



## **The Psychology of Colour in Marketing**

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## Tiivistelmä

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<p>Tämä tutkimus tutki värien merkitystä markkinoinnissa ja niiden vaikutusta kuluttajakäyttäytymiseen eri kulttuureissa. Ja miten värit vaikuttavat kuluttajakäyttäytymiseen ja ostopäätöksiin eri kulttuureissa. Värit ovat tärkeä osa markkinointistrategiaa, koska ne voivat herättää tunteita ja muokata kuluttajien asenteita. Tavoitteena oli ymmärtää, miten kuluttajat eri kulttuureista reagoivat markkinoinnissa käytettyihin väreihin ja kuinka nämä värit voivat vaikuttaa heidän päätöksentekoonsa. Tutkimuksen tulokset tarjoavat näkemyksiä siitä, miten markkinoijat voivat tehokkaasti käyttää värejä ottaen huomioon eri kulttuurien erityispiirteet. Lisäksi tutkimuksessa kehitettiin alustava toimintamallin värien strategiselle käytölle markkinoinnissa.</p> <p>Aineisto tutkimukseen kerättiin rakenteellisella kyselylomakkeella, johon vastasi kuluttajia Euroopasta ja Aasiasta. Kyselyn avulla pyrittiin ymmärtämään, kuinka värit herättävät tunteita ja vaikuttavat ostopäätöksiin. Aineisto analysoitiin tilastollisin menetelmin, kuten kuvailevilla tilastoilla ja ristiintaulukoinnilla, jotta kulttuuriset erot väriassosiaatioissa voitiin tunnistaa.</p> <p>Tutkimustulokset osoittivat, että värit, kuten punainen, sininen ja vihreä, herättävät vahvoja tunteita ja vaikuttavat kuluttajien valintoihin. Erityisesti vihreän värin yhteys ympäristötietoisuuteen osoittautui kulttuurikohtaisesti vaihtelevaksi. Esimerkiksi eurooppalaiset osallistujat liittivät vihreän usein luonnonsuojeluun, kun taas Aasian osallistujilla tällainen assosiaatio ei ollut yhtä vahva. Tämä ero korostaa tarvetta ymmärtää kulttuurikohtaisia vivahteita värien käytössä.</p> <p>Lisäksi tutkimus nosti esiin eettisiä kysymyksiä värien käytöstä markkinoinnissa, erityisesti tunteiden manipulointiin liittyen. Läpinäkyvyys ja eettisyys ovat keskeisiä kuluttajien luottamuksen säilyttämiseksi.</p>
<b>Key words</b> Värit, markkinointi, kuluttajakäyttäytyminen, kulttuuriset erot, eettinen markkinointi

## Abstract

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<b>Thesis Title</b> The Psychology of Colour in Marketing
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<p>This thesis explores the importance of colours in marketing and their impact on consumer behaviour across different cultures. Colours are an essential part of marketing strategy because they are able to create emotions and shape consumer attitudes. The aim was to understand how consumers from different cultures respond to the colours used in marketing and how these colours can influence their decision-making. The results of the study offer insights into how marketers can effectively use colours by considering the specific characteristics of different cultures. Additionally, a preliminary model was developed for the strategic use of colours in marketing.</p> <p>Data for the study was collected through a structured questionnaire answered by consumers from Europe and Asia. The survey aimed to understand how colours evoke emotions and influence purchasing decisions. The data was analysed using statistical methods, such as descriptive statistics and cross-tabulation, to identify cultural differences in colour associations.</p> <p>The findings showed that colours such as red, blue, and green are able to evoke strong emotions and influence consumer choices. In particular, the connection between the colour green and environmental awareness was found to vary by culture. For example, European participants often associated green with environmental conservation, while such an association was not as strong among Asian participants. This difference highlights the need to understand cultural nuances in the use of colours.</p> <p>Additionally, the study raised ethical questions about the use of colours in marketing, particularly concerning the manipulation of emotions. Transparency and ethics are crucial to maintaining consumer trust.</p>
<b>Key words</b> Colours, marketing, consumer behaviour, cultural differences, ethical marketing

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## **1 Introduction**

This is a research-based bachelor thesis for the Degree Programme in International Business, within the marketing specialisation at the Haaga-Helia University of Applied Sciences.

In this chapter, the author will introduce the research into the psychology of colour in the context of marketing. The chapter will begin by discussing the background of the study and its objectives. It will establish the role of colour in everyday life and its ability to influence one's emotions, mould perceptions, and consumer behaviours. We will also establish the basis of the significance of colour within the marketing landscape and lay down its relevance to professionals and theorists.

### **1.1 Background to the Topic**

This thesis explores the psychology behind colours in marketing and their impact on consumer emotions, behaviours, and decision-making. In a competitive business environment, brands must constantly strive to engage their target audiences. Therefore, the study of colour psychology becomes a crucial element in developing effective marketing strategies that resonate with consumers on an emotional level.

Theorists Hunjet and Vuk (2017) have previously conducted research that highlights the integral role of colours in marketing communication. Their work shows the significance of colour psychology, emphasising its impact on consumer behaviour. However, despite this awareness, practical guidance on using colours ethically and effectively in marketing still needs to be applied ethically and effectively to create impactful brand images that resonate with consumers.

In 2010, Kauppinen-Räsänen and Luomala began laying the groundwork for a unified colour marketing theory, addressing the fragmented nature of existing frameworks. Their efforts marked a significant step towards filling this gap, providing a starting point for further exploration.

Moreover, as businesses expand into diverse international markets, it becomes essential to consider how cultural differences may shape the perception of colour. Studies have shown that cultural backgrounds can significantly influence individuals' preferences and responses to different colours. Therefore, this thesis aims to explore the psychological aspects of colour and examine how these perceptions vary across cultures.

## **1.2 Research Objective**

This research examines the relationship between product colours and consumer behaviour, specifically focusing on how consumers from different cultures respond to colours in marketing. It explores differences in perception of colours to provide insights into how colour choices in marketing strategies can influence decision-making processes globally. The influence of colour on consumer emotions and behaviour is well-documented, and cultural contexts further shape how colours are interpreted.

The study aims to develop a tentative framework for understanding how colour can be used strategically to shape consumer perceptions and behaviour, offering marketers insights to refine their strategies. By looking into these relationships, the research seeks to provide practical tools for creating more effective campaigns that resonate with audiences and create stronger brand engagement. The research will look into this by exploring the various questions below:

### **Research Question**

How can colours influence consumer emotions, behaviours, and decision-making?

### **Investigative Questions**

1. What is the psychological basis for connecting colours and emotions in consumer behaviour?
2. Which specific emotions are most associated with different colours in marketing?
3. How does culture impact how individuals perceive colours and influence consumer behaviour?
4. What are the ethical considerations in using specific colours to influence consumer behaviour, and are there limits to this practice?

