as criteria to classify toothpastes into groups. This familiar-brand effect plays significant role for children age 8-11 product classification; while it is less significant in children age 7 years. The young children tend to pay more attention to cartoon characters and use it as a criteria for their product classification. On the other hand, unfamiliar-brand (e.g. Pureen, St. Andrew, Omeg Kids, Salz, and Sensodyne) effect is not revealed in children's product classification. Children tend to use cartoons characters rather than the unfamiliar-brand logo to classify toothpaste into groups.

The understanding of brand has been also developing along children age. Some children age 7-9 years old separate same-brand toothpastes apart because the products have some different visual characters; for instance, different size, different packaging design, different cartoons characters, and provided free gift as shown in Table 4.3 (a). This is because these products have different appearance; so they lost systematic thinking on prioritize brand as the first criteria.

Table 4.3 Same-brand toothpastes classification

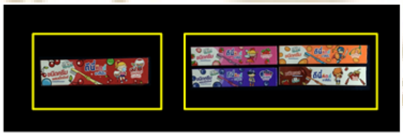
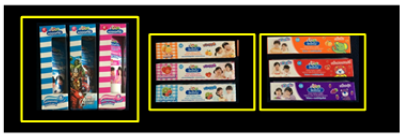
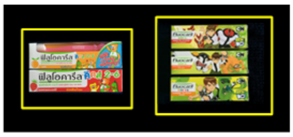
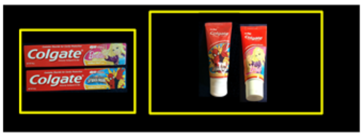
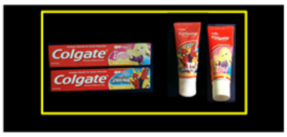
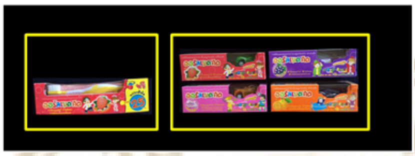
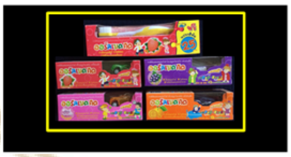
Toothpaste brand	(a) Toothpaste classification by children age 7-9 years	(b) Toothpaste classification by children age 10-11 years
D-nee Kids	 Different size	
Kodomo	 Different packaging design and size	
Fluocaril	 Different cartoon characters	

Table 4.3 Same-brand toothpastes classification (cont.)

Toothpaste brand	(a) Toothpaste classification by children age 7-9 years	(b) Toothpaste classification by children age 10-11 years
Colgate	 Different packaging Design	
Oralmed Kid	 Different size and given free gift	

Older children (10-11 years old) showed more understanding to brand as evidence that they could group the same-brand products together; even though, they have difference packaging appearance (See Table4.3 (b)). For example, the Kodomo toothpastes have different design of packaging such as opaque and transparent box; however, children know they are all Kodomo brand, so they grouped them together. This ensures that older children really aware of Kodomo brand and use it as a first criterion over other visual characters when they group products. It was found that some older children also separated same-brand toothpaste apart (See Table 4.4). However, they have more systematic on product grouping in compare to young children. They gave reasons that they knew the brands and they grouped product regarding to brand as first. Then they considered other characters such as packaging design and toothpaste type (cream or gel) and classified them into sub-groups.

"Researcher: If you group product by brands, can you tell me why you separate these apart? (pointed to Kodomo toothpaste groups)

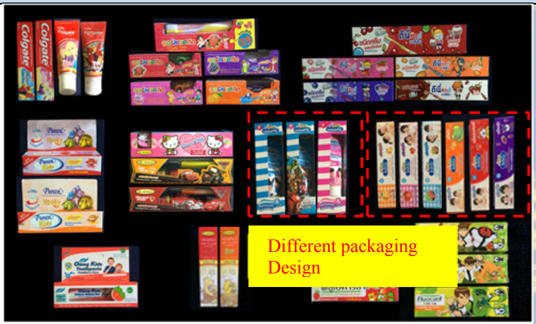
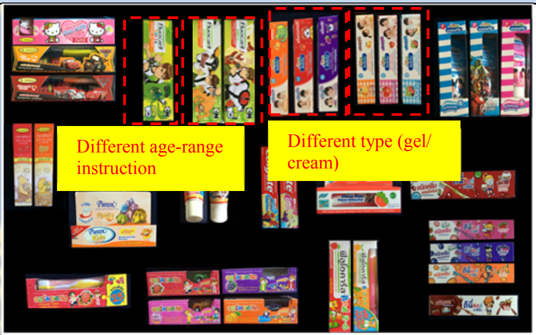
Respondent 22: I know they are all Kodomo. But this group is transparent box; while, another is opaque box." (Respondent 22: Girl, 11 years old) Table 4.3 (a)

"Respondent 23: I grouped by its brands.

Researcher: Why you grouped these same-brand toothpastes in different group?

Respondent 23: I separate because they are different; this is cream and this is gel (Kodomo products). And for these (Fluocaril BEN10 toothpaste), I separate because they are for young children and old children (the girl read the age range instruction on Fluocaril toothpaste packaging). (Respondent 23: Girl, 11 years old) Table 4.3 (b)

Table 4.4 Example of same-brand product differentiate of older children

(a) Toothpaste classification by Respondent 22 (girl 11 years old)	**(b) Toothpaste classification by Respondent 23 (girl 11 years old)**
	 Different age-range instruction Different type (gel/ cream)

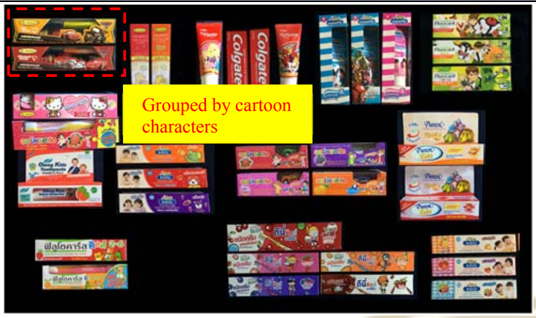
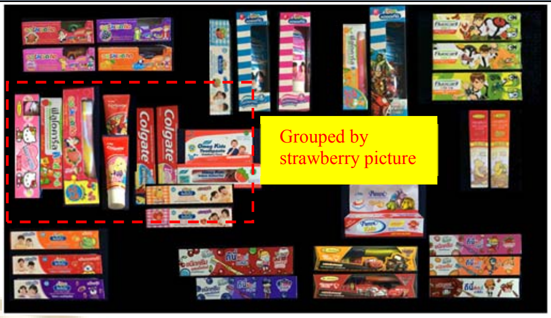
2) Cartoons characters and pictures

Cartoons characters and pictures play a significant role for young children, 7 years old. Children told that they considered packaging appearances which cartoons characters and pictures seemed to be the most attractive for them. While older children give first priority to brand and use the cartoon characters as a co-consideration criteria for further classified toothpastes into sub-groups as mentions in previous section.

"Respondent 3: I consider brand logo and cartoon on packaging. Like this group, they all have 'CAR' cartoons (St.Andrew toothpaste), so they should be together. (Respondent 3: Boy, 7 years old) Table 4.5 (a)

"I group by their brand. And for this group, they have the same strawberry picture" (Respondent 5: Girl, 7 years old) Table 4.5 (b).

Table 4.5 Example of product classification by cartoon characters and pictures

(a) Toothpaste classification by Respondent 3 (boy 7 years old)	(b) Toothpaste classification by Respondent 5 (girl 7 years old)
	

For unfamiliar-brand toothpaste (e.g. Pureen, St. Andrew, Omeg Kids, Salz, and Sensodyne), cartoons characters are the important visual that children in all age used to grouped toothpastes (Table 4.6).

"I group by its brand. I know every brand here; except, these two. (Pointed to 'St. Andrew' and 'Pureen'). But I group by consider their packaging." (Boy, 8 years old)

"…These products are in the same group because they have the same BEN10 cartoon characters (Fluocaril toothpaste with BEN10 cartoons). This toothpaste is separated from others because it is the only which has Kitty cartoon (St. Andrew toothpaste with Kitty cartoons). And for this group I consider picture on the box (pointed to Pooh cartoons on St. Andrew toothpaste)." (Respondent 13: Girl, 9 years old)

Table 4.6 Unfamiliar-brand toothpastes classification

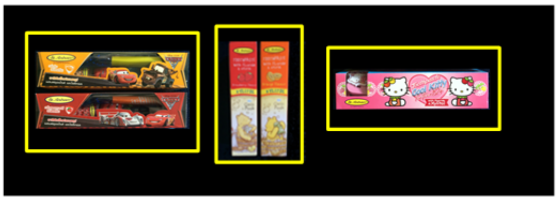
Toothpaste brand	English
St.Andrews	

Table 4.6 Unfamiliar-brand toothpastes classification (cont.)

Toothpaste brand	English
Pureen	
Omeg Kids	

Moreover, children use the graphic visual to classified adult's products apart from children's products as shown in Figure 4.7.

I separate this group apart because its picture is not like others. It's the adult's toothpastes." (Respondent 12: Boy, 9 years old)

However, it was shown that the boy classified the Colgate adult's toothpaste in same group as Colgate children's toothpaste. This is confirmed that he really knew Colgate brand; while, he might not know other adult's toothpaste brands. So they just separated because they have difference packaging appearances from children's product.

Toothpaste classification by Respondent 12 (boy 9 years old)

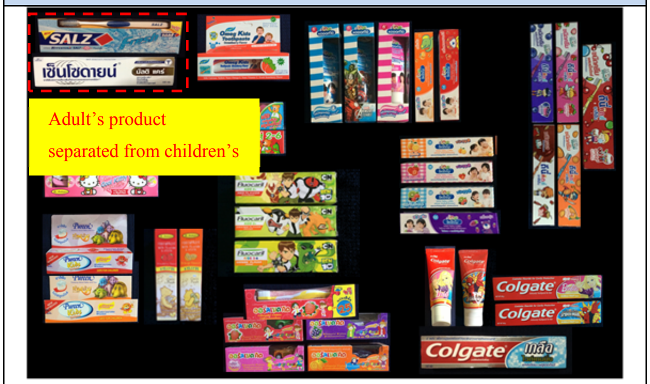


Figure 4.2 Example of adult's product differentiation from children's product

3) Packaging design

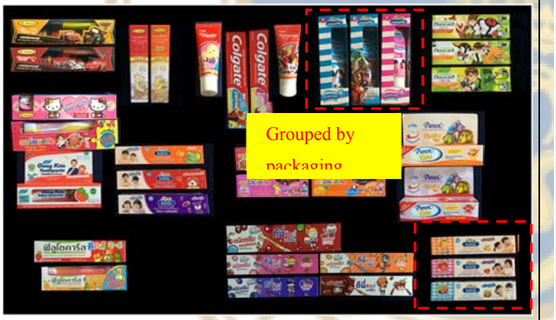
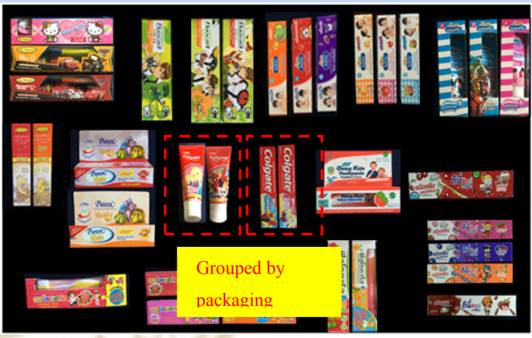
Packaging design was used as the co-consideration criteria for children's product classification as mentioned in previous part informed about Brand logos effect. It was used as the second priority after brand logo, or cartoon characters.

"Respondent 3: I consider brand logo and cartoon on packaging. Like this group, they all have 'CAR' cartoons, so they should be together.

Researcher: Anything else which you pay attention?

Respondent 3: I also consider packaging design. These products (Kodomo toothpaste) have the transparent box which I can see toothpaste product inside. So I group them in same group." (Respondent 3: Boy, 7 years old) Table 4.7

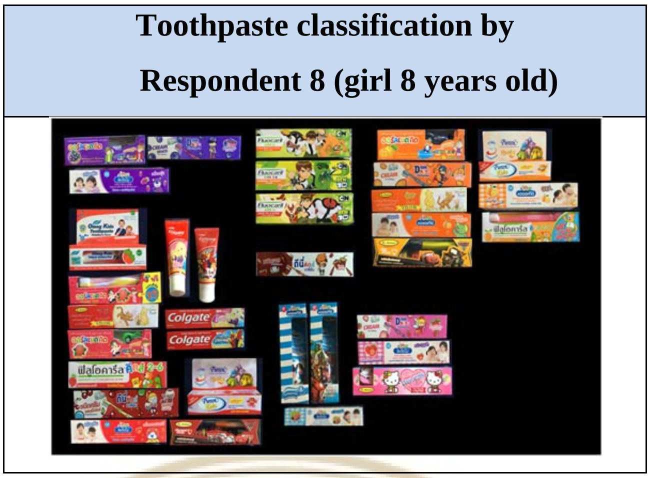
Table 4.7 Example of product classification by packaging design

(a) Toothpaste classification by Respondent 3 (boy 7 years old)	**(b) Toothpaste classification by Respondent 23 (girl 11 years old)**
	

4.1.1.2 Classified by color

The second classification patterns of toothpaste which found is the product classification by color. There were 2 8-year children from all 24 children (8 percent) simply grouped the toothpaste by considered its packaging color as shown in Figure 4.3.

"I group by color; including, red, green, orange, violet, blue, pink and cola" (Respondent 8: Girl, 8 years old)


Toothpaste classification by

Respondent 8 (girl 8 years old)

Figure 4.3 Example of product classification by color

4.1.1.3 Classified by flavor

Third pattern of toothpaste product classification is the classification by flavor. There were 2 of 9-year girls from 24 children (8 percent) grouped the toothpastes by its flavor Figure 4.4. Packaging communicate product flavor to children. Children imply product's flavor from toothpastes' packaging color, picture, and read description of flavors on packaging label. The observation shows that children could classify the toothpastes which are same flavor but different color together. This ensures that they read the flavor information given on the packaging.

