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A Study on the Impact of the Guochao on Biscuit Packaging Design: Focusing on Illustration

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Abstract:
As China's economic growth and international status improve, cultural industries and Chinese brand building have received key development. The rise of "Guochao" culture has been driven by policies and has affected the pastry industry, bringing it new development opportunities. This study selected the top ten biscuit brands on Taobao in 2022 for analysis, using literature survey, empirical comparative analysis, as well as comparative analysis and questionnaire survey of six brand packaging illustrations. The research results show that the fashion, culture and uniqueness of the "Guochao" have significantly affected the packaging illustration design of Chinese pastry brands, and have a positive impact on consumers' purchase intention,The Guochao trend not only reflects the inheritance and development of Chinese traditional culture but also demonstrates the gradual enhancement of Chinese brand culture.

Keywords:
Guochao Trend , Biscuit Packaging, Illustration Design

1.Introduction

In recent years, the Guochao trend has attracted widespread attention in China, and this trend has affected multiple industries including consumer goods packaging. This study focuses on illustration changes in biscuit packaging, especially how illustration design affects consumer experience and brand image. The Guochao trendrepresents the combination of modern and traditional elements, which not only changes the appearance of products, but also reshapes consumers' purchasing behavior. By analyzing Taobao's top ten biscuit brands by sales in 2022, this study aims to explore how Guochao elements convey cultural value through packaging design and attract a new generation of consumers. This study uses literature survey, empirical comparative analysis and questionnaire survey to explore the role of illustration design in biscuit packaging and its impact on consumers' purchase intention.This research is not only applicable to the field of food packaging design, but also provides insights into related design fields to help understand how Guochao become a force that promotes the internationalization of Chinese traditional culture and brands. [1]

2.Research background and purpose

In recent years, with the growth of China's economy and the improvement of its international status, Chi-

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nese industries have developed rapidly in various fields. Since 2016, China is State Council has successively issued a series of economic and cultural policies, focusing on the development of cultural industries and the construction of Chinese brands. With policy support, Guochao culture became popular. In the past ten years, through policy support, Guochao culture has become an indispensable part of various industrial fields such as clothing, electronic products, food, and beauty. According to the "2022 China New Consumer Brand Development Trend Report", in the past ten years, the number of searches related to Guochao has increased by 528%. By 2023, Guochao's attention to domestic brands will be three times that of international brands. In the context of the rapid development of the Internet, Guochao quickly occupied social networking sites, Douyin, Taobao, JD.com and other online platforms, setting off a craze for Guochao. Under the influence of the national trend, the biscuit industry has ushered in new development opportunities and trends. Enterprises are constantly adapting to market demand and launching more distinctive biscuit products and innovative packaging designs to meet consumer needs and Preferences. Promote products to a wider market and improve brand awareness and market competitiveness. [3]

The objectives of the research are as follows: First, to explore the application value and significance of illustration design in biscuit packaging, understanding its role in product market competition. Second, to deeply analyze the concept of Guochao and the reasons for its popularity, by reviewing relevant literature to summarize the characteristics of Guochao culture. Finally, to compile the designs of best-selling biscuit packaging on the market, analyze the application of Guochao elements in biscuit packaging design, and investigate the impact of Guochao characteristics on biscuit illustration design, as well as their potential influence on consumer purchase intentions. This series of analyses will help reveal the actual utility and market response of Guochao culture in consumer product design.

3.Research scope and methods

The scope of the research was selected as the research scope by selecting the "Top Ten Brands by Biscuit Sales in 2022" released by Taobao, China's largest shopping platform.