Table 1: Overlay matrix for research-based theses

Investigative questions	Theoretical Framework	Methods	Survey questions	Data analysis
IQ 1. What is the psychological basis for the connection between colours and emotions in consumer behaviour?	Colour-emotion association (Schloss & Palmer, Ecological Valence Theory, etc.). Colour psychology research, consumer behaviour models.	Literature review, structured survey, colour-emotion association questions.	2, 3, 4, 5	4.1, 4.2, 4.3
IQ 2. What specific emotions are most associated with different colours in marketing?	Studies on colour-emotion links (Sutton & Altarriba 2020).	Survey: Respondents asked about colour preference and emotional impact of specific colours.	6, 7, 8	4.3
IQ 3. How does culture impact the way individuals perceive colours and influence their consumer behaviour?	Cross-cultural variation in colour perception (Madden et al., 2000).	Survey questions focused on cultural background and interpretation of colours in ads and products.	1, 9, 10, 11	4.4
IQ 4. What are the ethical considerations in using specific colours to influence	Ethical theories in marketing	Survey questions on perceptions of ethical marketing	12, 13, 14	4.5



Investigative questions	Theoretical Framework	Methods	Survey questions	Data analysis
consumer behaviour, and are there limits to this practice?	(Labrecque & Milne 2012).	practices and emotional manipulation by colours.		

### 1.3 Demarcation

This thesis focuses specifically on the psychology of colour and consumer emotions and behaviour internationally. Certain related aspects have been intentionally excluded from the research. Although these excluded factors may play a role in influencing perceptions, they fall outside the primary scope of this study.

**Age:** The author acknowledges that age can significantly influence colour perception and emotional responses. However, age-related differences will not be the primary focus of this research, and the study opts out of exploring this dimension extensively.

**Gender:** Similarly, gender can contribute to variations in colour perception and emotional responses, but to acknowledge the changing world, this thesis will not discuss gender as an effect in viewing colours. Nonetheless, the primary focus of this study lies elsewhere, and gender-related factors will not be examined.

By clearly demarcating the above, the research can maintain its focus on the research objective and keep a more streamlined approach.

### 1.4 Key Concepts

**Neuromarketing** as a concept often differs, but at its core, it is the application of neuroscience and cognitive science to marketing. It involves various techniques, including innovative market research methods, to unearth customer needs, motivations, and preferences that conventional approaches, such as surveys and focus groups, often need to uncover (Dooley, 2021). Abbot (2019) expands on this by describing neuromarketing as the "measurement of physiological and neural signals to gain profound insights into customers' motivations, preferences, and decision-making processes."

**Colour psychology** studies how colours can affect human emotions, behaviour, and perceptions. It explores people's psychological and emotional responses to different colours and the cultural and contextual factors that can influence these responses (Wright, A. 2009.)

**Colour-emotion association** refers to the psychological and cultural connections between specific colours and the emotions or feelings they evoke in individuals. The associations are not universal and can vary across cultures and individuals, but there are often common patterns and general trends (Schloss, K.B. Palmer, S.E. 2010.)

**Consumer behaviour** is how consumers decide what products or services to buy, when, and where to buy them. It is influenced by various factors, including the consumer's needs and wants, budget, past experiences, and the marketing messages they are exposed to (Doyle, C. 2016).

**Cross-cultural variations** examine variations in human behaviour and development across diverse contexts and cultures, essential for gaining a deeper appreciation of human diversity (Saxena, M. 2020, pp. 1-3).

**Colour Manipulation** uses subliminal messaging of colours in branding to send a specific message. It explores the idea of emotional responses to particular colours that benefit the companies, e.g., green for Starbucks, which mimics the concept of sustainability (Stranger, M. 2012).

## 1.5 Benefits

This research benefits marketers and businesses operating in global markets, particularly in understanding the connection between products, colours, and cultural perceptions.

This research hopes to provide insights into the role of colour in shaping consumer emotions and behaviour by investigating how different cultures perceive and respond to specific colour choices in marketing. Understanding how cultural backgrounds influence individuals' interpretations of colours allows marketers to craft branding strategies that resonate deeply with diverse audiences and enhance brand recognition.

Moreover, this research investigates whether the ethical, strategic use of colours in various marketing contexts influences consumers' decision-making across different cultural backgrounds. By gaining insights into how colours impact consumer perceptions and behaviour, marketers can tailor their strategies to attract and engage with target audiences more effectively.

This exploration also sheds light on whether colours serve as attention-grabbing elements in branding or blend into the background. By understanding the dynamics between products, colours,

and consumer responses, marketers can better assess whether colours primarily attract consumers to products or if other factors drive purchasing decisions.

## 2 Theoretical Framework

In this chapter, the author will investigate theoretical frameworks which will be required to go deeper into the understanding of the psychology behind colours. Understanding how colours influence consumer emotions, behaviours, and decision-making is a complex endeavour that requires a multidisciplinary theoretical framework. The author will first investigate critical concepts that serve as this framework's foundation. Then, different literature and theories will be used to support further research later in this report.

To understand the complexity of the subject, a comprehensive overview (Figure 1.) is provided below to illustrate the interplay between all the components to visually encapsulate the essence of the theoretical framework that will be discussed.

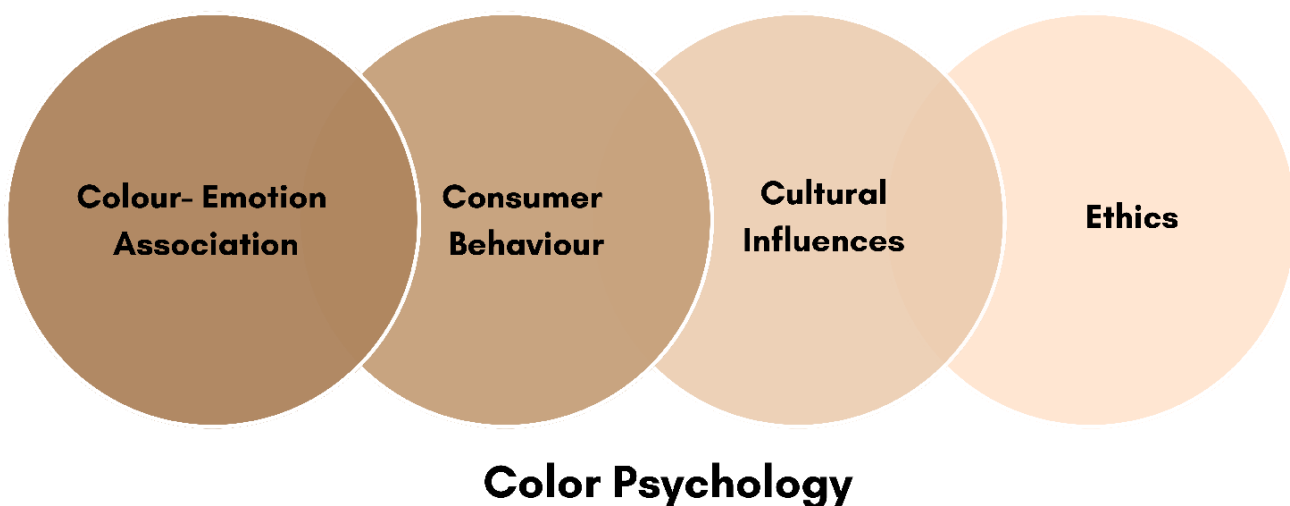


Figure 1. Theoretical Framework

This figure graphically shows the interrelationships in our research, which is the idea behind colour psychology. It involves colour-emotion association, consumer behaviour theories, cultural influences, and ethical considerations. Whilst cultural influences will not be discussed individually, they are incorporated throughout this theoretical framework as an integral part of our understanding of the influencer of colour perception.