"These products are group together because they are grape flavor and their color is purple. This group is bubble fruit or bubble gum. This group is strawberry and cherry. This group is orange. This one is Cola. This group is adult's toothpastes." (Respondent 15: Girl, 9 years old)

"I group by its color which referred to its flavor. For example this group is product with strawberry flavor, and its color is pink and red. (Respondent 16: Girl, 9 years old)

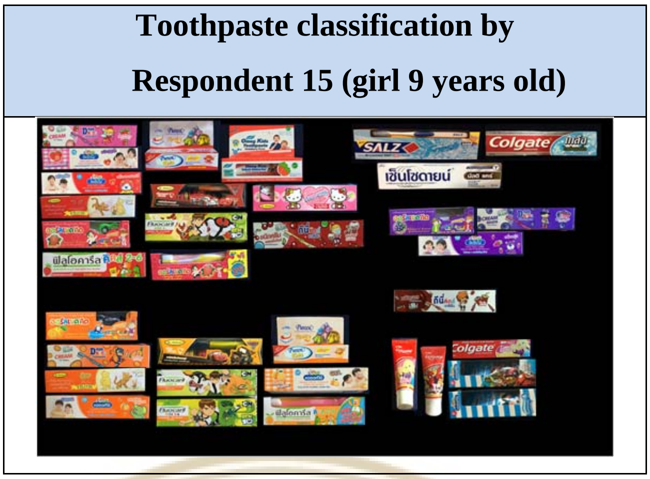

Toothpaste classification by
Respondent 15 (girl 9 years old)

Figure 4.4 Example of product classification by flavor

4.1.2 Cereal classification by children

It is revealed 5 classification patterns of cereal products which are product classification by; graphic, size, flavor, ingredients, and brand. Regarding to two main blocks of packaging elements (Kuvykaite, *et. al*, 2009), we can grouped them into 2 packaging elements; visual and verbal as shown in **Figure 4.5**.

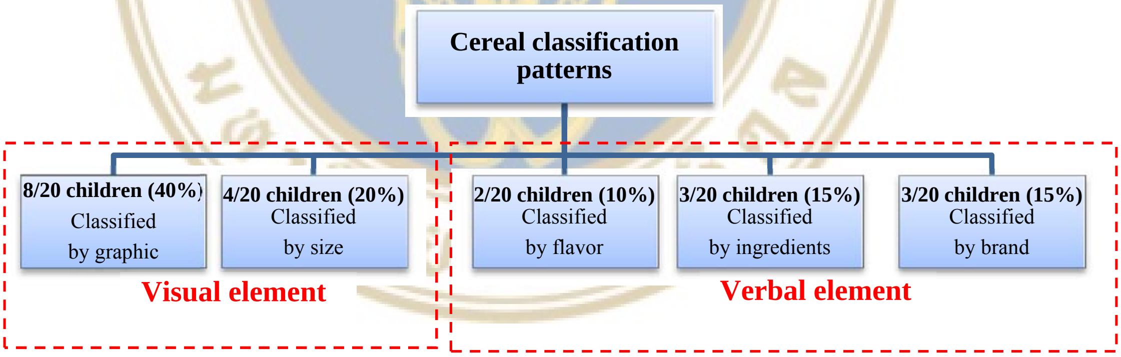
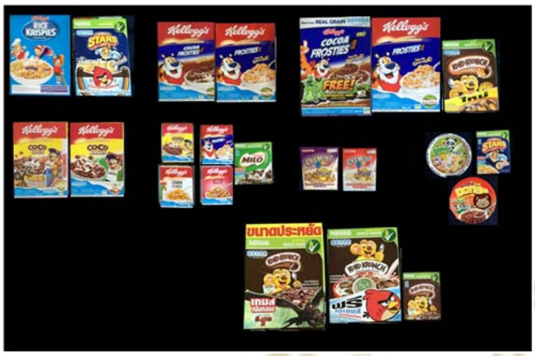
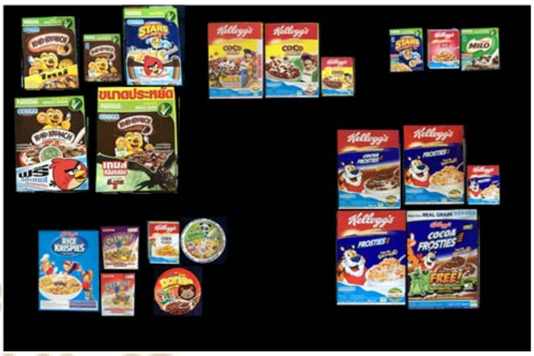
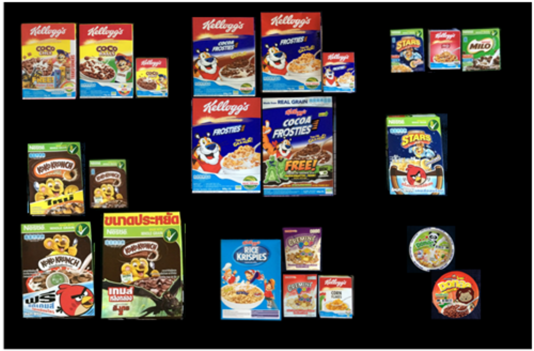

Cereal classification patterns
8/20 children (40%) Classified by graphic
4/20 children (20%) Classified by size
2/20 children (10%) Classified by flavor
3/20 children (15%) Classified by ingredients
3/20 children (15%) Classified by brand
Visual element
Verbal element

Figure 4.5 Cereal classification patterns

4.1.2.1 Classified by graphic

The first and the most frequently revealed of cereal classification pattern is product classification by graphic. Figure 4.6 shows cereal classification by 8 from 20 children in age 7-11 years (40 percent) who classified cereals by consider the graphic of its packaging. The specific graphic which were revealed including; company-own characters (e.g. Kelloggs' Tony the Tiger), brand logo & brand symbol, and cereal picture.

Table 4.8 Children's cereal classification by the graphic

7-year children	
Respondent 1 (Boy) 	**Respondent 2** (Boy) 
8-year children	
Respondent 9 (Boy) 	

1) Company own characters

According to Mathur (2013), character is special type of brand symbol which takes on animated human or real-life characteristics. Numerous company-own characters such as Kelloggs' Tony the Tiger, and Nestle's Koala bear KOKO (See more in Table 4.9) have been found in cereal's packaging. They are attractive for children and; so children used them as criteria for cereal grouping (Figure 4.6).

"I pair products which have same characters, and which are different size big and small together." (Respondent 34: Boy, 10 years old)

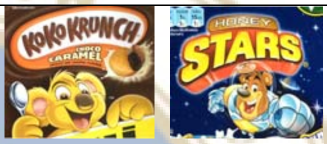
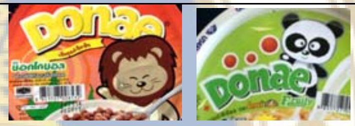
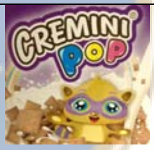
"I group by pictures on the packaging. For example I group the products with Tiger picture together." (Respondent 38: Boy, 11 years old)

"… I consider its type as criteria; for instance, the Koko-Crunch cereals shall be together." (Respondent 39: Girl, 11 years old)

Besides, it was observed that children could differentiate adult’s cereal from children’s cereal by cartoon characters.

“This group is not like others. They have no cartoon, so I group them into a group.” (Respondent 38: Boy, 11 years old)

Table 4.9 Company own cartoon characters

Cereal brand	Company own cartoon characters
Kellogg’s	
Nestle	
Danae	
SNACK2GO	

Cereal classification by

Respondent 34 (Boy 10 years old)

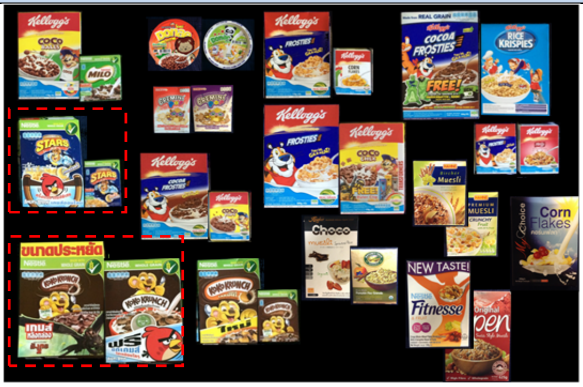


Figure 4.6 Example of product classification by cartoon characters

2) Brand logo and brand symbol

Several brand logo and brand symbol were found in cereals' packaging as shown in Table 4.10. It is revealed that brand symbol is one of an important brand element which children understand that it's brand identity. And thus children recognize brand from such symbol. For example, the Respondent 9 (Boy, 8 years old) answered that he grouped cereal by consider its brand. And when he was asked to tell brand name, he didn't answer the name; however, he point to Nestle's symbol instead.

"Respondent 9: I put them together because they are same brand.

Researcher: I don't know the cereal brands. Can you tell me which brands are? And how you know the brands?

Respondent 9: This group is 'Whole grain' brand. (point to Nestle cereal's symbol of 'green round shape with tick and ear of rice symbol" (Respondent 9: Boy, 8 years old)

"I group by their types. And they have same symbol. (pointed to Nestle cereal's symbol of 'green round shape with tick and ear of rice symbol" (Respondent 33: Boy, 10 years old)

Table 4.10 Cereal logo and symbol

Cereal brand	Brand logo	Brand symbol
Kellogg's	Kellogg's	made from REAL GRAIN VEGETARIAN
Nestle	Nestlé Good Food, Good Life Nestlé	✓
Danae	Donae	-
SNACK2GO	SNACK2GO	-
My Choice	My Choice	-

Table 4.10 Cereal logo and symbol (cont.)

Cereal brand	Brand logo	Brand symbol
Xongdur	Xongdur	-
Nature's Path	NATURE'S PATH ORGANIC	-
Alpen	Original Alpen Swiss Style Muesli	100% NATURAL INGREDIENTS
HAHNE	HAHNE	-

3) Cereal picture

The last graphic which is found in cereal product classification is the picture of cereal product on packaging. Children consider the cereal picture and use it to group the cereals which are same product appearance together.

"I consider characters of cereal inside; for example, these products are the small-piece cereal. So I put them in same group." (Respondent 36: Boy, 11 years old)

4.1.2.2 Classified by size

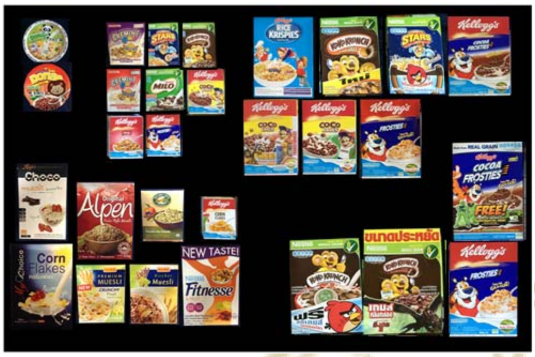
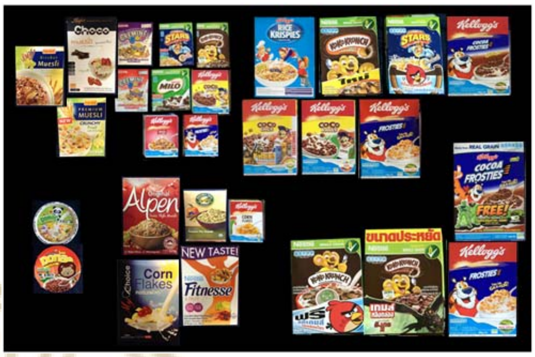
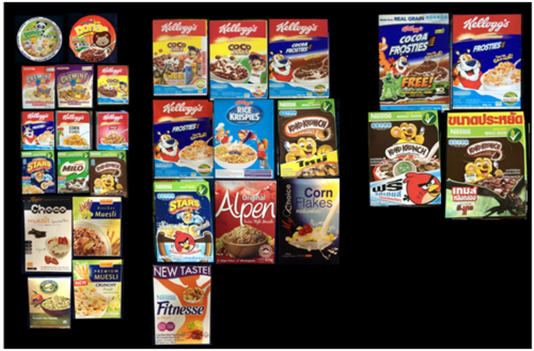
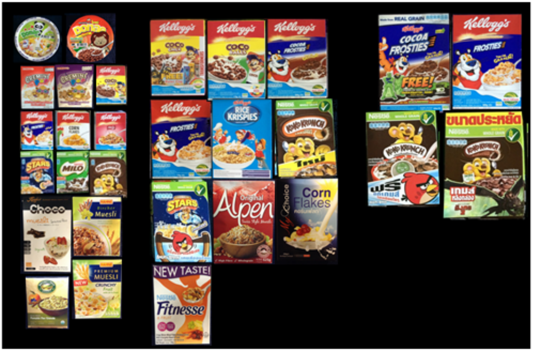
The second pattern of cereal classification is the classification by size. The results showed that 4 children from total 20 children (20 percent) between age 7-8 years classified cereal products by its size including; small box, medium box, large box, and bowl as shown in Table 4.11 The effect of size is obviously served as first priority for their cereal's classification. They could group same size product in same group, even if the cereals have different presented graphic.

"I separated them into groups by its size." (Respondent 25: Boy, 7 years old)

"I group cereal with the same size together; for example, small-size cereals are put together, medium-size cereals are in same group, and the big-size cereals are together" (Respondent 26: Boy, 7 years old)

"I consider its size; I group into small, medium, and large." (Respondent 29: Girl, 8 years old)

Table 4.11 Children's cereal classification by size

7-year children	
(a) Respondent 25 (Boy) 	**(b) Respondent 26** (Boy) 
8-year children	
(a) Respondent 29 (Girl) 	**(b) Respondent 30** (Girl) 

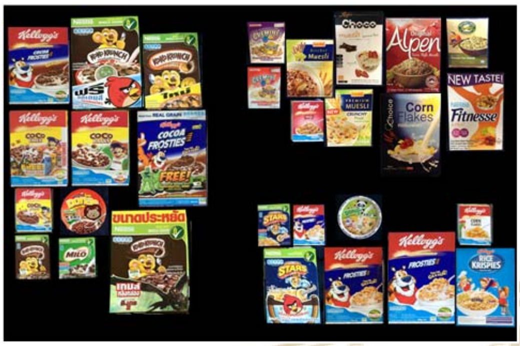
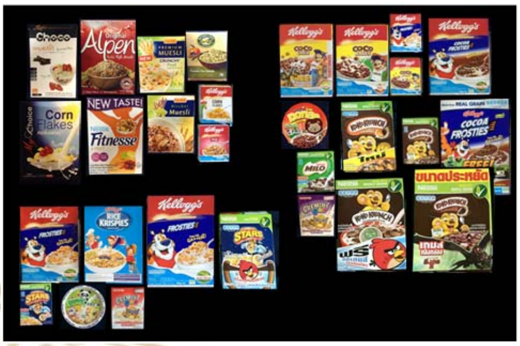
4.1.2.3 Classified by flavor

There are 2 from 20 children (10 percent) in age 7-8 years old classified product by considered its flavor (see Table 4.12). Children identified flavor by considering either cereal's color (e.g. they knew that the brown cereal can refer chocolate flavor), or flavor information on cereal packaging.