Research Methods: First, investigate online materials, news reports, books, and academic papers related to Guochao, packaging design, and illustrations to build a theoretical background. Second, grasp the concept and characteristics of Guochao, and analyze the impact of the Guochao trend on the style and content of biscuit packaging design. Finally, select six representative biscuit packaging illustration design cases and assess the acceptance and effectiveness of these designs through a survey to validate the actual impact of Guochao characteristics on consumer purchase intentions.[6]

4.Theoretical background

4.1. Illustration Concepts and Applications

The concept of illustration comes from the Latin word "illustratio", which means "to illuminate", symbolizing that the function of illustration is to make the text content of the book more transparent, brighter and easier to understand. When the written information itself is difficult to express or understand, illustrations, as

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a form of visual expression, take on the role of supplement and explanation. Over time, the application of illustration has expanded from simple textual explanation to an important form of expression in modern art and commercial design. In the commercial field, especially in food packaging design, commercial illustrations are widely used because they can convey product information vividly and accurately, helping consumers understand and accept the product more easily. In addition, through the use of rich colors, diverse styling elements and flexible transformation techniques, illustrations not only convey artistic emotions, but also attract consumers' visual attention and enhance product appeal. In the era of commodity economy, the application of illustrations conforms to the trend of commercialization and significantly promotes economic development, proving its core value in modern business strategies. (Figure 1)



Figure 1. Application of illustrations in food packaging

In daily life, people tend to receive and remember image information more easily than text information. Illustration, as a form of image, impresses the audience deeply with its unique artistic charm and excellent artistic expression. It effectively enhances the effect of information transmission by stimulating the audience's thinking and imagination. The core characteristics of illustration include purpose, interest, decoration and narrative. These characteristics make illustration a powerful communication tool that can effectively communicate with audiences across cultural and language barriers, thus playing an indispensable role in the fields of modern media, education, advertising and art.

4.2. The Concept and Characteristics of Guochao

In recent years, as China's international influence has increased, the Chinese government has attached great importance to cultural development and the construction of its own brand, and has accordingly launched a number of cultural support policies. In 2023, the State Council clearly stated the long-term development goal of building a culturally powerful country by 2035. With the support of national policies, Guochao have emerged in various fields. According to the " Guochao Research Report" released by the Institute of Cultural and Creative Development of Tsinghua University, "Guochao" is a compound word of "country" and "trend". From a literal meaning, "Guo" represents China, Chinese elements and China's excellent traditions. Culture, and "chao" represents fashion trends and trendy elements. In short, the Guochao is based on traditional Chinese culture, combined with Chinese elements and modern fashion trends. It is a cultural popular phenomenon that can be consumed.

From the early days of the development of Guochao in 2003 to the present, after 10 years of evolution and

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growth, Guochao has gone through three main stages and officially entered the 3.0 era of vigorous development of science and technology." In the early stage of Guochao 1.0, the core is to integrate Chinese culture, Elements and history are integrated into product packaging design, mainly in clothing, footwear, food and other industries. In the 2.0 era, the focus turns to the application and quality upgrade of technology in automobiles, mobile phones, cosmetics and other fields. Today, the 3.0 era is characterized by comprehensive Guochao integration, primarily reflected in cultural creation, IP production, television, films, and gaming.Reflecting on the past decade of Guochao's development, its popularity did not occur by chance but was fostered by a combination of factors including support from Chinese government policies, economic development, internet proliferation, global business collaboration, and the cultural confidence of the Chinese people. According to the study "The Mechanism of Guochao Consumers' Purchase Intentions," the Guochao consumer base is primarily made up of the MZ generation, with 83.05% of consumers being influenced to purchase due to a sense of superiority regarding traditional Chinese elements. This phenomenon further confirms the positive impact of national cultural confidence on consumer purchasing intentions.

To gain a deeper understanding of the "Guochao" phenomenon and its connection with Chinese culture, this study conducted a literature search using keywords such as "Guochao," "characteristics of Guochao," and "the relationship between Chinese culture and Guochao." Finally, 8 relevant documents were screened out. By literatur the data, the core characteristics of the Guochao phenomenon were sorted out and summarized. (Table 1)

Table 1. Summary of the characteristics of Guochao

	characteristic	illustrate
1	Culturality	Based on Chinese traditional culture
2	Fashionability	Have the characteristics of pursuing beauty and popularity
3	Integrativity	Integration of Chinese aesthetics and modern trends
4	Diversity	Diversified theme forms
5	Seriality	Diverse derivative forms and derivative products
6	Innovativeness	Inherits traditional culture while innovating
7	Uniqueness	Features strong Chinese elements (such as Chinese history, colors, culture, etc.)
8	Inclusivity	Not confined to traditional Chinese elements, incorporating a diverse range of cultural elements
9	Distinctiveness	The unique combination of Chinese elements and modern style forms a distinctive cultural identity