## 2.1 Colours and Emotions

Whether we acknowledge this or not, colour is a central part of our daily lives. It influences various aspects of human behaviour, from aiding in object recognition to shaping purchasing decisions and even being deeply ingrained in our language, as seen in idiomatic expressions like "once in a blue moon."

Extensive literature highlights the significant connection between colours and emotions. Various theories address the perception and categorisation of colours, considering aspects such as hue, chroma, saturation, and brightness, as demonstrated by systems like the Munsell Colour System. (Sutton & Altarriba 2020). This is why exploring the intricate relationship between colours and emotions is at the core of our framework, exemplified by the theory of colour-affect associations.

Notably, Schloss and Palmer's research in 2010 significantly enhances our understanding of how specific colours are associated with distinct emotional states, offering insights into the psychology of colour. In 2010, Schloss and Palmer proposed the Ecological Valence Theory (EVT), where individuals' emotional experiences with objects are typically linked to specific colours - pivotal in shaping their colour preferences. The participants were exposed to emotionally charged objects in specific colours to test this theory. Half of the participants encountered positive and negative red images, while the other half viewed negative and positive ones. Subsequently, participants re-evaluated their colour preferences. The results provided empirical support for the EVT, revealing that exposure to emotionally relevant objects in a particular colour could significantly influence participants' preferences. This influence could either increase or decrease, depending on the emotional valence of the things. This experiment confirmed that emotional experiences with coloured objects can reshape our colour preferences (Schloss & Palmer, 2010.)

This delicate relationship between colours and emotions is a captivating aspect of human perception. While some of our colour preferences may be rooted in cultural influences, a significant portion of our colour associations is shaped by our life experiences (Ismail, 2017.) In daily life, we encounter various situations, objects, and environments that leave lasting imprints on our memory. These experiences often trigger specific emotions, and our brains instinctively link these emotions to the colours present during those moments.

This showcases the incredible adaptability of the human brain and the nuanced ways our experiences influence perceptions. It is a reminder that cultural norms do not solely dictate our responses to the world but are also deeply intertwined with our unique life journeys.

## 2.2 Colour Wheel

In 1672, Sir Isaac Newton made the theory of colour the basis of what we now consider the general theory of colour. Wherein he associated colours with light. In his experimental observations, Newton noted that when white light passes through an optical prism, it disperses into various component beams, a phenomenon now known as the "colour spectrum". Each colour within this spectrum exhibits varying degrees of dispersion based on its position. Notably, the colour with the most negligible distribution in the range is red, characterised by its longest wavelength. Newton asserted that white sunlight is a composite of all the colours in the spectrum, including seven distinct colours: red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, and purple. The scope comprises a continuous range of colours, transitioning smoothly from blue-purple to orange. It is worth mentioning that Newton's initial concept of light as an electromagnetic occurrence preceded the development of the first circular colour diagram in 1666 (Gencer 2020.)



Figure 2. Sir Isaac Newton's Colour Diagram (Gencer 2020).

In Newton's colour system (Figure 2.), he has made the association of what we know as the primary colours - red, yellow, and blue, with the combination of these three colours forming the basis for all other colours (Gencer 2020.) However, this has faced challenges from various scientists, including Johannes Wolfgang von Goethe. Goethe contended that white light should disperse whenever possible. His experimental observation involved reflecting white light onto a room's wall, revealing different colours at the circle's periphery while the central light remained white. Consequently, Goethe concluded that the colour closest to white was yellow, and the colour nearer the edge was blue (Popova 2012.)

### 2.3 Colour Association

The relationship with colour extends beyond emotional responses, often carrying deeper symbolic meanings. Though numerous studies and discussions examine how colours impact emotions and moods, much of the existing literature relies on anecdotal evidence, highlighting the need for more rigorous research. However, a wealth of evidence in marketing research indicates that colour plays a pivotal role in shaping our purchasing decisions and attraction to various products (Cianci 2023, 37-42.)

Historically, colour has been associated with human psychological traits and personality types, although these theories are considered outdated and have no basis in current psychology. An example of this is the work of Carl Jung, a Swiss psychiatrist and psychoanalyst from the early 20th century, who remarked that "colours are the mother tongue of the subconscious" and that "colours express the main psychic functions of man" (Cianci 2023, 37-42.)

Despite that, the colour association represents a phenomenon deeply embedded in psychology, where individuals ascribe meanings and emotions to specific colours. These psychological connections between colours and emotions or concepts can vary across cultures and among individuals. Also, colours are anecdotal for the most part; however, in some cases, there is a historical presence in the perception of said colour in certain cultures. Table 2, based on work by Cianci (2023, pp. 37-42), shows a few examples of these colours and their country association.

Table 2. Colour Cultural Symbolism (Cianci 2023, pp. 37-42.)

Colours	White	Blue	Green	Red	Yellow
<b>China</b>	Purity, Mourning	Harmony, Peace	Growth, Prosperity	Good Luck, Happiness	Imperial Power
<b>Japan</b>	Purity, Innocence	Peace, Tranquility	Nature, Freshness	Passion, Excitement	Courage, Optimism
<b>Finland</b>	Snow, Purity	Lakes, Rivers, Forests	Forests, Meadows	Love, Danger	Autumn, Harvest
<b>US</b>	Purity, Innocence	Freedom, Liberty	Nature, Beauty	Courage, Strength	Optimism, Happiness
<b>France</b>	Purity, Innocence	Liberty, Equality, Fraternity	Hope, New Beginnings	Love, Romance, Danger	Knowledge, Wisdom

Table 2 shows that red is often linked with Love, Strength, and Danger in Western cultures, while it can symbolise Luck and Celebration in certain Eastern cultures. Conversely, blue is often used to evoke calmness and tranquillity, while yellow is associated with happiness and optimism (Madden et al., 2000, pp- 90-107). As mentioned, these associations can be influenced by personal experiences, cultural symbolism, and evolutionary factors (Bachman 2021).

Although there are variations in colour preferences among the cultures, the commonalities outweigh the distinctions. Understanding these colour associations within psychology can show how colours impact our mood, decision-making, and well-being. This knowledge proves invaluable in various practical applications, including marketing and design.

Whilst colours are often associated with cultural background, they are only sometimes ingrained. Throughout history, the meaning of these colours has changed and adapted, which is why studies regarding colours' cultural symbolism will always need to be adjusted and researched further.

## **2.4 Colour in Branding and Marketing**

The study of colour's impact is investigated across various fields, from psychology and art to mythology, anthropology, history, architecture, physics, philosophy, marketing, and medicine. In marketing, researchers have explored the role of colour in product branding, packaging, and advertising. In practical advertising, colour is a dynamic variable, often adjusted based on intuition and immediate impact. However, theoretical investigations into colour's effects still need to be made available, primarily due to inherent methodological complexities. Marketers and companies, nonetheless, employ diverse strategies to harness the power of colour, recognising its substantial influence on how consumers perceive brands and products (Bytyçi 2020.)

Bytyçi refers to (2020) colours as prominent nonverbal signs for products, emphasising their significance in the marketing context. In marketing, the crucial first step is capturing the consumer's attention, where colour plays the central role. Goodgold (2010) writes that "Colour wields formidable influence; within just three seconds of encountering an object, consumers register its colour" (pp. 99). This showcases colour's ability to shape a brand's message and image and influence physical and psychological responses.