"I group cereals into 3 groups by its flavor; which are chocolate, insipid, and whole grain." (Respondent 27: Girl, 7 years old)

"I classify by its flavor. These cereals are brown so they are chocolate." (Respondent 28: Boy, 8 years old)

Table 4.12 Children's cereal classification by flavor

7-year children	**8-year children**
Respondent 27 (Girl) 	**Respondent 28** (Boy) 

4.1.2.4 Classified by ingredients

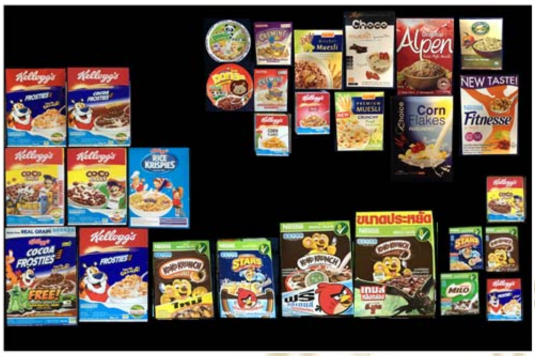
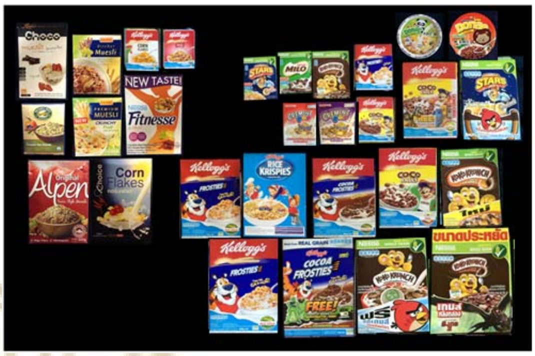
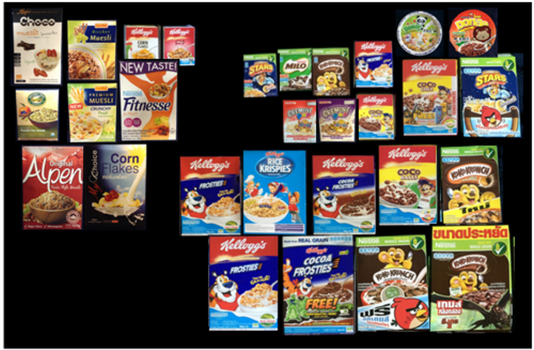
There are 3 from 20 children (15 percent) in age 9-10 years old grouped cereal by its ingredients such as sugar, and whole grains Table 4.13. Children in this group, thoroughly read cereal's ingredient information given on cereal's box before cereal grouping.

"I consider its ingredients; this group of products has high sugar, while another group has low sugar and they have whole grain." (Respondent 31: Boy, 9 years old)

"I group this cereal into 3 groups; low sugar contents, high sugar content and whole grains. I'm reading information on packaging." (Respondent 32: Girl, 9 years old)

"I divide them into 2 groups by its ingredient; one with whole grains, and another without whole grains." (Respondent 35: Girl, 10 years old)

Table 4.13 Children's cereal classification by product ingredient

9-year children	
Respondent 31 (Boy) 	**Respondent 32** (Girl) 
10-year children	
Respondent 35 (Girl) 	

4.1.2.5 Classified by brand

There are 3 from 20 children (15 percent) in age 11 years old classified product by brand as shown in Table 4.14. Compare to the children who grouped cereal by graphic of brand elements (e.g. brand symbol, brand logo) children in this group not only considered the visual; but they read cereal's brand name.

"I group cereals into three groups by its brand logo which are Nestle, Kellogg's, and others. I separate others because they have different brand logo." (Respondent 37: Boy, 11 years old)

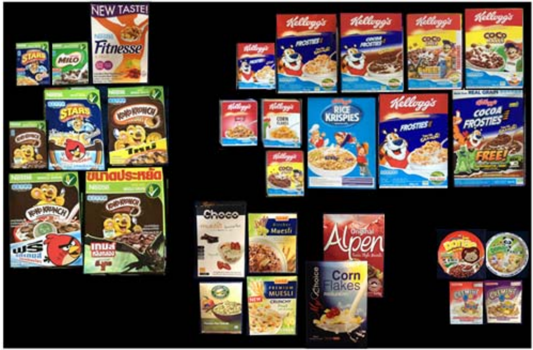
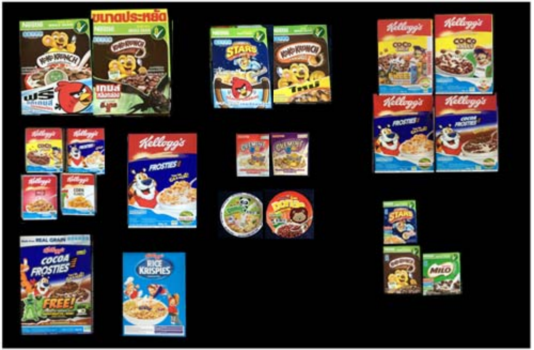
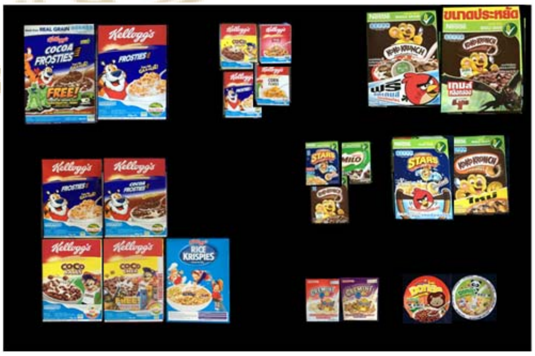
"I classify by their brand and size. I cannot remember the brand but I know brands when I see its packaging." (Respondent 24: Girl, 11 years old)

"I group by its brand and separate into sub-group by its size. I know Nestle, but I don't know another which are read alphabet (pointed to Kellogg's cereal)." (Respondent 25: Girl, 11 years old)

The obvious brand effect has been revealed in cereal's classification by the 11-year children. A boy classified cereal into 3 groups by only brand criteria, no matter how its size *(Respondent 37: Boy, 11 years old)*. While another 2 girls further separated cereals into sub-group by cereal's size. Children showed brand awareness with regarding to 'Nestle' and 'Kellogg's' while they don't know other cereal brands. So they grouped all unfamiliar-brand cereals in same group.

Moreover, for the same-brand cereals such as Kellogg's, children aware of the brand but they consider graphic on packaging as other criteria to separate products apart. For example, the Respondent 24 separated Kellogg's cereals (Figure 4.7) from others because it had different brand logo design.

Table 4.14 Children's cereal classification by brand

(a) Respondent 37 (Boy)	**(b) Respondent 24** (Girl)
	
	(c) Respondent 25 (Girl)
	

Respondent 24 (Girl)

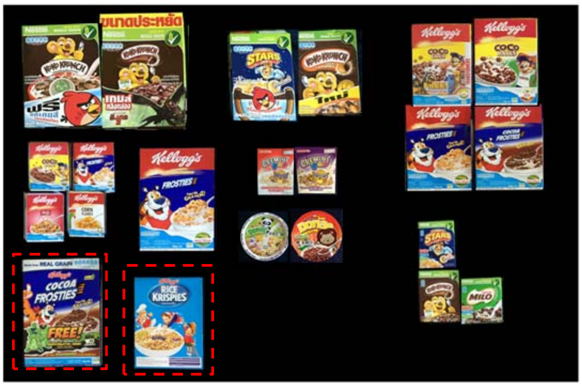


Figure 4.7 The Kellogg's cereal is separated from other because the different brand logo design

4.2 Children's product preference and purchase decision making

After children classified toothpastes and/or cereals into several groups, they were asked to choose one favorite product from each group. And in the final step of interview, they were encouraged to choose the most favorite product which they would buy back.

This section is divided into 2 sub-sections including; children product preference and purchase decision making regarding to toothpaste product and cereal product, respectively. Children's criteria and reasons for product preference and purchase decision making are reported.

4.2.1 Children's toothpaste product preference and purchase decision making

It reveals 7 criteria for toothpaste preference and buying decision making of children in age 7 – 11 years as following.

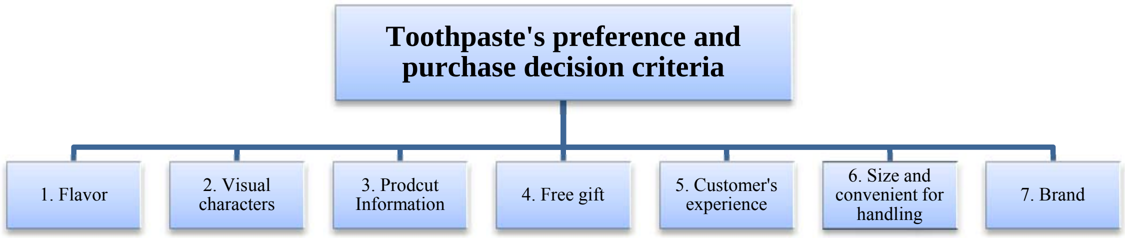

Toothpaste's preference and purchase decision criteria
1. Flavor
2. Visual characters
3. Prodcut Information
4. Free gift
5. Customer's experience
6. Size and convenient for handling
7. Brand

Figure 4.8 Toothpaste's preference and purchase decision criteria

Table 4.15 shows varieties patterns of toothpaste's choosing criteria which are found in the interviews. In the 2nd step of interview, children chose the preferred product from each group by considered many criteria (represent by **x**) which was varied from 1 to 4 criteria.

For example, Respondent 1 (7-year boy) chose favorite toothpaste by consider 2 criteria. He chose the toothpaste from one group because it offered free gift, while chose from another group because he like cartoon character on its packaging.

"I choose this (Oralmed Kids orange flavor) because I like the purple free car toy and I have never used it.

For this group, I choose the toothpaste with red BEN10 because I have never used it before." (Respondent 1: Boy, 7 years old)

Table 4.15 Children's criteria for toothpaste preference and purchase decision making

No. Respondents	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	Number Total
Age	7 years						8 years			9 years							10 years		11 years						
Gender	Boy				Girl		Boy	Girl		Boy			Girl				Boy	Girl	Boy			Girl			
Criteria for **Toothpaste's preference** x **Toothpaste's purchase decision** o																									
1.Flavor		x o		x	x		x o	x o	x o			x	x	x	x o	x o	x	x	x o	x			x o	x	17 children 8 children
2.Visual character	x		x o	x o	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x		x o	o	x	x o	o		o	x	16 children 7 children
3. Product Information							x			x o	x o	o	x	x	x	x	x o	x o							9 children 5 children
4. Free Gift	x o		x		x o	x						x	x	x			x o	x							9 children 3 children
5. Customer's Experience					x	x o					x o		o						x		x			x	6 children 3 children
6. Size / Convenience for handling							x					x o	o	o								x o		x o	4 children 5 children
7. Brand										x						x					o				2 children 1 children

Respondent 5 (7-year girl) chose favorite toothpaste by consider 4 criteria; she chose the toothpaste from one group because of free gift and, color and flavor. For other groups, she chose the favorite toothpaste because she like its color and she has never used it before.

"I like this toothpaste because it has free collecting Kitty gift, and I also like its color and flavor.

For this group, I choose the pink one because I like pink and I have never used it." (Respondent 5: Girl, 7 years old)

In the final interview step, children also made a decision to buy toothpaste by many criteria (represent by **o**) which was varied from 1 to 3 criteria. However, the criteria for decision making are lower than the criteria for preference. For example, both Respondent 1 (7-year boy) and Respondent 5 (7-year girl) chose his/her most preference product to purchase by considered only the toothpaste with free gift provide.

"Comparing between BEN10 and Oralmed Kids with purple car, I would choose Oralmed Kids. Although I don't like orange flavor, I like the toy. So I want to buy because of free gift." (Respondent 1: Boy, 7 years old)

"I choose the toothpaste with yellow toothpaste; although, I have never used it before. Not only pink, I also like yellow." (Respondent 5: Girl, 7 years old)

4.2.1.1 Flavor of toothpaste

Most revealed criteria in toothpaste preference and purchase decision for children in age 7-11 years is the flavor. It was observed that children recognized toothpaste's flavor by considering color code referred to flavor (e.g. red refer to strawberry flavor) and reading flavor information on its packaging. Table 4.16 shows example of toothpaste with many kinds of flavor.

Table 4.16 Examples of toothpaste with many kind of flavor

Toothpaste brand	many kind of toothpaste's flavor
D-nee Kids	
Kodomo	
Fluocaril	
Oralmed Kid	
St.Andrews	
Pureen	

1) Children's preference to toothpaste because of flavor

There are 17 children from 24 children (71 percent) chose their favorite toothpaste from each group because of its flavor.

"I like orange because it has good smell." (Respondent 4: Boy, 7 years old)

"I choose cola because it's not like others." (Respondent 7: Boy, 8 years old)

"This group, I choose cherry-taste Dee-nee Kids because it's sweet and sour like candy. I don't consider cartoon characters." (Respondent 15: Girl, 8 years old)

"I mainly consider orange flavor. However I would rather choose others if they are interesting." (Respondent 23: Girl, 11 years old)

2) Children's purchase decision making to toothpaste because of flavor

In the purchase decision making stage, there are 8 children from 24 children (33 percent) made a decision to buy toothpaste because of its flavor. All of them are the children who chose their preference toothpaste because of flavor in the previous step.