4.3. The relationship between packaging design and illustration

Packaging design is one of the most important links in the product production process. Packaging is not only an important carrier to convey product information, but also has the function of protecting and promoting the product. Unique packaging design helps improve product sales and economic value. In the field of packaging, illustration design effectively conveys various information through the diversity of its graphic language and has become an indispensable part of packaging design. With the rise of the digital media era, illustrations are no longer limited to traditional pictures or single text forms, and their applications in commercial activities and cultural promotions are becoming increasingly diverse. The aesthetics, interest and diversity of illustrations not only demonstrate the artistic and commercial value of packaging design, but also enhance

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consumers' attention to the product and stimulate consumers' willingness to purchase. Modern packaging design and illustration design have developed into a complementary and close relationship. Packaging design provides inspiration and a display platform for illustrations, and when the two are combined in a reasonable and personalized way, they can have a significant visual impact, achieving complementary and reinforcing effects. In addition, as an effective marketing tool, packaging design needs to attract consumers' attention and stimulate consumption, while meeting their needs for product quality and aesthetics. By cleverly combining illustration design and packaging design, you can create product packaging that inspires consumers to purchase. (Figure 2)



Figure 2. The application of illustrations in packaging design

5.Current status and characteristics of Chinese biscuit packaging illustrations

5.1. Current status of China's biscuit market

In recent years, China's pastry market has reached 81.6 billion yuan, and market competition is extremely fierce. In the past, foreign-funded enterprises occupied a larger share in the mid-to-high-end market by virtue of their brand and marketing strategy advantages, while domestic, especially emerging pastry enterprises, faced greater pressure and were usually limited to the mid-to-low-end market. However, the rise of Guochao culture has brought new opportunities to the Chinese pastry market. This fusion of tradition and modernity not only promotes the growth of market demand, but also intensifies market competition. Through innovative product and packaging design, companies integrate national trend elements such as traditional Chinese patterns and mythological elements to enhance product appeal and the cultural value of the brand, provide a unique consumer experience, and strengthen market influence.

5.2. Research object selection and analysis criteria

In the field of food packaging, if a similar product is visually more prominent than its competitors, it is more likely to attract consumers' attention and trigger purchase behavior. This study selected the top ten snack brands in the "2022 Taobao Snack Sales Ranking" as the research object, and conducted a comprehensive analysis of the packaging design changes, illustration design and packaging characteristics of these brands. (Figure 3)

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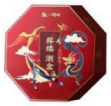
brand	logo	Before Guochao	After Guochao	illustration design	Illustration features
Oreo					-Theme: The image of the beauty in the Forbidden City. -Pattern: Forbidden City elements and female images are the design patterns. -Color: Illustrations are brightly colored
Chips Ahoy					-Theme: Theme is based on cute cookie images. -Pattern: Biscuit cartoon image is the design pattern -Color: The illustrations use bright colors such as blue, red, and yellow.
Liangpin Puzi					-Theme: Designed with the theme of Chinese architecture. -Pattern: Traditional Chinese architecture is used. -Color: The color of the illustration is warm. Colors such as pink and light green are used.
Three Squirrels					-Theme: Taking Chinese fairy elements as the theme. -Pattern: Using Chinese Dunhuang elements, combined with the brand's squirrel IP image -Color: Use bright colors such as orange, red, etc.
WANT WANT					-Theme: Theme is based on the image of a cow. -Pattern: Cow cartoon image is the design pattern -Color: The illustrations use bright colors such as blue and yellow.
BE&CHERY					-Theme: Chinese traditional elements -Pattern: Using traditional elements such as dragons, phoenixes, and auspicious clouds. -Color: bright colors, use red, gold and other bright colors.
Hsu Fu Chi					-Theme: Taking Chinese traditional festivals as the theme. -Pattern: Using traditional Chinese elements such as dragons, blessing characters, lanterns, etc. -Color: The color is in red, gold and other colors.
Franzzi					-Theme: Taking the Chinese Year of the Tiger as the theme -Pattern: Use traditional elements such as lions and hydrangeas. -Color: Rich colors, using bright colors such as red, blue, gold, etc.
DALI YUAN					-Theme: Urban element theme. -Pattern: using elements of buildings and characters -Color: The illustrations are brightly colored, with red as the main color.
Hutou Bureau					-Theme: Tiger paw theme. -Pattern: Combine the tiger claw pattern with the text pattern. -Color: Yellow is the main color, showing a warm and bright visual effect.