While marketing experts have attempted to simplify the attributes and perceptions associated with colours, psychology offers insights for businesses seeking a deeper understanding of colour selection's implications. It is important to note that there also needs to be recognition that a colour's meaning can often be context-dependent; for instance, green does not universally symbolise growth, and red does not consistently signify excitement, as seen with the previous example by Cianci (2023, pp. 37-42.)

An excellent example of using colour in branding is Coca-Cola's rebranding. In its early days, Coca-Cola sported technically black branding, though it used red from the start. However, it was only synonymous with the colouring in the 1940s when the brand underwent a transformative shift, introducing the now-iconic red. This change altered the colour palette and marked a significant turning point in the company's history. The decision to embrace red was driven by a strategic intent



to establish a bold and attention-grabbing brand image that would distinguish Coca-Cola from its competitors. Red, known for its associations with energy, excitement, passion, and enthusiasm, made for an ideal choice in conveying the brand's core values and capturing the hearts of consumers (Coca-Cola n.a.)

## **2.5 Consumer Behaviour and Colour**

Consumer behaviour often feels the sway of emotional response from colours. To look further into this, we turn to the well-established Consumer Decision-Making Process model by Engel, Blackwell, and Minard (1995). The model outlines several critical stages in the decision-making journey, starting with problem recognition, information search, the evaluation of alternatives, purchase decisions, and post-purchase evaluation. The findings from this model related to our research subject is the substantial influence of emotions, often triggered by colour, on each of these decision-making stages. Emotions play a significant role in problem recognition and deeply affect how consumers search for information, evaluate product alternatives, make purchase decisions, and subsequently evaluate their choices. Additionally, the model emphasises the importance of external factors, including cultural and regional influences, in shaping consumer preferences and favourites throughout this process (Engel, Blackwell, et Al. 1995.)

The influential role of colour in steering consumer behaviour operates mainly at the subconscious level. Studies indicate that 90% of impulsive purchases are steered primarily by considerations of colour, and some product choices are made within a 90-second timeframe (Smith, 2021).

## **2.6 Colours and Ethics**

The previous chapters introduced the influence of colour on consumer behaviour and its ability to create strong emotions and associations. Businesses often take these attributes to establish favourable brand connections and enhance marketing strategies. However, ethical concerns arise when considering colour to sway consumer behaviour. On one hand, colour's impact is a natural and often subconscious part of human perception. However, there are arguments against exploiting colour to manipulate decisions, particularly among vulnerable demographics like children or individuals with mental health conditions (Labrecque & Milne, 2012, pp. 711-727).

One ethical concern revolves around the potential for deception when employing colour to influence others in a false light. For instance, businesses may utilise specific colours to portray a product as more natural or healthful than it truly is, resulting in consumer misinformation and a breach of trust (Chen et al., Y.-R., 2020). Such practices can be seen as unfair and deceptive, undermining consumer autonomy.

Responsible and ethical colour usage is imperative for companies. They should avoid manipulative tactics, resist creating an artificial sense of urgency, and avoid discriminatory practices. Green and blue, two frequently employed colours in marketing, typically evoke positive connotations like nature, freshness, and trust (Chen et al., Y.-R., 2020, pp. 194–209). However, they are not immune to misuse.

Green, for instance, is sometimes misappropriated through "greenwashing," a practice in which companies make false claims regarding the environmental friendliness of their products or services (Chen, Y.S et Al., 2020, pp. 194–209). This can mislead consumers who prioritise environmentally responsible choices. Also, green marketing may target vulnerable groups, including children, by promoting unhealthy products or concealing harmful chemicals under the guise of eco-friendliness.

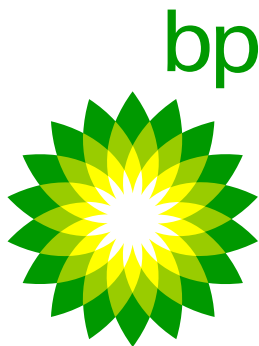


Figure 3. British Petroleum logo (BP, 2024)

An example of the use of green in branding cases is with companies like British Petroleum (BP) Figure 3, which have prominently featured green, notably within its iconic sunburst logo. This deliberate selection of the green serves a strategic purpose, aiming to convey an image of environmental responsibility and sustainability.

However, BP has encountered much scrutiny over time due to alleged "greenwashing." It has been argued that BP's branding initiatives, while highlighting its dedication to renewable energy and carbon reduction, have sometimes contradicted the company's actual environmental practices, particularly in the aftermath of the Deepwater Horizon oil spill in 2010 (BBC, 2014.). The evaluation of the ethical use of the colour green in branding underscores the necessity for a transparent and consistent alignment between a company's environmental assertions and its tangible actions, a contentious issue often encountered by corporations such as BP.

Similarly, blue is often misused in marketing. It can create a sense of urgency or scarcity, pressuring consumers into impulsive decisions (Labrecque & Milne, 2012, pp. 711-727). Additionally, businesses may exploit blue to convey trustworthiness, particularly in sectors such as finance and healthcare.

### 3 Research Methods

This chapter outlines the details of the research methodology, highlighting the steps taken to address the research questions. It recognises the role of methodology in shaping the design, collection, analysis, and interpretation of data and presents a comprehensive overview of the methodological framework employed for the study.

#### 3.1 Research Design

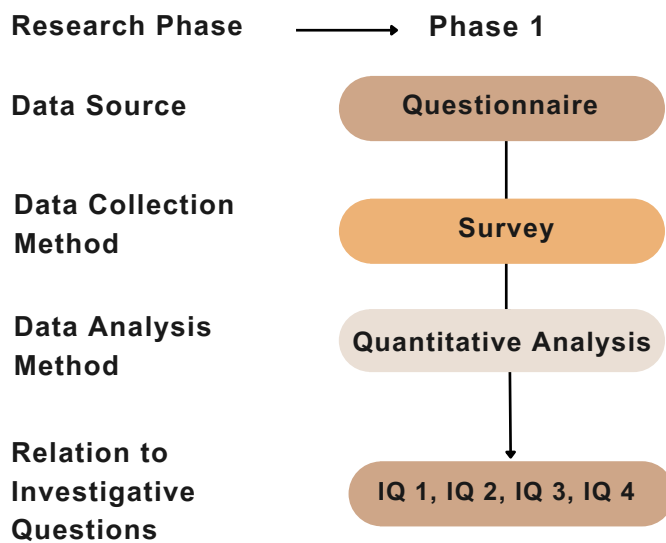


Figure 4. Research Design and Methods

Figure 4 represents the research design used in the research. The decision was made to have one singular phase to create a linear line to gather data from participants in the research. The study investigated the influence of colour in marketing on consumer decision-making across diverse cultural backgrounds. A quantitative approach was selected for this research, employing a cross-sectional design to collect data through a structured survey at a specific time. This method facilitated the analysis of patterns and trends in consumer responses to colour across different cultural contexts (Saunders et al., 2019. pp. 169 - 174).

The survey targeted respondents primarily from Europe and Asia to understand how different cultures perceive and react to colours in marketing contexts. A quantitative approach was selected to gather measurable data that can be statistically analysed to reveal trends and patterns that can be generalised to a larger population. This method aligns with the research objective of investigating the impact of colour on consumer emotions and behaviour across different cultural settings.