"I like grape taste because I use it. I choose by consider flavor more than its type. Toothpaste type, cream or gel is not matter for me." (Respondent 9: Girl, 8 years old)

"I choose Deenee Kids strawberry toothpaste because it's sweet. I don't eat it but I know it's sweet and delicious." (Respondent 16: Girl, 9 years old)

"I suddenly know I'm going to choose this because it's orange flavor and with my favorite cartoon 'Pooh'". (Respondent 23: Girl, 11 years)

With children's experience to the toothpaste, most of them choose their preference or made a decision to buy toothpaste based on its smell and taste, although they don't ingest toothpaste. The orange flavor is the most general preference flavor which is revealed in both boys and girls. While other flavors of choice are strawberry, grape, blueberry, bubble fruit, cherry and cola. Children tend to choose the flavor that they've ever used rather than one which they have no experience.

4.2.1.2 Visual characters of toothpaste packaging

The second important criterion for toothpaste's preference and purchase decision for children in age 7-11 years is visual characters of packaging. The visual elements which children pay attention from highest to lowest important are; cartoon characters, color, pictures and packaging design, respectively. Figure 4.9 show example of visual characters of toothpaste's packaging.

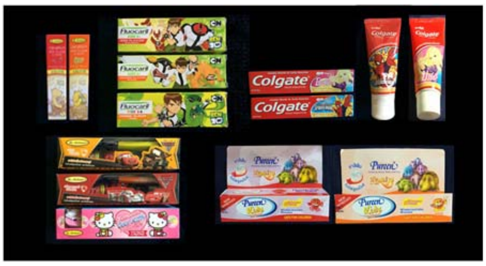
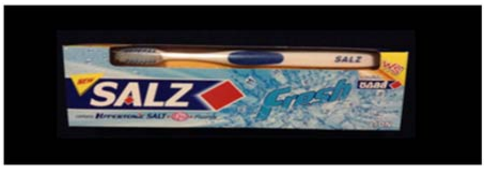
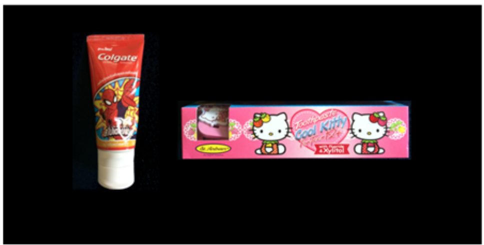
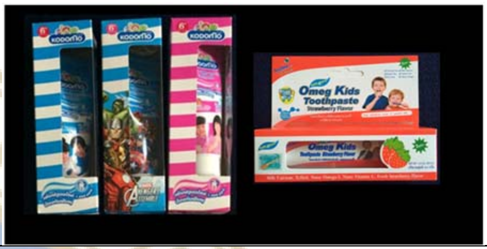
a) Cartoons characters 	b) Pictures 
c) Color 	d) Packaging design 

Figure 4.9 Example of visual characters of toothpaste's packaging

1) Children's preference to toothpaste because of visual characters

There are 16 from 24 children (67 percent), chose their preferred toothpaste from each group because of its visual characters.

"I choose toothpaste with Avenger cartoon because I have this cartoon model at my home and I also play the game. For another group, I choose red BEN10 because it has more details of picture." (Respondent 3: Boy, 7 years old)

"I like this because it has many colors on packaging (point to Colgate with Spiderman cartoon)...." (Respondent 8: Girl, 8 years old)

"… I choose this because I like iceberg picture which make me feel fresh breath."(Respondent 12: Boy, 9 years old)

"I choose this because my twin likes BEN10. I always see the movie with him and I like it."(Respondent 13: Girl, 9 years old)

"The packaging is interesting. It has the transparent plastic on the packaging, so I can see the product inside and consider whether I should buy this product." (Respondent 15: Girl, 9 years old)

2) Children's purchase decision making to toothpaste because of visual characters

There are 7 children from total 24 children (29 percent) made a decision to buy toothpaste because of its visual characters. Some of them didn't consider visual characters as criteria for their product preference in the previous interview step; however, they considered it when they were encouraged to make the decision to buy. This shows that children used visual characters as a complement to other key criteria such as brand and flavor when they make a purchase decision. These are founded in Respondent 21 (Boy, 11 year old) and Respondent 23 (Girl 11 years old).

Among all visual characters, it is revealed that the licensed cartoon character (Table 4.17) played the most important for children in their decision making stage.

"I choose this (the red St.Andrew toothpaste with CAR cartoon) because I like cartoon on this packaging more than the orange one." (Respondent 4: Boy, 7 years old)

"I choose this because I like Spiderman character. I don't consider flavor at all." (Respondent 20: Boy, 11 years)

"I choose this because I can use the adult-like toothpaste like Colgate; while, it has the cartoon character which I like (choosing colgate toothpaste with Spiderman cartoon character)." (Respondent 21: Boy, 11 years)

"I suddenly know I'm going to choose this because it's orange flavor and with my favorite cartoon 'Pooh Bear'". (Respondent 23: Girl, 11 years)

Table 4.17 Examples of toothpaste with licensed cartoon characters

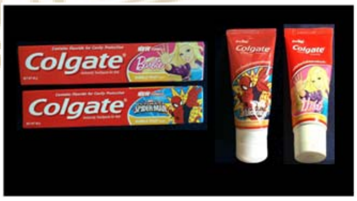
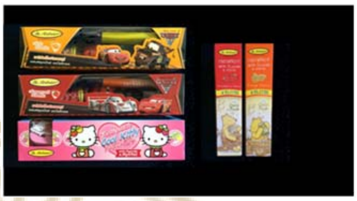
Toothpaste brand	Licensed cartoon characters
Colgate	
Kodomo	

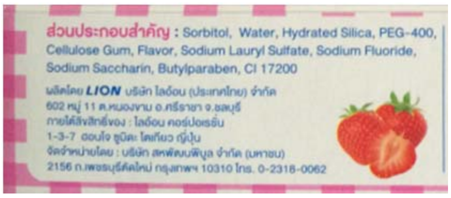
Table 4.17 Examples of toothpaste with licensed cartoon characters (cont.)

Toothpaste brand	Licensed cartoon characters
Fluocaril	
St.Andrews	
Pureen	

4.2.1.3 Product Information

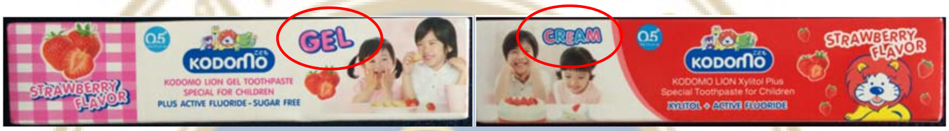
It is revealed that children from age 8 years, considered and read product information or description on packaging including; product ingredient, product benefit, toothpaste type, and age-range instruction when they were asked to choose their preference toothpaste from each group or to choose which they will buy. Figure 4.10 shows example of product information or description on toothpaste packaging.

a) Product Ingredient


Sorbitol, Water, Hydrated Silica, PEG-400, Cellulose Gum, Flavor, Sodium Lauryl Sulfate, Sodium Fluoride, Sodium Saccharin, Butylparaben, CI 17200
LION

b) Product benefit

c) Toothpaste type (e.g. Gel and Cream)


GEL
KODOMO
KODOMO LION GEL TOOTHPASTE SPECIAL FOR CHILDREN
PLUS ACTIVE FLUORIDE • SUGAR FREE
STRAWBERRY FLAVOR
CREAM
KODOMO
KODOMO LION Xylitol Plus Special Toothpaste for Children
XYLITOL + ACTIVE FLUORIDE
STRAWBERRY FLAVOR

d) Age range instruction (Such as for Kid 6+ and Kids 2-6)

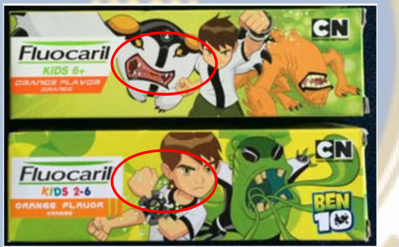

CN
Fluocaril
KIDS 6+
ORANGE FLAVOR
CN
Fluocaril
KIDS 2-6
ORANGE FLAVOR
BEN 10

Figure 4.10 Example of product information on toothpaste packaging

1) Children's preference to toothpaste because of product information

There are 9 from 24 children (38 percent) chose their preferred toothpaste from each group because of product information. Several types of product information are found. It can be ranked from highest to lowest important as following; product ingredient, product benefit, toothpaste type, and age-range instruction, respectively.

- Product Ingredient: *"Because I read the description on packaging, it has Xylitol as ingredient." (Respondent 11: Boy, 9 years)*

"I choose because it has Fluoril and Camomile." (Respondent 13: Girl, 9 years)

- Product Benefit: *"I choose this transparent-box toothpaste because the description on packaging state that it protects teeth decay. I don't consider cartoons because it's not necessary." (Respondent 13: Girl, 9 years)*

"It describes that teeth is healthy by Calcium and Phosphate." (Respondent 13: Girl, 9 years)

- Toothpaste type: *"Its box is very nice and I like gel toothpaste." (Respondent 9: Girl, 8 years)*

"I like this one because it has shimmer." (Respondent 18: Girl, 10 years)

- Age-range instruction: *"I choose the orange one because it is for children in my age." (Respondent 7: Boy, 8 years)*

"I don't choose that toothpaste because it has described that it's for 2-6 years children." (Respondent 13: Girl, 9 years)

2) Children's purchase decision making to toothpaste because of product information

There are 5 from 24 children (21 percent) made a decision to buy toothpaste because of product information. Most of them were the children who chose preference product by product information in the previous step.

Children focus on product ingredient and benefit information when they choose toothpaste to buy. They neither consider toothpaste type, and age-range instruction in this decision making stage any more.

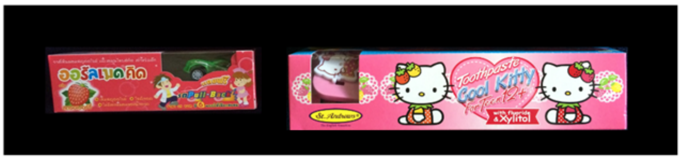
"I choose orange Oralmed Kids because it has herbs as ingredients. It isn't because the free toothbrush; but, it's because I has never used it before." (Respondent 11: Boy, 9 years)

"I choose this because it protects teeth decay and has low sugar content." (Respondent 18: Girl, 10 years)

4.2.1.4 Free gift

It is found that children are attracted by free gift provided with products. There are two main types of free gifts that toothpaste companies have been used (Figure 4.11). First is non-functional free gift such as small car, and collecting jigsaw. Another is functional free gift such as toothbrush.

a) Non-functional free gift



b) Functional free gift

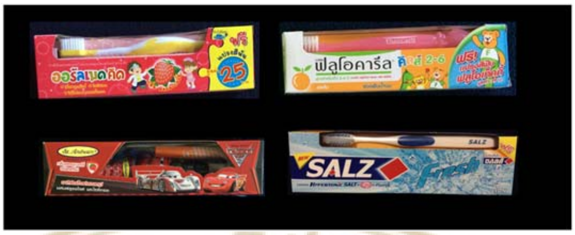


Figure 4.11 Example of free gifts provided with toothpaste

1) Children’s preference to toothpaste because of free gift

There were 38 percent participated children, or 9 from 24 children chose their preferred toothpaste from each group because they were attracted by free gifts.

“I choose it because I like toothbrush design.” (Respondent 3: Boy, 7 years)

“I choose this because I like yellow toothbrush. And for another I choose it because it provides free green car. Actually I prefer green rather than yellow.” (Respondent 6: Girl, 7 years)

“I choose it because it provides new toothbrush; so I can use it when my toothpaste is broken.”(Respondent 13: Girl, 9 years)

“I choose the one which has free green car toy. Actually I don’t like the free car; however, I can give it to my brother. He really like the car. (Respondent 14: Girl, 9 years)

“I choose this because it has free gift; so it is attractive to children.” (Respondent 18: Girl, 10 years)

It is revealed that the free gifts are not always attractive for children due to their bad experience to the kind of free gift, or this type is not match with their interests.

"I like its flavor. However, I'm not interested in free toy because it's not good. I have bought it and I found the free car run very slow. (Respondent 7: Boy, 8 years old)

"I choose this toothpaste because it has fluoride, and herbs. The free car toy is not necessary for me as it's for boy."(Respondent 13: Girl, 9 years old)

2) Children's purchase decision making to toothpaste because of free gift

In the purchase decision making step, there are only 3 children from 24 children (12.5 percent), chose to buy toothpaste because of free gift. All of them are the children who choose preferred toothpaste by free gift in the previous step.

"Comparing this toothpaste with BEN10 and toothpaste which provided free purple car, I choose the toothpaste with free car. Although, I don't like orange flavor, I like the toy." (Respondent 1: Boy, 7 years)

"I will buy it because it has free toy."(Respondent 17: Boy, 10 years)

4.2.1.5 Customer's experience

Customer's experience is other important factor for children when they choose preference products or select product to buy.

1) Children's preference to toothpaste because of customer's experience

There are 6 from 24 children (25 percent) chose their preferred toothpaste from each group because of their experience to product. It's depended on one's style. Some chose toothpaste because they have used it before, but some chose because they have never used it and want to try new one.

"I choose this toothpaste (toothpaste branded BayBee) because I have never used it." (Respondent 5: Girl, 7 years)

"I choose the toothpaste with Spiderman because I have used it and it makes my teeth clean." (Respondent 11: Boy, 9 years)

"I choose this toothpaste because it's new to me." (Respondent 24: Girl, 11 years)

"I have used it. My mom bought this toothpaste for me when I was young." (Respondent 19: Boy, 11 years)

2) Children's purchase decision making to toothpaste because of customer's experience

There are 3 from 24 children (12.5 percent) made a decision to buy toothpaste because of their experience. Some of them are the children who chose preference toothpaste because of their experience in the previous step.

"I choose Oralmed kid toothpaste because I have never used it before; so I want to try it. It's not because of free toothbrush." (Respondent 11: Boy, 9 years)

It was found that children's bad experience to toothpaste can make them not decide to repurchase in the next time.