Figure 3. Changes and analysis of illustration design for ten biscuit brands

"Figure. 3" displays the packaging characteristics of the top ten biscuit brands in China, listing brand names, logos, and packaging changes influenced by the Guochao trend, along with illustration design and features. The subjects of the study were primarily selected from the most popular, well-known brands that are highly favored by consumers on "Taobao," China's largest shopping platform. This is to visually compare the changes in biscuit brand illustration designs brought by the Guochao craze and to analyze the impact of Guo-

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chao characteristics on biscuit brand illustration design.

5.3. Biscuit Illustration Design Survey

This study aims to analyze the impact of the Guochao trend on the packaging illustration design of biscuit brands and to explore its effect on consumer purchase intentions. The survey was conducted from December 25, 2023, to January 8, 2024, with 190 male and female participants aged between 18 and 40 years old, through the website https://www.wjx.cn/report/1616.aspx. The survey content corresponds with the information in "Table 2." (Table 2)

Table 2. Survey Participant Description

Number of people	Age	Gender		Profession	
		Female	Male	Student	Professional
190 people	10~49 years old	114（60%）	76（40%）	57（30%）	133（70%）
Age					
18~23 years old	24~29 years old	30~35 years old		35~40 years old	
39（20.52%）	87（45.78%）	41（21.57%）		23（12.1%）	

Based on sales rankings, this study selected the packaging illustration designs of six biscuit brands for analysis. Based on the characteristics of the Guochao, five relevant questions were designed. The "5-point Likert scale" was used to evaluate the visual effect of the packaging illustration design of the respondents. (Table 3)

Table 3. Survey Question Description

Evaluation benchmark	Detailed Content
Fashionability	1. Is the illustration design beautiful?
Culturality	2.Does the illustration design reflect cultural elements?
Uniqueness	3. Is the illustration design unique?
Integrativity	4.Are the Guochao elements well integrated with modern trends?
Purchasing Desire	5.Does the biscuit packaging design evoke a desire to purchase?

A questionnaire survey was conducted on the packaging illustration design characteristics of high-selling biscuit brands. Figures 4 to 9 show the results of the questionnaire.

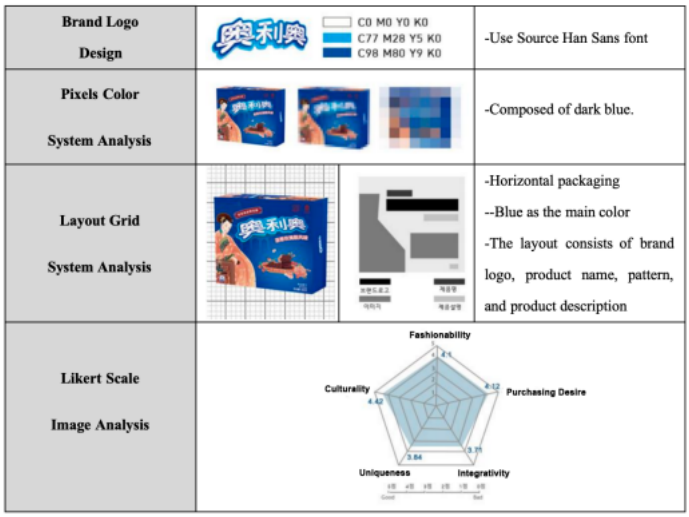


Figure 4. Oreo comparison analysis table

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According to a survey on the packaging illustration design of biscuit brands, Oreo's packaging illustrations received high overall ratings. Particularly in terms of Culturality , it scored 4.42 points. As shown in Figures 4", Oreo's illustrations primarily feature the Forbidden City and images of ancient Chinese women as the main design elements. The product is integrated with the Forbidden City IP, and Chinese cultural elements are evident in Oreo's packaging design. Additionally, the fashionability received a score of 4.1, likely due to the rich colors and charming character design elements in Oreo's illustrations, which effectively attract consumer attention.