Descriptive statistics were used to summarise and interpret the results of the data analysis, while cross-tabulation helped compare responses across cultural groups. This approach understood any significant differences or similarities in how colour affects consumer decision-making across various cultures. Ethical guidelines were followed throughout the study, ensuring voluntary participation and the protection of respondent anonymity and confidentiality (Saunders et al., 2019. pp. 169 - 174).

### **3.2 Data Collection Tools**

The researcher created the survey after reviewing the research objectives and relevant literature. The questions were designed to ensure they directly addressed the research goals and could provide precise, measurable data. The survey included a mix of questions, such as the Likert scale, multiple-choice, and demographic questions, to gather quantitative and categorical data.

Although the survey was not formally pilot-tested, it was reviewed by peers from different national backgrounds. Their feedback helped refine the questions to ensure they were clear and relevant to the research objectives.

The survey was distributed through social media platforms like Instagram, Facebook, WhatsApp, and Telegram to reach the intended participants. These channels ensured that the survey reached a broad and relevant audience.

Demographic questions were included to help understand how different backgrounds might influence responses. The survey's overall design aimed to gather comprehensive data that would provide meaningful insights into the research topic and support a deeper understanding of the key issues.

### **3.3 Data Collection**

The data collection process was conducted over two weeks, between the 15th of July and the 26<sup>th</sup> of July 2024, using Webropol. The survey link was shared through WhatsApp, Instagram, Telegram, and Facebook, ensuring that the sample included the desired target group of diverse nations.

A snowball sampling technique was used to encourage wider participation. Participants were encouraged to forward the survey to others in their networks who met the study's criteria. This approach helped increase the responses, giving a broader and more diverse sample.

### **3.4 Data Analysis**

The data analysis followed a structured approach using Webropol's built-in tools and Excel. Initially, data cleaning was conducted to eliminate incomplete or inconsistent responses, ensuring that the analysis was based on accurate and reliable information. This process was essential in maintaining the integrity of the findings. Key findings were then summarised using descriptive statistics, including means, and percentages, to provide an overview of the participants' responses.

Responses were examined with the key variable, cultural background, to explore differences in perceptions and behaviours across demographic groups. This cross-tabulation allowed us to understand how different sample segments responded to various colour-related marketing questions.

Data visualisation techniques were also employed, using charts and graphs to represent the main patterns identified in the survey. This approach made it easier to interpret and communicate the findings and align them with the research questions and objectives.

The quantitative data gave insights into how colour influences emotions and decision-making in marketing while also revealing variations across cultures. This helped to validate existing theories and provide new data to support them. The analysis ensured that the findings were meaningful and grounded in the broader consumer psychology and marketing literature.

### **3.5 Ethical Considerations**

The ethical considerations have been addressed throughout the research process. Informed consent was gathered from all participants, and their privacy and anonymity were protected. The study adhered to ethical guidelines for research involving human participants, ensuring that no harm or deception occurred during data collection.

### **3.6 Limitations**

It is essential to acknowledge some potential limitations of this study. Due to the availability of participants, the sample size for the study may be limited. This could affect the findings' generalizability to broader populations or market segments.

While deliberately focused, the scope of the research may only encompass some possible dimensions of the influence of colours on consumer behaviour. Given the nature of the topic, some nuances and subtleties will need to be explored further. Researchers conducting more extensive studies may delve deeper into these aspects.

## 4 Findings

In this chapter, the findings gotten from the quantitative research will be presented. The gathered data aims to see all the key patterns, trends, and noteworthy observations from examining participants' responses. To represent the findings better, here are the questions from which each theme was derived from:

### Research Question

How can colours influence consumer emotions, behaviours, and decision-making?

### Investigative Questions

1. What is the psychological basis for connecting colours and emotions in consumer behaviour?
2. Which specific emotions are most associated with different colours in marketing?
3. How does culture impact the way individuals perceive colours and influence their consumer behaviour?
4. What are the ethical considerations in using specific colours to influence consumer behaviour, and are there limits to this practice?

### 4.1 Introduction to Respondents

The survey was conducted to gather opinions relevant to the study's objectives. Given the nature of the research, the only demographic data collected was the participants' nationality, which helped to deepen the understanding of how cultural backgrounds influenced their perceptions and opinions about colour. The resulting dataset from 52 participants served as the base for the survey analysis.

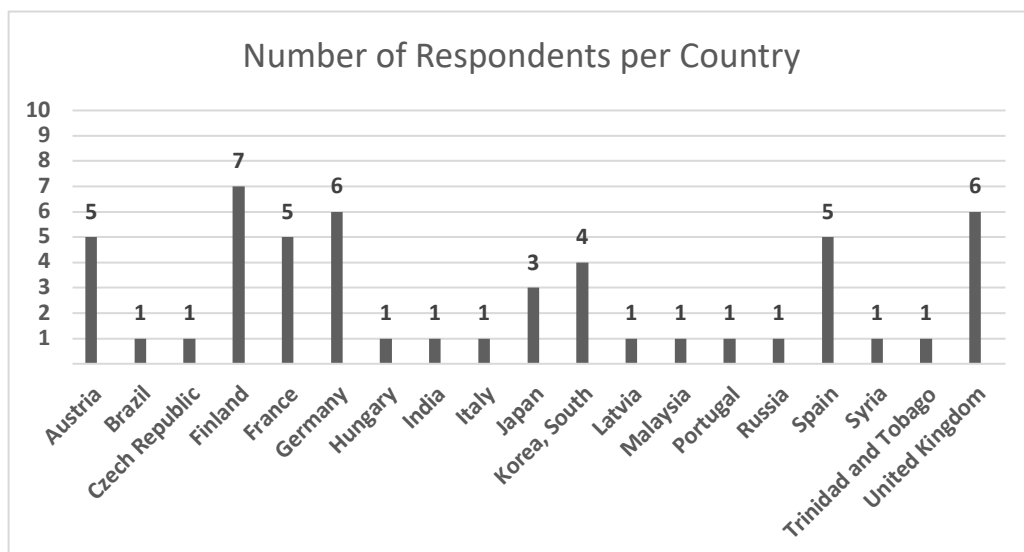


Figure 5. Respondents' nationality (n=52)

Figure 5 shows the distribution of respondents based on their nationality, allowing us to have an overview of the surveyed population. The survey gathered responses from 52 participants, with the biggest representation from European countries such as Finland, Germany, the United Kingdom, Austria, Spain, and France, each contributing around 5 to 7 respondents. This highlights a strong European presence in the data. In contrast, Asian countries like Japan and South Korea had fewer participants, with only 3 and 4 respondents.

While the demographic breakdown reflects a diverse range of cultural backgrounds, it is important to note that there is currently no representation from African nations.