"I have used this toothpaste (toothpaste branded St.Andrew). But I found that its tube is so small. It seems toothpaste producer want me to buy because of collecting free gift rather than toothpaste itself." (Respondent 21: Boy, 11 years)

4.2.1.6 Size and convenient for handling

Packaging size is one of key criteria which children considered when they choose favorite toothpaste and the one which they buy. Packaging size is referred to toothpaste quantity and convenient to use. Children carefully consider value of money to selling quantity and convenient to use.

1) Children's preference to toothpaste because of size and convenient for handling

There are 4 from 24 children (17 percent) chose their preference toothpaste because of size.

"I choose the biggest tube because it can be used longer." (Respondent 7: Boy, 8 years)

"I like to Spiderman toothpaste because it's pretty small." (Respondent 12: Boy, 9 years)

2) Children's purchase decision making to toothpaste because of size and convenient for handling

In the decision making stage, there are 5 from 24 children (21 percent), chose the toothpaste to buy because of its size.

"I would like to choose Oralmed Kids toothpaste because it's cheap. Moreover, it's big so I think it can be used longer." (Respondent 12: Boy, 9 years)

"I choose this because it's convenient for handling. It's light so it will not make my baggage overweight when I travel. (Respondent 14: Girl, 9 years)

It is found that children's experience can make them aware of toothpaste's packaging size associated with actual product size. Then it impacts to their purchase decision in next time.

"I don't consider size because it's deceptive. Actually toothpaste inside is small." (Respondent 7: Boy, 8 years)

4.2.1.7 Brand as product preference criteria

Older children aged over 9 years old, show awareness to specific brand and considered it as a criterion for preference product choosing.

1) Children's preference to toothpaste because of brand

There are 2 from 24 children (8 percent) chose preference toothpaste because they aware of its brand.

"I choose the blue one because of its brand logo." (Respondent 10: Boy, 9 years)

"I choose Denee Kids toothpaste. I like Denee brand because its ingredient is quite good. Moreover I always use its shampoo product." (Respondent 16: Girl, 9 years)

2) Children's purchase decision making to toothpaste because of brand

There is one from 24 children made a decision to buy toothpaste because its brand.

"Actually I don't use toothpaste for kid. However, if I have to choose, I would choose this one (Colgate brand toothpaste with Spiderman cartoon). Because I can use adult product with cartoon for kids which I like." (Respondent 21: Boy, 11 years)

4.2.1.8 Others

It is observed that family influence is another criteria that effect children's decision making to buy toothpaste.

"I always choose toothpaste follow my brother." (Respondent 2: Boy, 7 years old)

"I choose this one because my twin who is a boy like BEN10 cartoon. I always watch BEN10 cartoon TV show with him and I like it." (Respondent 13: Girl, 9 years old)

"I choose the one with green car toy. Actually I don't like the toy but I can give it to my brother. He likes it." (Respondent 14: Girl, 9 years)

"Actually I prefer Sensodyne toothpaste because my mom teaches me it's the best toothpaste product (his mom is dentist). But there is not Sensodyne here." (Respondent 7: Boy, 8 years)

4.2.2 Children's cereal product preference and purchase decision making

It reveals 7 children's criteria for product's preference and buying decision making as following.

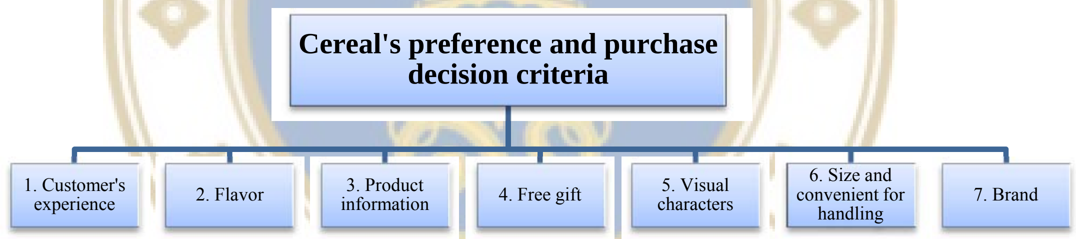

Cereal's preference and purchase decision criteria
1. Customer's experience
2. Flavor
3. Product information
4. Free gift
5. Visual characters
6. Size and convenient for handling
7. Brand

Figure 4.12 Cereal's preference and purchase decision criteria

Table 4.18 shows varieties patterns of children's cereal choosing criteria which are found in the interviews of children age 7 – 11 years. The criteria of cereal's product choosing are same as toothpaste; however, the ranking of influence level is different.

In the 2nd step of interview, children chose their preferred cereal from each group by considering many criteria (x) which was varied from 1 to 4 criteria. For example, Respondent 34 (10-year boy) chose his favorite cereal by consider 2 criteria; he chose his favorite cereal from one group because it offered free game of his favorite cartoon character; while he said that he chose another favorite cereal because he have eaten. Respondent 26 (7-year boy) chose favorite cereal by considered 4 criteria; he chose the cereal from one group because he have ever eaten and he could remember its brand name. And for other group, he chose the favorite cereal because he liked free BEN10 watch.

"I like this because this is my favorite cartoon (pointed to Dragon). Though another also has cartoon; but I'm not familiar with it and cannot play. And for this group, I choose this because I have eaten and found it's delicious. Another is new one; so I concern that it's poisoned me." (Respondent 34: Boy, 10 years)

"For this group, I chose this cereal because I have eaten it before and I remember its brand. And for this group, I like the BEN10 watch; so I choose it." (Respondent 26: Boy, 7 years)

In the final interview step, children also made a decision to buy cereal based on many criteria (o) which was varied from 1 to 4 criteria. The results regard to cereal product shows that criteria for decision making are not lower than the criteria for product preference like toothpaste. For example, Respondent 34 (10-year boy) chose preference cereal based on 2 criteria, his experience and free gift. But when he were asked to made a decision to buy, he tended to carefully thought about reasons, and he told that he considered the 4 criteria including; size, free gift, product quality guarantee information, and ingredients.

"This cereal is the biggest; so it's economical; so I don't need to go to shopping so often. Moreover, the provided free game is interesting to me. I have never play it before. Then I considered product information. This product has been approved by Thailand's Food and Drug Administration. And I will consider its sugar contents as well." (Respondent 34: Boy, 10 years)

Table 4.18 Children’s criteria for cereal preference and purchase decision making

No. Respondents	**1**	**2**	**25**	**26**	**27**	**9**	**28**	29	30	**31**	**32**	**33**	34	**35**	**36**	**37**	**38**	**23**	**24**	**39**	**Number Total**
Age	**7 years**					**8 years**				**9 years**		**10 years**			**11 years**						
Gender	**Boy**				**Girl**	**Boy**		**Girl**		**Boy**	**Girl**	**Boy**		**Girl**	**Boy**			**Girl**			
Criteria for **Cereal's preference** **Cereal’s purchase decision**																					
1. Customer’s Experience		o		x o	x	o	x o		x	x	x	x o	x o	x			x o	x o			11 children 8 children
2.Flavor							x	x						x	x		x	x o	x	x	8 children 1 children
3. Information on packaging					x	x	x			x	x o		o	x o		x o					7 children 4 children
4. Free Gift	x o		x o	x								x	x o							x o	6 children 4 children
5.Visual character	x o			x	x o			x										x	x		6 children 2 children
6. Size / Convenience for handling		x		o	x	x o		o	o	x o		x	o		x o				o		6 children 8 children
7. Brand				x o																	1 children 1 children

4.2.2.1 Customer's experience

Customer's experience plays the most important role for children. When children experience cereal, they learn how good it is. And then it impacts to their next time decision making.

The visual of inside cereal product −cereal's shape or color, presented on the packaging is important for children to remember their favorite product which they have experience.

1) Children's preference to cereal because of their experience

There are 11 from 20 children (55 percent) mentioned they choose favorite cereal from the group because they were familiar with such product.

"I choose this cereal because I've ever eaten. It has round shape and it's so delicious." (Respondent 32: Girl, 9 years)

"I have eaten this small box; while, I don't know whether bigger box is the same. So I'd better to choose the one which I have experience." (Respondent 33: Boy, 10 years)

"I choose this because I have eaten and found it's delicious. Another is new one; so I am concern that it's poisoned me." (Respondent 34: Boy, 10 years)

"I like this the most. Though it's chocolate like others, it's round shape while other is flat shape. The round-shape cereal is crispy." (Respondent 24: Girl, 11 years)

2) Children's purchase decision making to cereal because of their experience

In the decision making stage, there are 6 from 20 children (30 percent) use their experience as a key criteria for their buying decision. They choose to buy the product which they experience and get used to in order to avoid mistakes.

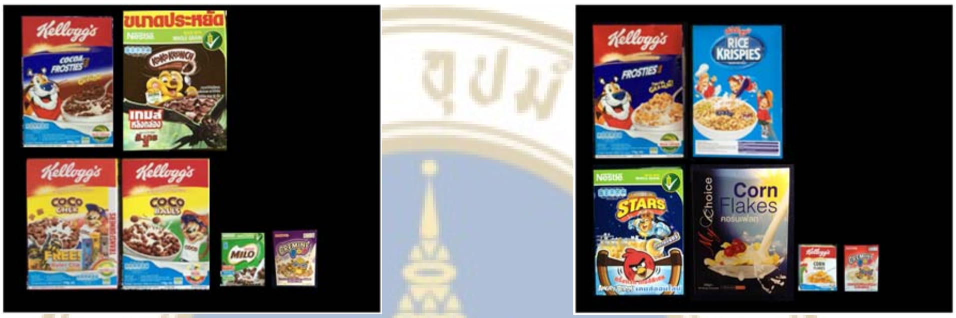
"I have eaten this cereal and it's the most favorite cereal for me." (Respondent 34: Boy, 10 years)

"I choose this cereal because I like it. I always request my mom to buy the cereal which has word C-O-C-O and monkey cartoon."(Respondent 33: Boy, 10 years)

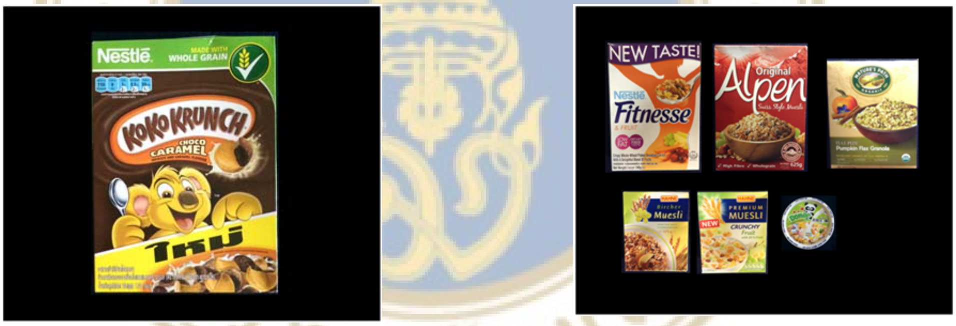
"I prefer this cereal. I have ever eaten and found it's crispy. (Respondent 24: Girl, 11 years)

4.2.2.2 Cereal flavor

The second important criteria of cereal product preference and decision making among children age 7-11 years is cereal's flavor. It is observed that children recognizes cereal's flavor by considering cereal's color and reading description on packaging. Figure 4.13 shows example of cereal product's flavor founded in this research.



a) Chocolate b) Milk



c) Choco Caramel d) Whole grain or Fruit

Figure 4.13 Example of cereal product's flavor

1) Children's preference to cereal because of its flavor.

There are 8 from 20 children (40 percent) in age over 8 years old chose the favorite cereal in each group because they like its flavor.

"I choose this cereal because it is chocolate and milk. When it's mix, it's so delicious." (Respondent 29: Girl, 8 years)

"I like the caramel flavor. It's sweet and concentrated by chocolate." (Respondent 39: Girl, 11 years)

"I like its flavor. It's coco." (Respondent 36: Boy, 11 years)

"I prefer this cereal as it has whole grain and it is chocolate flavor." (Respondent 35: Girl, 10 years)

2) Children’s purchase decision making to cereal because of its flavor.

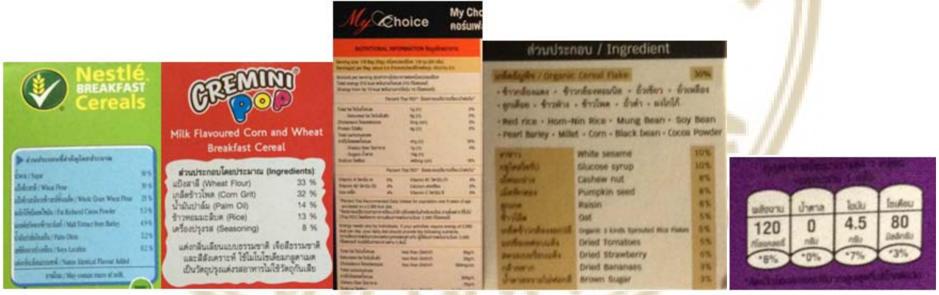
Though flavor is a significant criteria for cereal preference; however, it’s not so important to children when they were asked to make a decision which they will buy back. As it revealed that there was only one girl or only 5 percent of participated children mentioned that she used flavor as criteria for purchase decision.