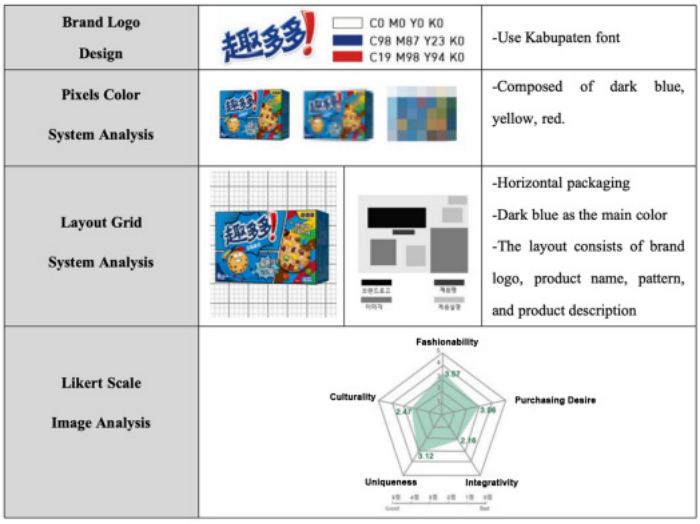


Figure 5. ChipsAhoy comparison analysis table

In Figure 5, the fashionability question of illustration design has the highest score of 3.57 points. The illustration design uses character elements, rich colors, and interesting text information. These factors combine to make the illustration design interesting to look at. On the contrary, questions about Culturality scored the lowest, only 2.47 points. From the perspective of packaging analysis, the brand's illustration design is not greatly affected by the Guochao trend. Since the cultural elements of the illustration design may be relatively weak, the Culturality evaluation score is not high.

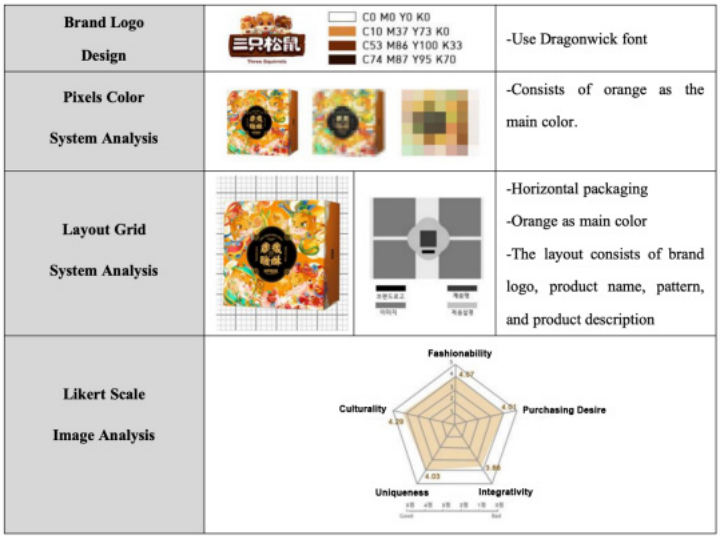


Figure 6. ChipsAhoy comparison analysis table

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As can be seen from the analysis table in Figure 6, the illustration design of the Three Squirrels is very popular among the survey respondents. Especially in terms of Culturality, the highest score is 4.29 points. This may be because the illustration design uses a lot of Chinese elements, combining the brand's squirrel image IP with the image of the flying immortals of Dunhuang, China, and incorporating Chinese character elements. In addition, the scores for fashionability and uniqueness were 4.07 and 4.03 respectively, following closely behind. This may be because the bright colors of the illustration design and the combination of cartoon IP with Chinese elements have left a deep impression on consumers.