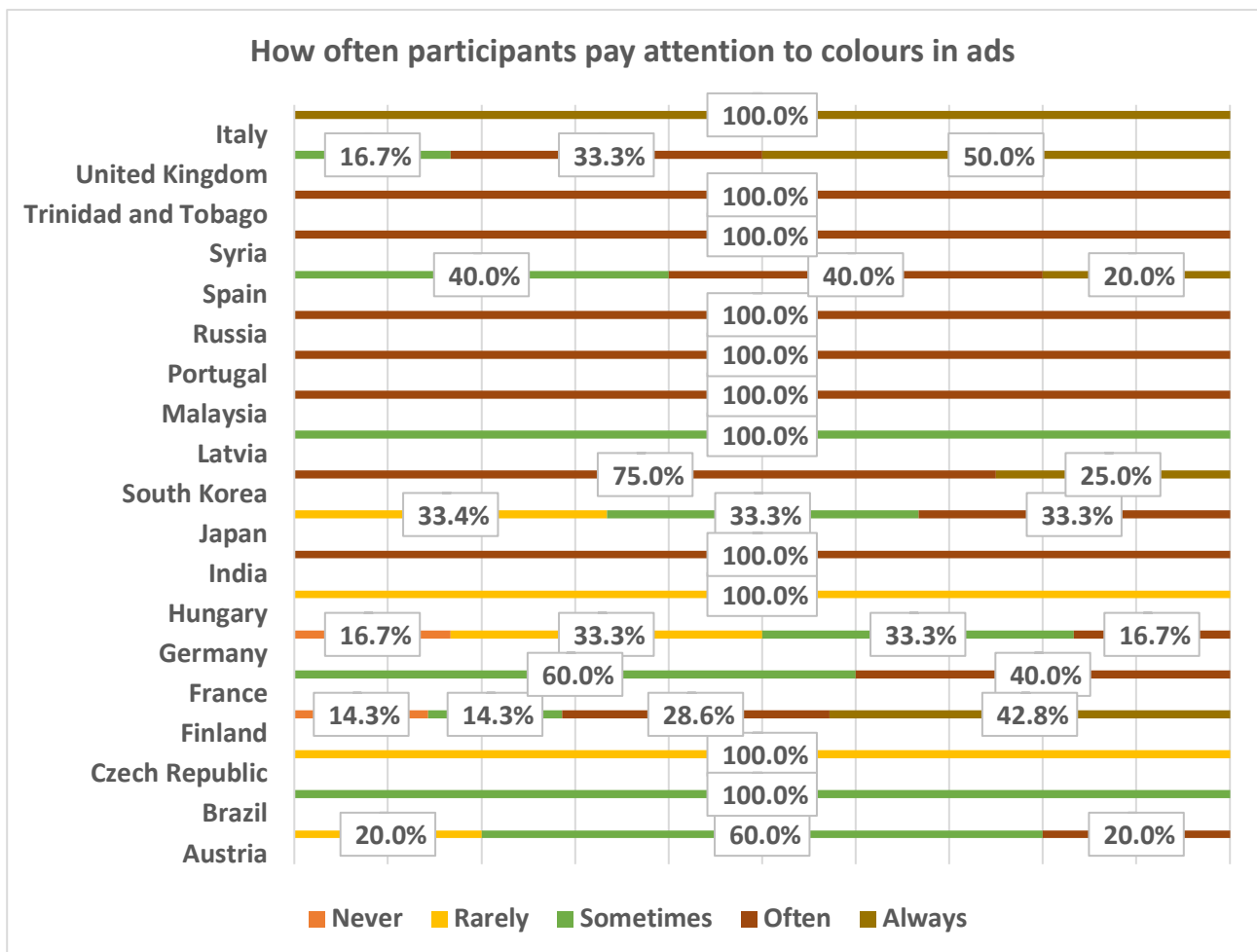


Figure 6. Colours in ads

Respondents were asked how much attention each paid to colours in advertisements. Figure 6 shows that most of the 52 respondents indicated that they "often" or "always" pay attention to the colours used in advertisements. Specifically, 48 participants, accounting for 92.3%, reported this level of engagement, while only four respondents (7.7%) stated that they rarely notice colours.

Within the Finnish responses, there were some differences among the 7 participants, yet a majority still aligned with the consensus. In contrast, the responses from Germany revealed a more pronounced divide, with only 60% of German respondents indicating that they "often" notice colours. This suggests a slightly lower level of engagement with colour in advertising compared to other countries.

## 4.2 Colours and Emotions

To start exploring the relationship between colours and consumer behaviour, respondents were asked questions to see their understanding of the psychological basis behind how colours influence emotions. The following questions examine which consumers recognise the impact of colour in marketing and how it shapes their purchasing decisions.

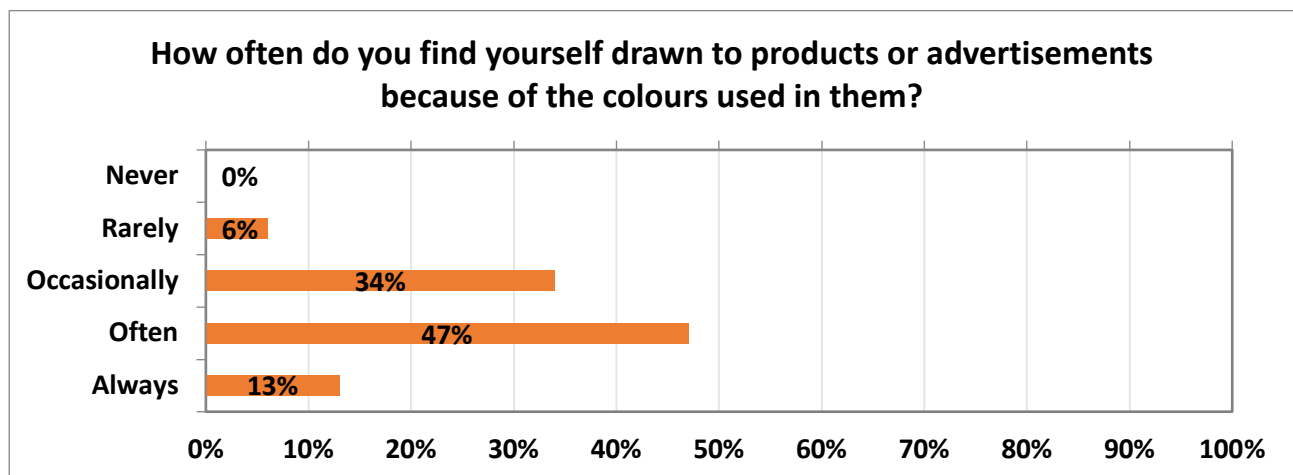


Figure 7. Products, ads and colour

Building on the previous question, respondents were asked whether colours in advertisements influenced their attraction to products. As illustrated in Figure 7, 60% of participants indicated that they 'always' or 'often' felt drawn to products based on their colour. The remaining respondents provided moderate ratings, with 34% stating that colours occasionally influence their choices. This data shows a varied response to colour in advertising, with a significant portion of respondents



acknowledging its impact to varying degrees.