“I will choose this because I like caramel flavor.” (Respondent 24: Girl, 11 years)

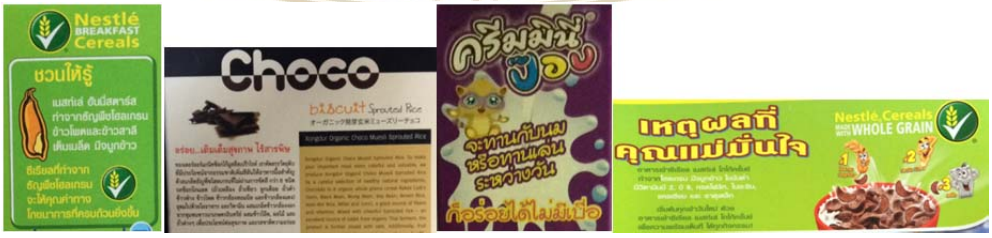
4.2.2.3 Cereal information

It is revealed that information on cereal packaging is an important criterion among children 7-11 years old. Children consider and read product description on cereal packaging including; product ingredient, product benefit and expire date, when they were asked to choose their preference cereal from each group or to choose which they will buy. Figure 4.14 shows example of product information or description on cereal packaging.

a) Product Ingredient


Nestlé BREAKFAST Cereals
CREMINI POP
Milk Flavoured Corn and Wheat Breakfast Cereal
My Choice
ส่วนประกอบ / Ingredient
120
0
4.5
80

b) Product benefit


Nestlé BREAKFAST Cereals
ชวนให้รู้
Choco
biscuit Sprouted Rice
ครีมมินิ ป๊อป
เหตุผลที่คุณแม่มั่นใจ
Nestlé Cereals WHOLE GRAIN

c) Expire date

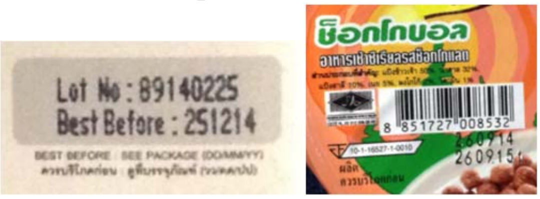

Lot No : 89140225
Best Before : 251214
BEST BEFORE : SEE PACKAGE (DD/MM/YY)
ช็อกโกบอล
8 851727 008532
260914
260915

Figure 4.14 Example of product information or description on cereal packaging

1) Children’s preference to cereal because of information on packaging

There are 7 from 20 children (35 percent) chose their favorite cereal from each group because of product information. Several types of product information are found in this stage; which can be ranked from highest to lowest important as following; product ingredient, product benefit, and expire date, respectively.

- Product Ingredients

“I choose this cereal because it has dried fruits like grape. I like it because I have ever eaten the dried fruit at Paragon and I’ve found it’s delicious. Besides, I consider given ingredient information on the cereal box. How much sugar and fiber content?” (Respondent 32: Girl, 9 years)

“For this group, I choose this (the Choco) because it’s whole grain.” (Respondent 35: Girl, 10 years)

“I choose this cereal because the fruit ingredients have much Vitamin contents.”(Respondent 37: Boy, 11 years)

- Product benefit

“I choose this cereal because its fruit ingredient is good for health.” (Respondent 27: Girl, 7 years)

“I choose this cereal because it’s organic product. So it’s good for me” (Respondent 31: Boy, 9 years)

- Expire Date

“I choose this cereal because I consider expire date on packaging. This cereal is the longest date.” (Respondent 9: Boy, 8 years)

2) Children’s purchase decision making to cereal because of information on packaging

There are 4 from 20 children (20 percent) made a decision to buy cereal because of product information. Most of them were the children who chose favorite cereal by product information in the previous step. Among all information given on cereal packaging, product ingredient information is the first priority children pay their attention to when they make a buying decision.

- Product Ingredients: *"I would like to choose this cereal as I like fruit and whole grains ingredients." (Respondent 35: Girl, 10 years)*

- Product benefit: *"I choose this (Kellogg's Mueslix) because I think it's delicious and it has benefit as well." (Respondent 37: Boy, 11 years)*

4.2.2.4 Free gift

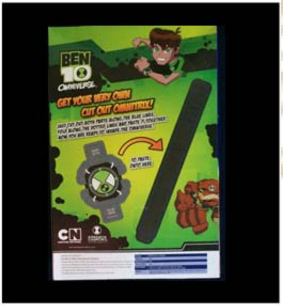
It reveals that children are interested in free gift provided with cereal product. There are two types of free gift offered with cereals which are the non-function and functional as shown in Figure 4.15. The non-functional are included; game and toy. And the functional are included; stationary such as the ruler, and milk.

a) Non-functional free gift

Game provided on cereal packaging

CD Game and Game Online

Toy



b) Functional free gift

Cereal-supplemental product

Stationary (e.g. ruler clip)

Figure 4.15 Example of free gifts provided with cereal

1) Children’s preference to toothpaste because of provided free gift

There are 6 from 20 children (30 percent) chose their favorite cereal from each group because they like free gift.

“I like this cereal because of Optimus Prime toy. I have never eaten it before; but I want to try it. For this group, I like Dinosaur and it also provides toy.” (Respondent 1: Boy, 7 years)

“I choose this because I like the BEN10 watch.” (Respondent 26: Boy, 7 years)

“I choose this (Kellogg’s Coco Balls) because it have game to play; while the small cereal doesn’t have game. For this group, I like this (Kellogg’s Cocoa Frosties). I have never eaten both of them; but game of the big box seems to be more funny than the small one.” (Respondent 33: Boy, 10 years)

“I choose this cereal (Nestle Koko Crunch with Dragon cartoon) because I like this cartoon. Another also has cartoon; but, I cannot play its provided game. For this group, it’s very simple. I like the big box because it has a game; while the small one has no game.” (Respondent 34: Boy, 10 years)

“I prefer this because there is game on packaging.” (Respondent 39: Girl, 11 years)

“I choose this because I’m used to buy it so often. It provides free sticker and attached with cereal box. The raccoon cartoon is nice. I have raccoon painting book.” (Respondent 24: Girl, 11 years)

2) Children’s purchase decision making to toothpaste because of provided free gift

In the decision making stage, there are 4 children (20 percent) who considered free gift as a criteria of their cereal buying. All of them are the children who choose favorite product in the 1st stage by free items.

“I would like to buy the cereal that have toy. I always request mom to buy cereal which has toy and I will sad if others bring my toy.” (Respondent 1: Boy, 7 years)

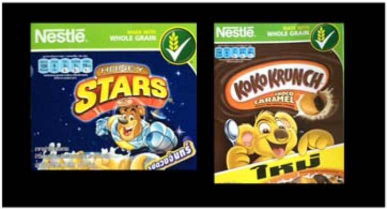
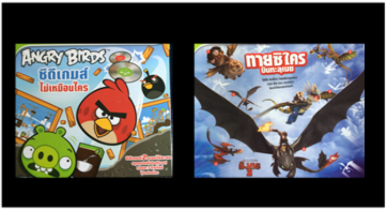
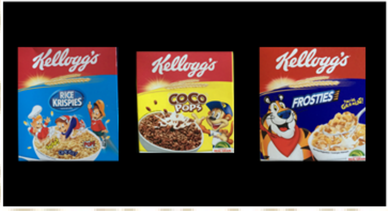
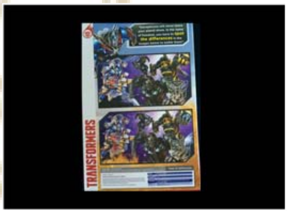
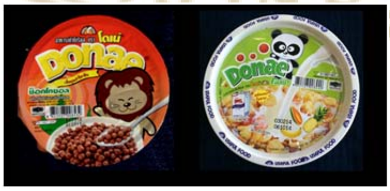
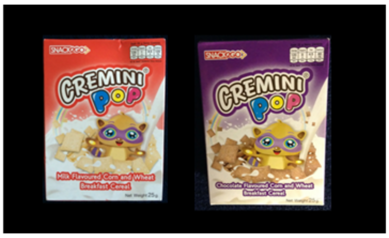
“I choose the cereal when has the most funny game.” (Respondent 25: Boy, 7 years)

"Apart from economical reason, I also consider its provided game on packaging because I have never played it before." (Respondent 34: Boy, 10 years)

4.2.2.5 Visual characters

A next criterion for cereal's preference and purchase decision for children is visual character of cereal's packaging. Only cartoon character on packaging, which effect children's cereal choosing. It finds no evidence of other visual characters of cereal which children interested like revealed in toothpaste. Table 4.19 shows example of cartoon characters in cereal's packaging which are found in this study. It reveals both company-own cartoon characters and licensed cartoon characters in cereal products.

Table 4.19 Example of cartoon character found on cereal packaging

Cereal brand	Company-own cartoon characters	Licensed cartoon characters
Nestle		
Kellogg's		
Donae		-
Snack2Go		-

1) Children's preference to toothpaste because of visual character

There are 6 from 20 children (30 percent) chose their favorite cereal from each group because they like cartoon character on cereal packaging.

"I like this cereal because of Optimus Prime toy. I have never eaten it before; but I want to try it. Do you see the little parrot?. Its mouth is so nice." (Respondent 1: Boy, 7 years)

"…The raccoon cartoon is nice. I have raccoon painting book." (Respondent 23: Girl, 11 years)

"I prefer this (Nestle Koko Krunch with Dragon cartoon) because I like Dragon. I see it in the movie."(Respondent 24: Girl, 11 years)

2) Children's purchase decision making to toothpaste because of visual character

There were 2 from 20 children (10 percent) used their favorite cartoon characters as criteria for their buying decision making.

"Yes, I would choose this because I like the Optimus Prime." (Respondent 1: Boy, 7 years)

It reveals that children tend to be attracted by licensed cartoon more than company-own cartoon characters. So the licensed cartoon is important to both children's preference and purchase decision making. This result can explain by Mere Exposure Effect (Zojonc, 2001) which demonstrated that simply exposing subjects to a familiar stimulus led them to rate it more positively than other similar stimuli which had not been presented. Zojonc (2001) tested that consumers did not show recognition of repeated stimuli, but they continued to show affective bias towards the repeatedly exposed stimuli. As mentioned in customer's experience part; characters are useful for children to recognize and remember their favorite cereal product that they experience. And so it is impact their repurchasing and requesting parents to buy those product for them.

"I choose this cereal because I like it. I always request my mom to buy the cereal which has word C-O-C-O and monkey cartoon."(Respondent 33: Boy, 10 years)

4.2.2.6 Size/Shape as product preference criteria

Packaging size or shape are another key criteria which children considered when they were choosing favorite cereal. Cereal packaging's size is referred to its quantity. And cereal packaging's shape is implied to the convenient for handling.

"I choose it because it's pretty small. The big one is too much for me. I cannot eat it up." (Respondent 9: Boy, 8 years)

"I like this cereal (Donae's cereal with bowl packaging) because it's very easy to eat. I can just open the bowl."(Respondent 33: Boy, 10 years)

There are several size of cereal's packaging found in this study including; small, medium, large, and super large as shows in Table 4.19. Most of them are in the box shape; except, the Donae-brand cereal which are in bowl shape (Table 4.20).

Table 4.20 Cereal packaging size

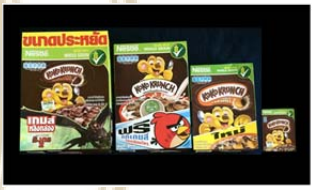
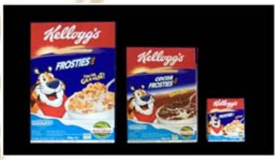
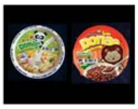
Cereal brand	Size	
Nestle	Super Large, Large, Medium, Small	
Kellogg's	Large, Medium, Small	
Donae	Small	
Snack2Go	Small	
HAHNE	Small	
Nature's Path	Medium	

Table 4.20 Cereal packaging size (cont.)

Cereal brand	Size	
Alpen	Large	
My Choice	Large	
Xongdur	Medium	

1) Children's preference to cereal because of size/shape

There are 6 from 20 children (30 percent) chose favorite cereal because of cereal's size or shape. They tend to choose size with appropriate quantity for their consuming. Moreover, it find that the bowl shape of cereal is considered by children to be more convenient to eat and so it can be attractive to them.

"I like it because it's big (children choose medium size). But I don't choose the biggest one because it's too much for me." (Respondent 2: Boy, 7 years)

"I choose this cereal because it's economy size. The size is also suitable for me, not too big or too small. (Respondent 36: Boy, 11 years)

"I choose Donae because it has fruit and I just open and eat it." (Respondent 27: Girl, 7 years)

"I prefer this (Donae's cereal with bowl packaging) because it's ready to eat." (Respondent 31: Boy, 9 years)

2) Children's purchase decision making to cereal because of size/shape

In the decision making stage, there are 8 children (40 percent) who chose cereal to buy because of its size or shape. Surprisingly, 5 children didn't choose their favorite product in each group in previous stage from its size or shape. It was observed that children try to rational think about what that should buy, and so they come up with choosing as a reason of size or shape.

"I would choose this (Nestle Koko Crunch, small size) because it's suited size for me. Actually I like other favor; but, it has only big size which I think it's too big for me." (Respondent 9: Boy, 8 years)

"I prefer this (Nestle Koko Crunch, big size) because it seems delicious and quite big. I can share to my brother." (Respondent 33: Boy, 10 years)

"I choose this (Nestle Honey Stars, medium size). Its size is best fit for me. I think I cannot eat up the big size. (Respondent 36: Boy, 11 years)

"I choose the cereal in bowl because it's convenient." (Respondent 31: Boy, 9 years)

4.2.2.7 Brand

The study shows there is a boy have awareness on cereal's brand and use brand as criteria for his product choosing. Compare to other criteria, brand has the lowest effect on children's product choosing or decision making. This is align with McNeal and Ji's study (2003) study, children aware product brand; however, the company's brand is less in evidence on children's recalled memorial. It is the product that matter to children rather that the people who make the product.

1) Children's preference to cereal because of brand

There was only one from 20 (or 5 percent) of children who chose favorite cereal because of its brand.

"I would choose this cereal as my favorite because I have ever eaten product of this brand and it's the same brand I eat. Others brands I have never eaten before." (Respondent 26: Boy, 7 years)

2) Children's purchase decision making to cereal because of brand

The boy who gave the reason that he use brand as criteria for his favorite cereal choosing, made decision to buy cereal because of brand as well.

"I prefer this because it's the brand which I have been eaten with my brother. The big box can eat for many days." (Respondent 26: Boy, 7 years)

CHAPTER V
CONCLUSION

This chapter presents the conclusion and implication of the study. It is organized as follows: the first section provides the conclusion. Implications of the research finding are in the second section, the third section, provides the limitations. Directions for future of the study are in the last section.

5.1 Conclusion of Research Result

The primary goal of this study is to develop a conceptual to identify what and how visual and verbal packaging elements influence Thai children's product preference. The impact of the elements on children's preference reveals by analyzing an importance of its separate elements for consumer's choice. For this purpose two main blocks of packaging's elements have been identified: visual and verbal elements, where graphic, color, size, form, and material are considered as visual elements, while product information, producer, country-of-origin and brand name are considered as verbal ones. Moreover, the impact of packaging elements on children's product preference have been evaluated depending on the consumer's individual characteristics; including, age and gender.