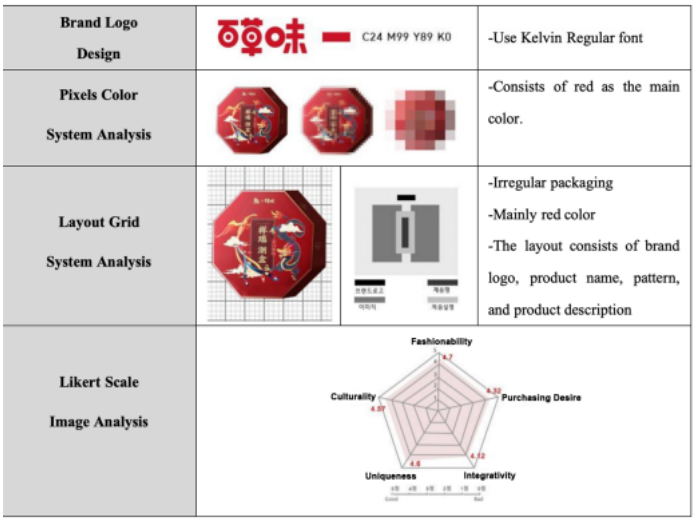


Figure 7. Be&Cheery comparison analysis table

As can be seen from Figure 7, be&cheery's illustration design scores the highest among all brands. In the question of fashionability, be&cheery received the highest score of 4.7 points. This may be because the color of the illustration design uses eye-catching red as the main color, which attracts the attention of consumers. In addition, red symbolizes joy, auspiciousness and enthusiasm in Chinese culture. Because the survey respondents are mainly Chinese, it received the highest score in this question. In addition, questions about Culturality and uniqueness received high scores of 4.57 and 4.6 respectively. This may be because the illustration design uses elements with Chinese characteristics such as dragons, phoenixes, and auspicious clouds, showing a strong Chinese style. The overall packaging design can reflect cultural elements and conform to the aesthetics of the Chinese people, so it is highly praised.

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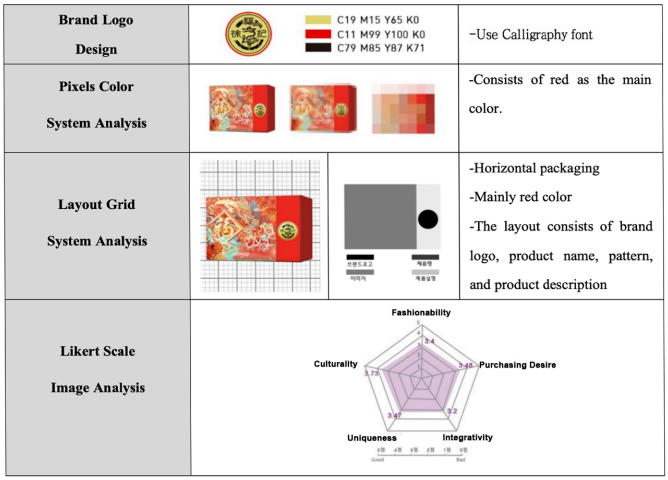


Figure 8. Hsu FuChi comparison analysis table

The survey results for Hsu FuChi, as shown in Figure 8, indicate that the highest score was given for Culturality relevance, at 3.73 points. This may be due to the illustration design predominantly using striking red as the main color, with elements such as lions, dragons, lanterns, and the Chinese character, which are traditional Chinese elements. These designs were recognized in the question about Culturality relevance. However, the question about integrativity scored the lowest, at 3.2 points. This suggests that although the illustration design includes rich cultural elements, these elements are not well integrated with the brand image.