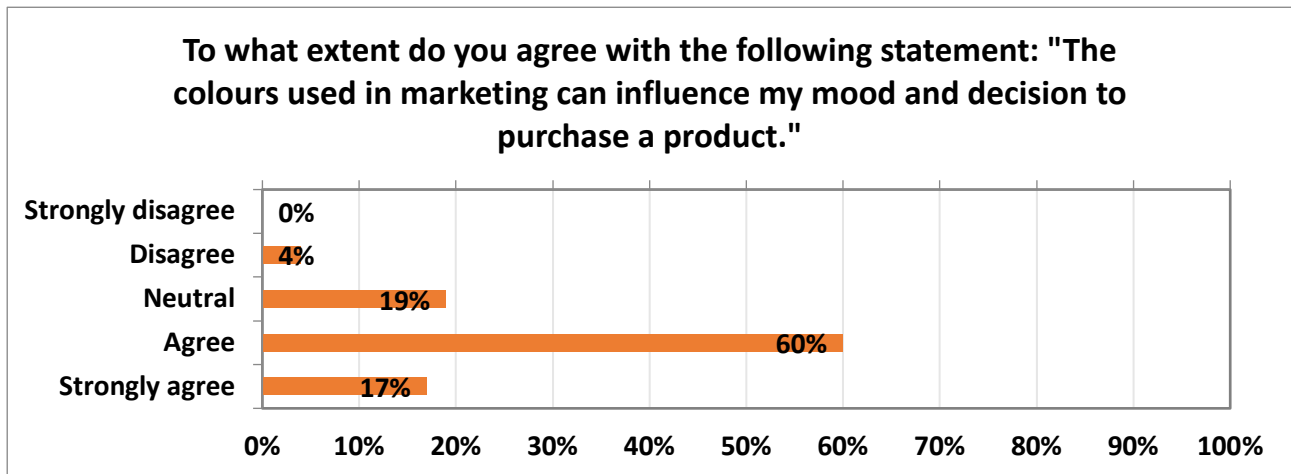


Figure 8. Purchase behaviour based on colour

In Figure 8, participants were asked to consider the statement: "The colours used in marketing can influence my mood and decision to purchase a product." 77% of respondents expressed some level of agreement, with 17% strongly agreeing with the idea. This indicates a widespread recognition of colours' role in shaping mood and purchasing behaviour. On the other hand, 19% of respondents were either neutral or disagreed with the statement, including 4% who specifically indicated disagreement.

Building on the previous questions, the next part examines specific emotions that consumers commonly associate with various colours in marketing. This is to identify how different colours evoke emotional responses, potentially influencing purchasing decisions.

Table 3. Open Response of participants and colour preferences

Country	Colour Preferences
<b>Austria</b>	As blue and beige are my preferred colours i would choose products that have one of those colours, if i needed to decide between two similar products.
<b>Czech Republic</b>	I like black and white because it feels exclusive and also super bright colour because it feels fun.
<b>Finland</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Darker colours, seasonal colours, masculine colours</li> <li>2. For example, pink always grabs my attention. Lets say a fizzy drink is packaged in pink, most likely I will notice it first and will</li> </ol>

	<p>gravitate towards it even if it would sit next to other more established brands</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Bright colours tend to catch my attention often, I wouldn't necessarily pick a product based on the colouring but it will often draw my attention to that specific product more easily.</li> <li>4. Green because of environmental friendliness</li> <li>5. "Red because it is a bright color and associated with life: fruit, love, blood, danger, fire..."</li> <li>6. Green as well because I look for natural and environmentally conscious products."</li> <li>7. Yes, soft colors like pastel colors usually make me purchase the product since they are nice for the eye and look more expensive, which makes me think the products must be good.</li> </ol>
<b>Germany</b>	I am very drawn to purple, reds, greens and gold/black colors. These are my favorites and their radiate a certain comfort towards me
<b>Hungary</b>	I am very drawn to purple, reds, greens and gold/black colors. These are my favorites and their radiate a certain comfort towards me
<b>India</b>	For digital devices, accessories, clothes i gravitate towards black or dark grays
<b>Italy</b>	For example, yesterday I bought a new toothpaste because the packaging was black and gold color so it made me feel like I was buying a luxury toothpaste product
<b>Latvia</b>	Red, yellow - because they are bright and catch my attention. Green and white - often are associated with eco and bio products.
<b>Malaysia</b>	Yes, bright colours that grab my attention or light colours
<b>Portugal</b>	Light Blue, purple and green. They are colours I have always liked since i was a child
<b>Syria</b>	Yes. Red.

<b>Trinidad and Tobago</b>	Yes but it depends on the product. Lighter and muted colors for self care products. Red and green for food items.
<b>United Kingdom</b>	I like aesthetically pleasing colours because it is pleasing to look at and often has good packaging design

In the open-ended question, participants were asked to recall an advertisement where the colour used significantly impacted their feelings. As seen in Table 3, - A prominent theme that emerged is the emotional comfort and aesthetic appeal associated with specific colours. For example, respondents from Germany and Hungary strongly preferred purple, red, green, and gold/black, describing these colours as comforting. On the other side, Latvian participants indicated a preference for bright colours like red and yellow, noting their effectiveness in capturing attention. In contrast, a Czech respondent preferred black and white for their exclusivity.

The responses also highlight product associations, which underscore the importance of colour in consumer behaviour. An Italian participant noted that toothpaste's black and gold packaging conveyed a sense of luxury. At the same time, a respondent from Trinidad and Tobago preferred lighter colours for self-care products and red and green for food items.

Environmental considerations emerged as a notable theme, with several respondents linking green to eco-friendliness; Participants in Finland consistently linked green to sustainability, which contrasts with Asian participants, who had a more neutral stance on this association.

Lastly, individual preferences and seasonal variations were apparent in the responses. A participant from Portugal expressed a longstanding affinity for light blue, purple, and green, while a Finnish respondent mentioned "masculine colours" and seasonal shades. This is the nature of colour preferences, which fluctuate based on personal experiences and current trends.

The respondents were asked for their emotional reaction to 3 different colours: red, blue, and green. For each colour, participants had three options: negativity, neutrality, or positivity, allowing for a straightforward assessment of their feelings about these colours.