Results of packaging elements, and individual characteristics impact on Thai children product classification and preference stipulated following conclusions:

5.1.1 The influence of packaging elements on children's product classification

It concludes that packaging visual elements has stronger effect on their product classification rather than verbal elements. This is supported study of Dammler and Middelmann-Motz (2002) and Taghavi and Seyedsalehi (2015) who stated that children have lower abilities to process information; so they are likely to simply assess products mainly on a visual level, in addition to verbal. This research reveals that among several types of visual element, the graphic including; cartoon characters, pictures and brand characters (such as brand logo, brand symbol), pays the most important role for children in product classification stage. The results strengthen several previous researches (Brée and Cegarra, 1994; Hémar-Nicolas and Gollety, 2012; Osborne, 2012). Graphics make package more fun and thus they draw children's attention (Osborne, 2012). Other visual elements which children use as criteria for their product classification are; size, color, and packaging design. However, most of them are used for classifying products into sub-group. The study reveal size is more important for cereal than toothpaste in product classification. This may due to there are variety sizes of cereal product in market place; so it's outstanding element for children and they use it as a criteria.

In addition to the effect of packaging's visual elements, it is found that children are also interested in some verbal elements. The most significant information for children's product classification is flavor. Other product information such as product type (gel or cream), product instruction (specific age), product ingredient, and brand name are also important for children's product classification as well. There are found the different of product information which children pay attention in toothpaste's and cereal's grouping. For toothpaste, product type, and product instruction seem to be important; while, for cereal product, product ingredients and brand names, seemto be outstanding.

5.1.2 The influence of packaging elements on children's product preference and buying decision making

The study reveals that there are 7 key criteria affect children product's preference and purchase decision making of toothpaste and cereal which are; flavor, visual characters (e.g. graphic, cartoon characters, pictures, packaging design, and color), product information, free gift, customers' experience, size & convenient for handling, and brand.

It's different from the product classification stage which children mainly pay attention on packaging visual elements. When they are asked to choose their favorite product and the most preference product to buy, they carefully considered about key product attributes or benefit offered to them. They bring more product information into their consideration. For example some consider information on packaging and make a decision based on benefit of product. This results describe by Grossman and Wisenblit (1999)'s; and Kupiec and Revell, (2001)'s finding who reported that packaging effects can differ by involvement level of decision. For low involvement decisions, product attributes are less importance than image − consumers do not search extensively for information about the brands, evaluate their characteristics, and make a weighty decision on which brand to buy. It implies from the study that toothpaste and cereal are high-involvement product due to children attend to the product information for their decision making. In other word, children in this age develop their behaviour of adulthood toward products characterized by high involvement. They tend to be less influenced by visual elements; in such cases they need more information (Kupiec and Revell, 2001). This supports previous research which stated that children show highly involve in the purchase of product for their own consumption (Sharma and Dasgupta, 2009).

Among several type of verbal packaging elements, flavor is the most important product information which children in every age used as criteria for their product preference. This is aligned with Gollety and Guichard (2011)'s finding, they reported that in a choice situation, flavor preference prevails more often over color preference. This study finds stronger flavor effect in toothpaste product rather than cereal. This is due to toothpaste product have more choices of flavor than cereal. There are over five flavors in toothpaste; while there are a few flavors in cereal. For cereal, children take first priority and choose their preference cereal by their experience in order to avoid mistakes.

It is proven that packaging visual elements not only effect children's product classification, but also impact children's preference product choosing. The visual elements show stronger effect in toothpaste than cereal. There are several visual elements which children paid attention in toothpaste choosing which ranks from highest to lowest important; cartoon characters, color, pictures and packaging design. While for cereal, it is revealed only effect of cartoon characters on children's preference product choosing. This results support many researches; cartoon characters associated with brands have a great influence in making the brand attractive to children. The children' preferences for brands are in sync with, 'which' of their favorite or popular cartoon characters are associated with the brand (Christina, et al., 2010; Ogba and Johnson, 2010; Jose, 2014).

The study shows that some children haven't considered visual elements as criteria for their product preference; however, they considered it when they are asked to make the decision to buy. This shows that children use visual elements as a complement to other key criteria such as flavor, and product information when they make a purchase decision. Licensed cartoon characters are effective attractive elements communicate to children in every age. Size is another visual packaging element which it's found to be important for children's buying decision. They carefully considered size for value of money to product quantity with appropriate quantity for their consuming and convenient to use. This supports Boonmattaya and Taweerutchana (2013)'s finding. The study shows that children's experience can make them aware of product's packaging size associated with actual product size. For cereal product, children show concern on packaging shape. The bowl shape of cereal is considered by children to be more convenient to eat and so it can be attractive them to purchasing.

In addition to flavor information; in the preference product choosing stage, children tend to consider other packaging informational elements and read product description such as product ingredient, product benefit, toothpaste type, age-specific, and expire date. However their attention is changed when they are asked to choose a product to buy. They focus on product ingredient and benefit information. Slightly brand effect is found in preference product choosing stage by children. Even though they aware of brand as the showing recognition to brand logo or brand name in their product classification, it's found that they rarely take it into consideration in toothpaste's and cereal's product choosing.

This study reveals that children are likely to choose familiar-brand product such as 'Colgate' and 'Nestle', rather than the unfamiliar-brand such as 'St.Andrew' and 'Kellogg's'. This results support by Festinger's (1957) Cognitive Dissonance theory which focus on human motivation. The theory explains that an individual who experience inconsistency (dissonance) tends to become psychologically uncomfortable, and motivated to try to reduce this dissonance. Considering that the unfamiliar-brand products are dissonance, so children feel uncomfortable and tend not to choose such product. According to Euromonitor International (2015), Colgate-Palmolive (Thailand) gained highest value share 38% to consolidate its lead in oral care in 2014, and Nestle (Thai) Ltd. Gained share for 43% sales, and consolidated its leadership within breakfast cereals in 2015. Compare this market research report to the research finding, it can state that familiar-brand products are likely to be leader in the market.

Moreover, this study's results support many previous studies regarding effect of promotional free gift on children's product preference (Ogba and Johnson, 2010; Boonmattaya and Taweerutchana, 2013). It finds that promotional free gift is attractive to children and leads their buying decision. There are two types of free gift provided with toothpaste and cereal products comprising of; functional and non-functional free gift. The examples of functional free gift are toothbrush and stationary; and non-functional free gifts are game and toy. Most of product companies incorporated licensed cartoon characters with the gift. Children in every age tend to be attractive to the non-functional promotional more than the functional free gift.

Customer experience to product is another criterion which children consider when they choose preference product. With their experience to specific product, they learn how good it is and remember their favorite product by its packaging graphic, flavor and product shape. These are elements facilitate their product recall which often leads to product preference during purchase (McNeal and Ji, 2003). However, the study shows that its effect can contribute either positive or negative impact. Children choose product which they are familiar; on the contrary bad experience can make them not decide to repurchase in the next time.

5.1.3 The influence of individual characteristics on children's product classification and preference

5.1.3.1 Age effect

As same as previous researches (Bloch, 1995; and Silayoi & Speece, 2007), this study shows that the influence of packaging elements on children's product classification, product preference, and purchase decision making has been varied by age.

For young children aged 7-8 years old, they tend to group products by mix of visual packaging elements. Among all visual elements, ***cartoons characters and color*** seem to be the most attractive for young children. In addition, for cereal product, ***packaging size*** also play significant. However, when young children have to choose favorite product or make a buying decision, they haven't take priority on only cartoons or color as expected. For toothpaste choosing, children consider flavor and promotional free gift as important as visual elements. And for cereal product, they choose product based on their experience and convenient size for handling in complement to visual element.

Many changes and cognitive development are found in 9-year children. Children show interest on informational elements on product packaging. ***Flavor, product ingredient, and product benefit information*** tend to take more important role for children's product classification and preference product choosing. They use packaging color to imply product's flavor and read description of flavors on packaging. The observation shows that children could classify products which were same flavor but different color together. This ensures that they really read the flavor information given on the packaging. In addition, 9-year children can differentiate adult's products and children's products by considered graphic visual such as cartoon characters. Although visual elements such as cartoons, or color seems attractive to them and it's still be the criteria for their preference product choosing; when they have to make a decision on buying product, they give attention to product information more than visual elements.

The older children aged 10 – 11 years tend to pay more attention in product information details given on packaging such as ***toothpaste product types, inside cereal characters, product ingredient, and provided free gift*** and have a complex systematic classification pattern. Moreover, the obvious ***brand effect*** has been revealed in product's classification by 10-11 years old children. They showed really understanding to and aware of brand, as evidence that they could group the same-brand products together; even though, they have difference packaging appearance. Following brand, children tend to consider further elements and use them as co-consideration criterion for classified same-brand products into sub-groups. Children in age 10-11 years, show no significant difference in criteria of product preference choosing and buying decision, in compare to the 9-year children. In addition, even if the children understand and aware of brand, it have less impact on children's preference.

5.1.3.2 Gender effect

There are no different in product's classification of girl and boy. Observation shows that although children never give the reason of product preference mentioned to their sexual identity, they choose products with cartoon characters and color which represent their gender stereotype. For example, a boy shows body language conceiving a dislike to product which is pink package and has ‘Barbie’ cartoon. While none of girls show preference on toothpaste with Spiderman. Low color gender stereotype is revealed. Some boys choose product in color specific to girl such as pink, and vice versa. This is contradict to previous researches of Boonmattaya and Taweerutchana (2013), who reported that children choose the product which color represent their gender; for example, pink and red are for girl and blue is for boy.

5.2 Research Implication

5.2.1 Marketing Strategies Implication

By knowing about the way the children thinks and feels in this study in Thailand context, marketers can understand how best to communicate to them when designing product packaging and promotions. Each packaging elements are not equally important and their impact are also varied in each age group. Moreover, it is revealed in this study that children are not totally naïve to marketing as a whole. Their understanding in marketing tools has also developed along their age. So this is important for marketers to clearly understand about it, so that they can manage limited resource, use appropriate marketing strategies, and put effort in only high impact packaging elements. This is to gain an advantage in the market. Some key issues have emerged in this study:

1) It implies from the study that toothpaste and cereal are high-involvement product due to children attend to the product information for their decision making. So the marketers should think about how to input information such as product flavor, and ingredient on packaging label that most influence children’s decision making.

2) Due to the limit of ability to reading and spelling, children cannot recognize and aware of some brands for example; ‘Kellegg’s’, ‘St.Andrew’, and “Pureen” because their names are presented in only English and seems difficult for children to read and pronounce. Then they cannot recognize. So marketers should think about how to make their brand spell easier and build brand awareness in children’s long-term memory.

3) Children are not naïve to marketing. They understand that free gift is part of marketing strategies and it seems more difficult to attract children by conventional

gift such as free car toy. In order to use the promotional material marketing tools targeting to children, marketers need to understand children needs and always update trends in order to make the product attractive to them.

4) Cartoon character is one of the most important packaging elements for children in many aspects such as in the product classification, product's preference and product awareness. However, Thai children tend to be attracted by popular characters such as transformer and BEN10 more than company's own characters. It's recommended to associate the kind of popular cartoon in TV show, and game to the products.

5) Thai Children from age 9 years tend to share product with parents. They prefer adult-product while they still like children-product appearance such as packaging with cartoon characters. This is the room of product line gap development. It's recommend to design the product with these combinations of needs targeting to children in age above 9 years.

5.2.2 Research Method Strategy Implication

1) This research method designs interview conduct in 3 steps; including, product classification, choosing preference product, choosing the most preference product. This tries to simulate the situation when children consumers go to shopping at market place and they find several products on shelf. They tend to follow this 3 steps before decide which product they will purchase.

2) This study finds that younger children (age lower than 8 years old) are not able to express their idea. It might be due to the restricted adaptability of the influence strategies (John, 1999). It recommends interviewing younger children in group (e.g. 2-3 persons per group) instead of individual. But each child is still asked questions individually. The group environment will motivate them to talk about their experiences in purchase decisions.

3) In order to study the age effect on children consumers, school is one of the great place to do the research. Because researcher can control age range and number of participants, then it consumes shorter time comparing to conducting the research in other public places.

5.3 Limitation of the study

Due to conditions of cost and time, there have been several limitations within this study.

1) To begin with, only children consumers in two provinces of Thailand, Bangkok and Samutprakarn have been interviewed; as a result, further study should obtain other locations to reveal the differences in consumer perception towards packaging elements.

2) Second two product samples (toothpaste and cereal) are used in order to conduct the study. There is a possibility that the findings may differ when changing products. The difference of consumer involvement level in products can be changed the focusing area of packaging elements.

3) In addition, both toothpaste and cereal is product which used for personal. In order to study the effect of social influencers on children's product preference, products which consumption with family/friends are another interested area to be studied.

4) Lastly, due to the study focus on children in age 7-11 who is in John's analytical stage. It is not continue picture of children consumers' product preference development along the age.

5.4 Direction for Further Study

Recommendations for further research are based on the limitations of this study.

1) Firstly, this research has focused on Bangkok and perimeter area. Therefore to understand children consumer perception in Thailand better, further study should expand the study area to other areas in Thailand. Then the cultural, financial status and so on, could appear through the perception of consumers from different area.

2) Second, others product samples specific to children with different degree of consumer involvement and social influence should be study.