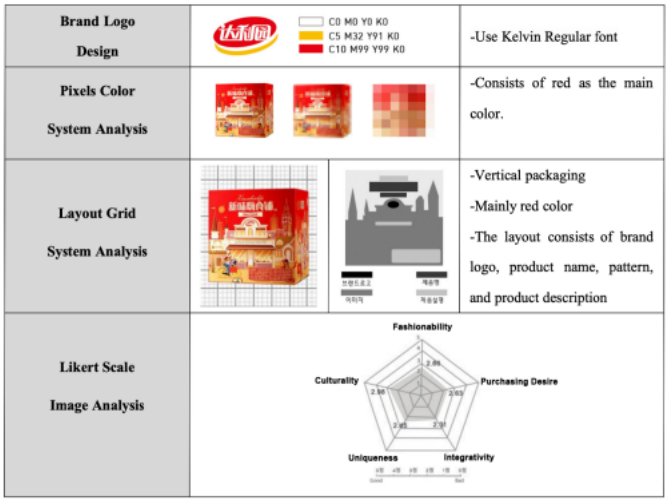


Figure 9. Dali Yuan comparison analysis table

Figure 9 shows that Dali Yuan's illustration design scored the lowest overall in the survey, with all five items scoring around 2 points. The question about Culturality relevance received a relatively higher score of 2.98, possibly because red was used as the main color. Additionally, the score for uniqueness was 2.45. This may be due to the illustration design lacking innovation and attractiveness, failing to effectively capture consumer attention. The low scores for Daliyuan may be attributed to its visual presentation not being as prominent compared to other brands, lacking visual competitiveness.

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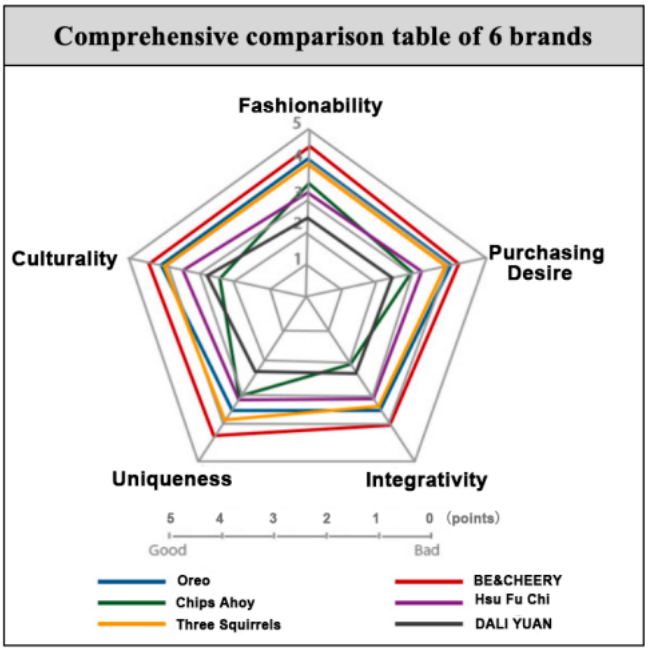


Figure 10. Comprehensive comparison table of 6 brands

"Table 12" is a comprehensive comparison of illustration designs of six brands. Among them, Oreo on the blue line, Be&cheery on the red line, and three Squirrels on the yellow line performed outstandingly in the survey. The survey results show that these three brands have high scores in terms of fashion, culture and uniqueness, and consumers have relatively strong desire to purchase these three brands. It can be seen from the consumer purchase desire scores that influenced by the craze of national trends, the fashionability, culturality and uniqueness of Guochao have a significant impact on the illustration design of biscuit packaging.

6.Conclusions

This study used a questionnaire survey to explore the impact of the Guochao trend on the illustration design of biscuit packaging. The research results show that the fashionability,, Culturality and uniqueness of the Guochao have a significant impact on the design of packaging illustrations of Chinese biscuit brands, and the national trend culture has a positive impact on consumers' purchase intentions. Among them, packaging illustration designs that use Chinese cultural elements or use traditional Chinese colors as the main colors are more attractive to consumers. For example, the illustration design of Be&cheery uses red as the main color of the illustration and uses traditional Chinese elements such as auspicious clouds, dragons, and phoenixes, showing a strong Chinese style. Therefore, in the survey, Be&cheery's illustration design received high praise from Chinese consumers. According to research, red has always been the favorite color of Chinese people; red is not only gorgeous in color and gives people a strong impact, but it also represents happiness and auspiciousness.

Thus, the combination of these elements has positively influenced consumer purchase intentions towards Be&cheery biscuits. Compared to packaging designs lacking Guochao elements, those with Guochao elements and characteristics are more appealing to Chinese consumers. As consumer preferences evolve and

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the market becomes younger, the popularity of the Guochao trend represents not only the inheritance and development of traditional Chinese culture but also the gradual enhancement of Chinese brand culture. This study is applicable not only to food packaging design but also to illustration and related advertising design. However, since the survey respondents were predominantly Chinese, the study has certain limitations. It is hoped that this research will provide useful information for the future application of Chinese Guochao culture in food packaging.

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