3) Lastly, future research is encouraged to extend the study focusing on different age range such as John's reflective stage (11-16 years old). At this age children move into adolescence and become more focused on the social meanings.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Details of Individual Children's Interviews with Toothpaste

No. Respondent	Age (years old)	Gender
1	7	Male
2	7	Male
3	7	Male
4	7	Male
5	7	Female
6	7	Female
7	8	Male
8	8	Female
9	8	Female
10	9	Male
11	9	Male
12	9	Male
13	9	Female
14	9	Female
15	9	Female
16	9	Female
17	10	Male
18	10	Female
19	11	Male
20	11	Male
21	11	Male
22	11	Female
23	11	Female
24	11	Female

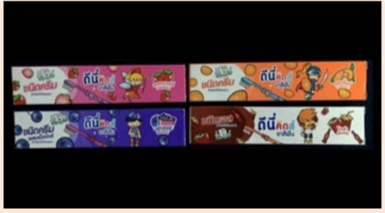
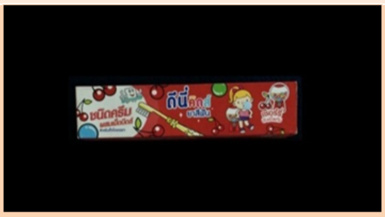
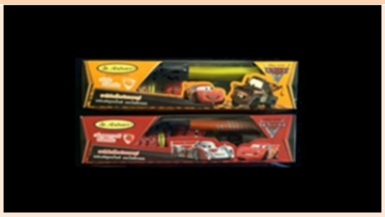
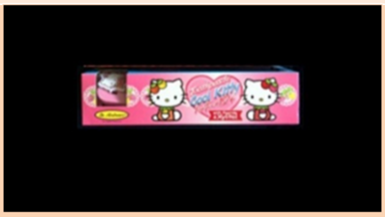
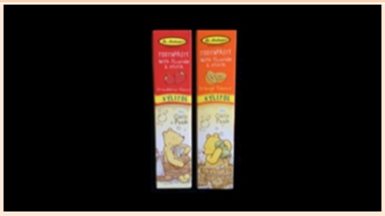
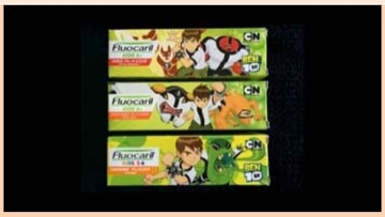
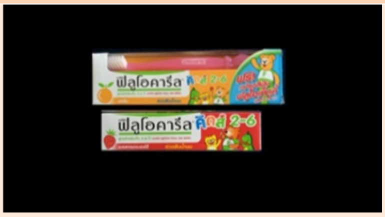
Appendix B: Details of Individual Children's Interviews with Cereal

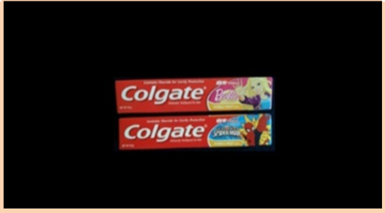
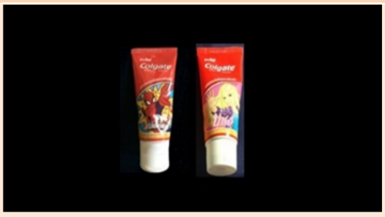
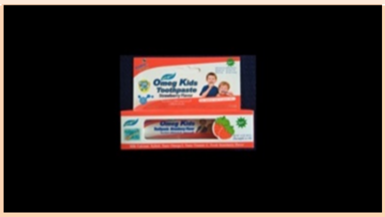
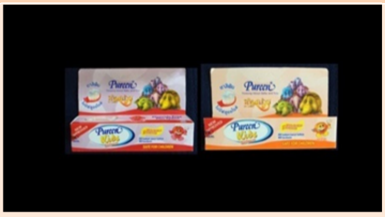
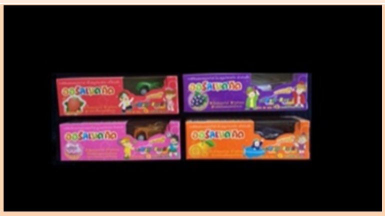
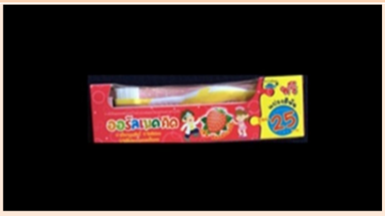
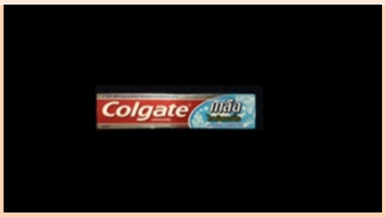
No. Respondent	Age (years old)	Gender
1	7	Male
2	7	Male
25	7	Male
26	7	Male
27	7	Female
9	8	Male
28	8	Male
29	8	Female
30	8	Female
31	9	Male
32	9	Female
33	10	Male
34	10	Male
35	10	Female
36	11	Male
37	11	Male
38	11	Male
24	11	Female
25	11	Female
39	11	Female

Appendix C: Incorporated Toothpaste Products in This Study

Colgate
Colgate
Pureen
Pureen Kids
Omeg Kids Toothpaste
Colgate
SALZ
Fresh
Fluocaril
ฟลูโอคารีล
เซ็นโซดายน์
มัลติ แคร์

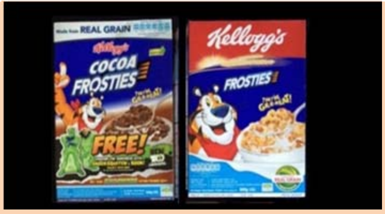
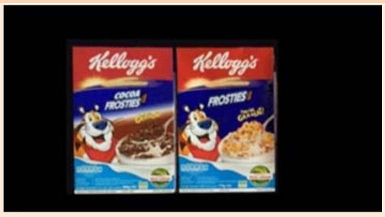
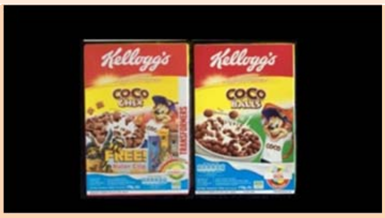
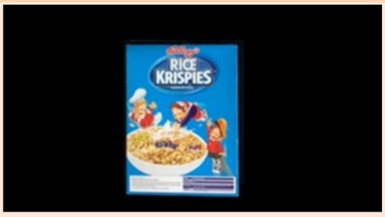
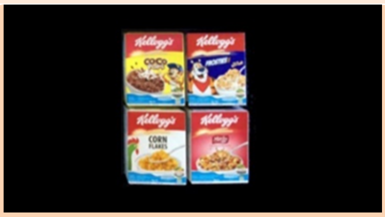
No.	Brand	Packaging
1-3	Kodomo	
4-6		
7-9		

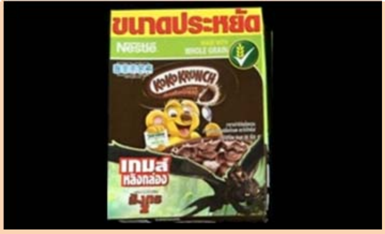
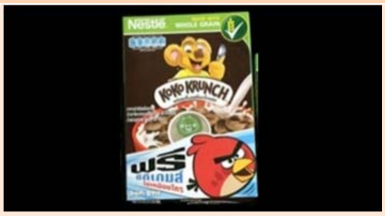
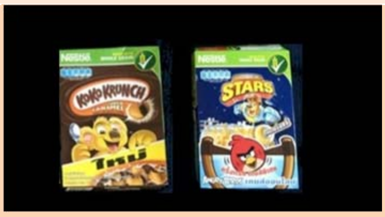
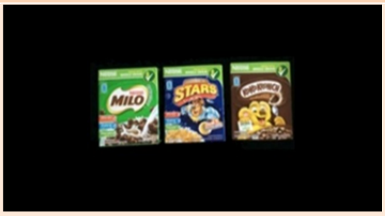
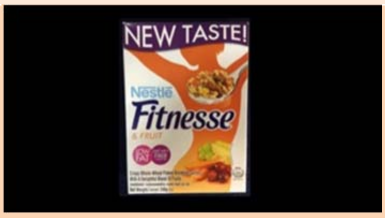
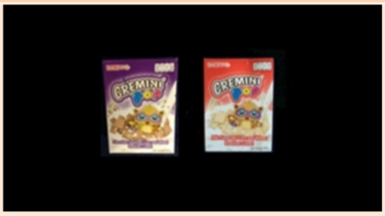
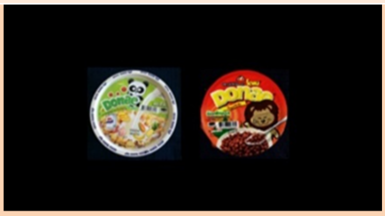
No.	Brand	Packaging
10-13	**D Nee**	
14		
15-16	**St. Andrews**	
17		
18-19		
20-22	**Fluocaril**	
23-24		

No.	Brand	Packaging
25-26	**Colgate**	
27-28		
29	**Bay Bee**	
30-31	**Pureen**	
32-35	**Oralmed Kids**	
36		
37	**Colgate**	

No.	Brand	Packaging
38	**SALZ**	
39	**Sensodyze**	

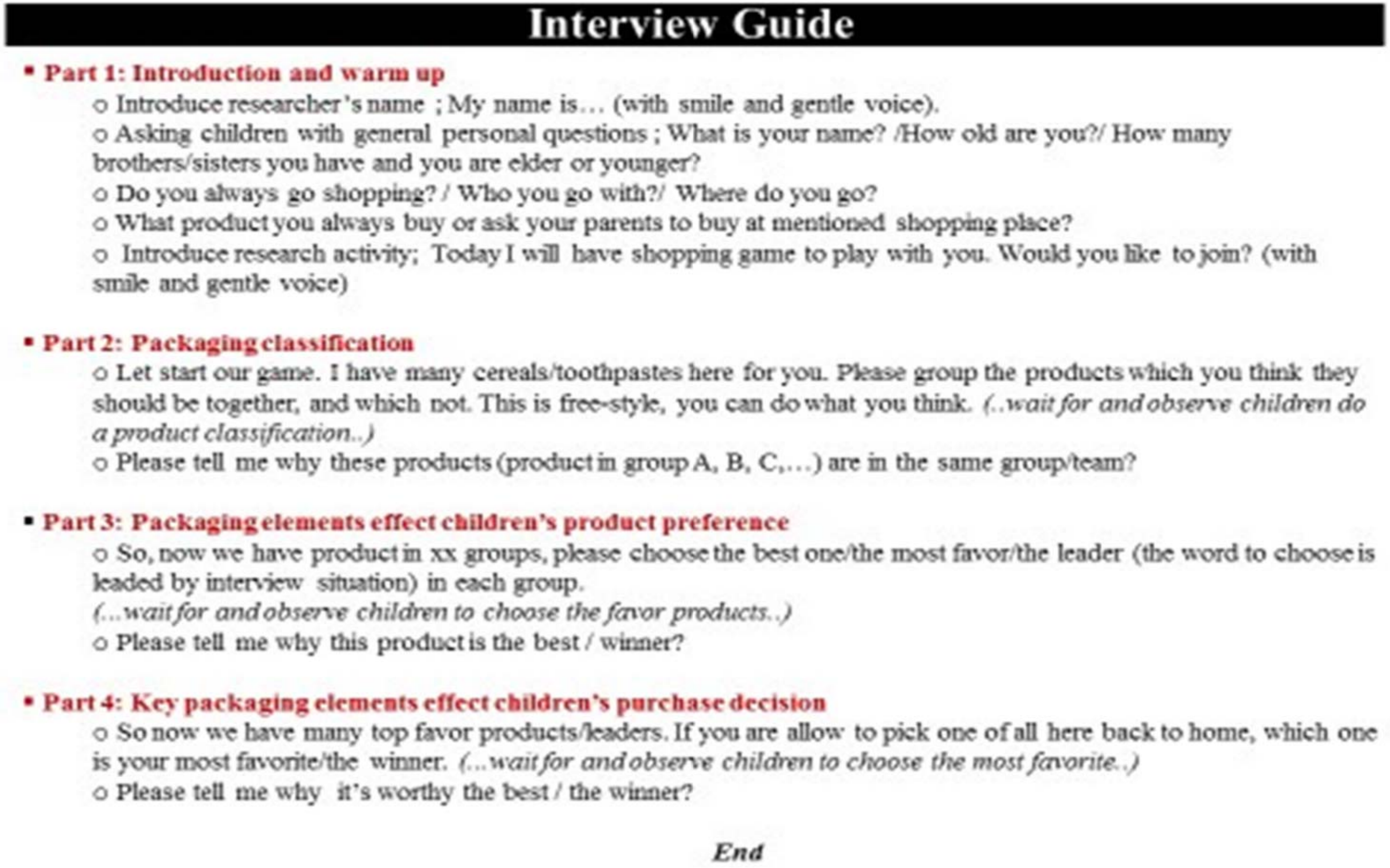
Appendix D: Incorporated Cereal Products in This Study

NO.	Cereal Brand	Packaging
1-2	**Kellogg’s**	
3-4		
5-6		
7		
8-11		

NO.	Cereal Brand	Packaging
12	**Nestle**	
13		
14-15		
16-18		
19		
20-21	**SNACK2GO**	
22-23	**Donae**	

NO.	Cereal Brand	Packaging
24	**Xongdur**	
25-26	**HEHNE**	
27	**NATURE's PATH**	
28	**MyChoice**	
29	**Alpen**	

Appendix E: Interview Guide



Interview Guide

- **Part 1: Introduction and warm up**
  - Introduce researcher's name ; My name is… (with smile and gentle voice).
  - Asking children with general personal questions ; What is your name? /How old are you?/ How many brothers/sisters you have and you are elder or younger?
  - Do you always go shopping? / Who you go with?/ Where do you go?
  - What product you always buy or ask your parents to buy at mentioned shopping place?
  - Introduce research activity; Today I will have shopping game to play with you. Would you like to join? (with smile and gentle voice)

- **Part 2: Packaging classification**
  - Let start our game. I have many cereals/toothpastes here for you. Please group the products which you think they should be together, and which not. This is free-style, you can do what you think. *(..wait for and observe children do a product classification..)*
  - Please tell me why these products (product in group A, B, C,…) are in the same group/team?

- **Part 3: Packaging elements effect children's product preference**
  - So, now we have product in xx groups, please choose the best one/the most favor/the leader (the word to choose is leaded by interview situation) in each group. *(...wait for and observe children to choose the favor products..)*
  - Please tell me why this product is the best / winner?

- **Part 4: Key packaging elements effect children's purchase decision**
  - So now we have many top favor products/leaders. If you are allow to pick one of all here back to home, which one is your most favorite/the winner. *(...wait for and observe children to choose the most favorite..)*
  - Please tell me why it's worthy the best / the winner?

End