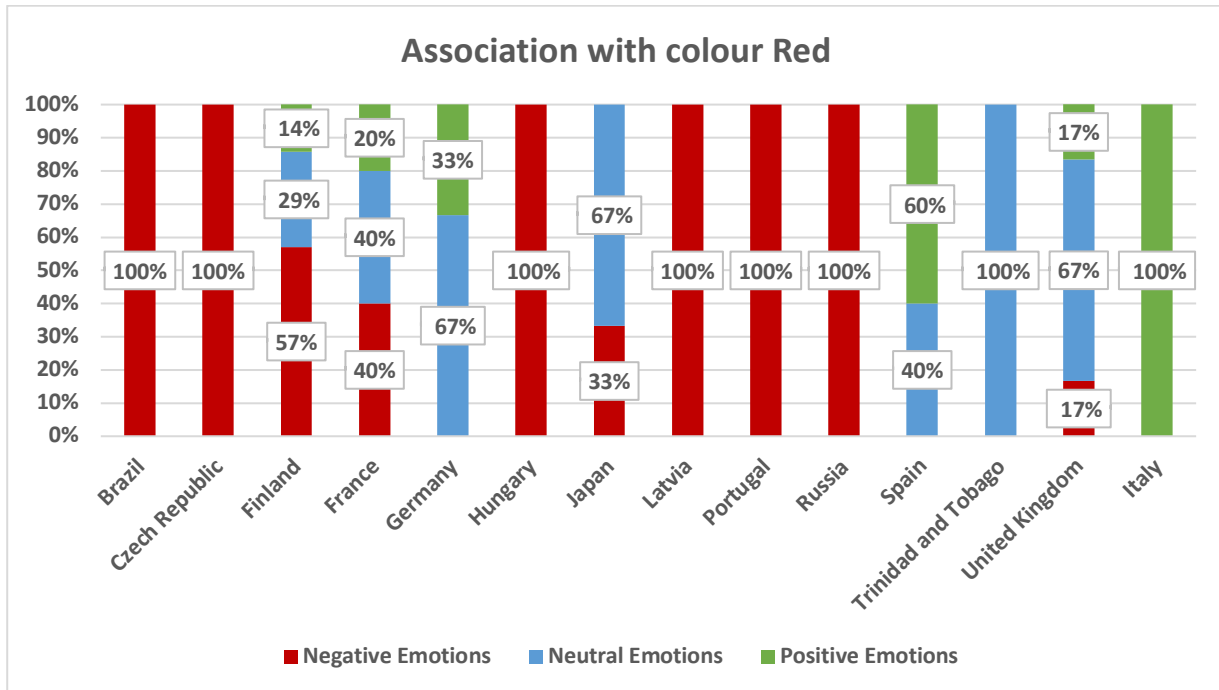


Figure 9. Colour red association by country

In Figure 9, the responses show that red is primarily associated with negative emotions across most countries. However, Germany is a notable exception among the larger respondent nations, with many participants seeing red as neutral or positive. Spain also reflects a division in opinion, with 60% of respondents—three out of five—associating red with positive emotions. On the other hand, Japan and the United Kingdom have varied perceptions; while the majority in the UK regard red as neutral, Japanese respondents express a mix of views.

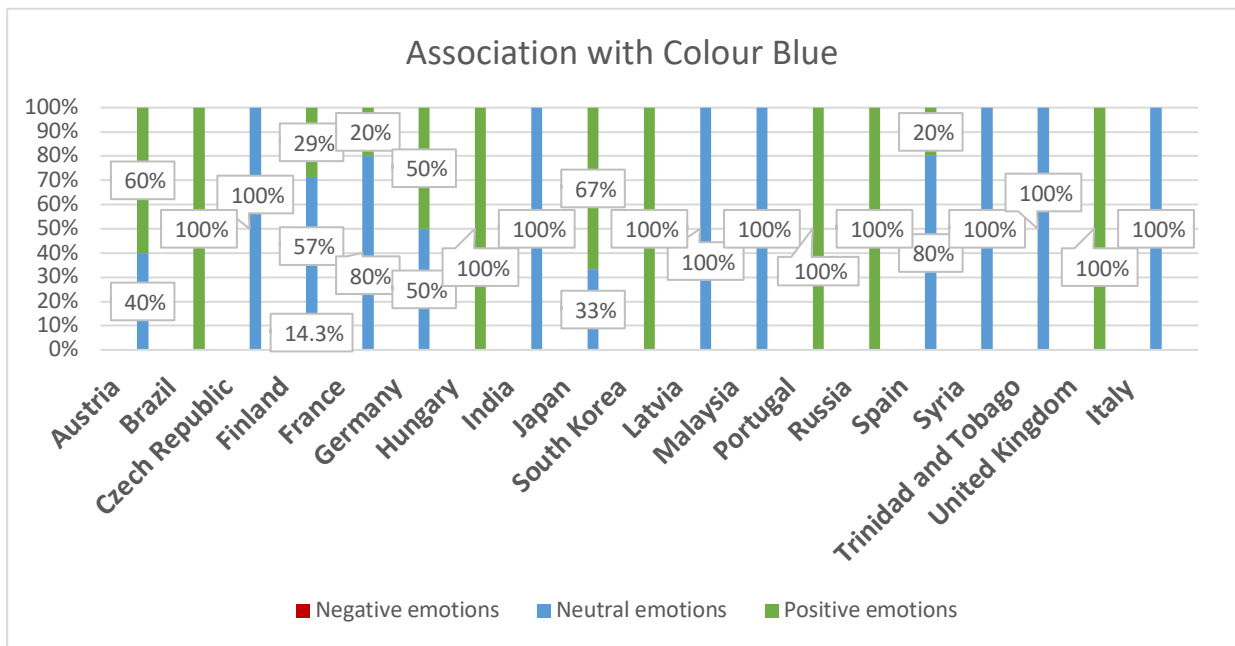


Figure 10. Colour blue association by country

While red had divided opinions, with the colour blue, there was more agreement. Only Finland is the only country that considers it slightly negative, as seen in Figure 10. Most countries view blue as neutral or positive, indicating a consensus with the colour. For example, countries such as Austria, Brazil, and Spain strongly associate blue with positive emotions, with a significant percentage of respondents affirming this perspective.

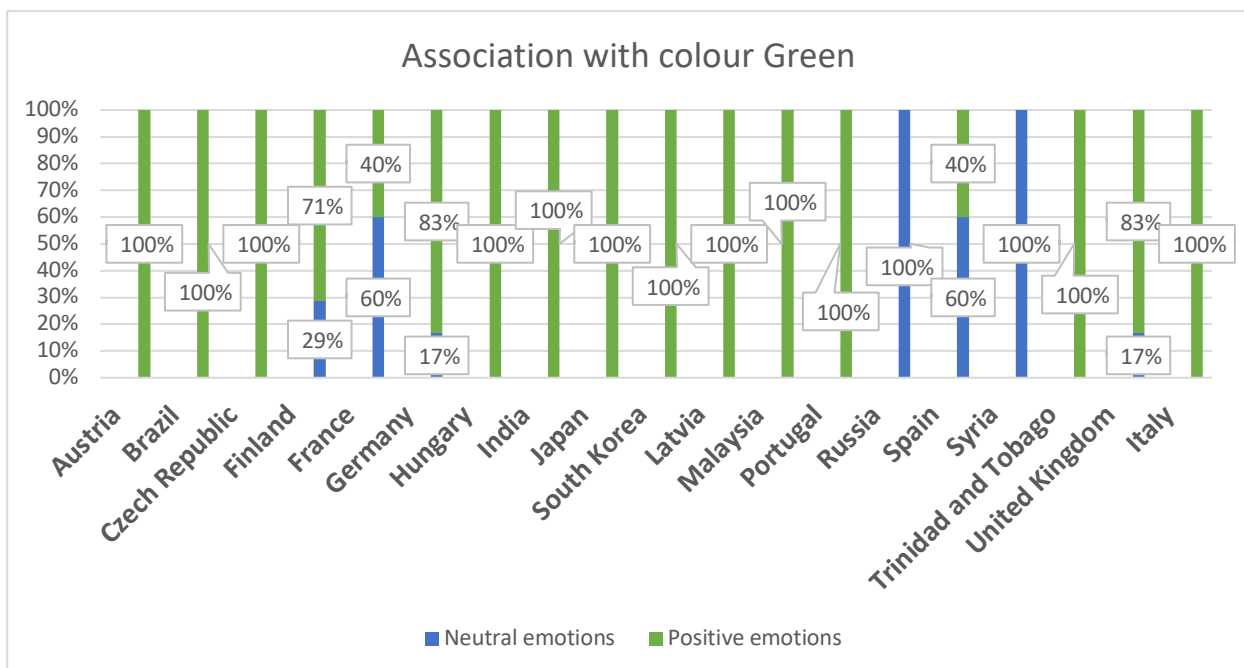


Figure 11. Green association by country

Like the previous question with blue, green shows little to no divide among respondents, as depicted in Figure 11; of the 52 participants, 40 associated green with positive emotions, while the remaining 12 respondents expressed neutral associations. This indicates a strong consensus on the positive connotations of green across the surveyed countries.

### 4.3 Cultures and Colour

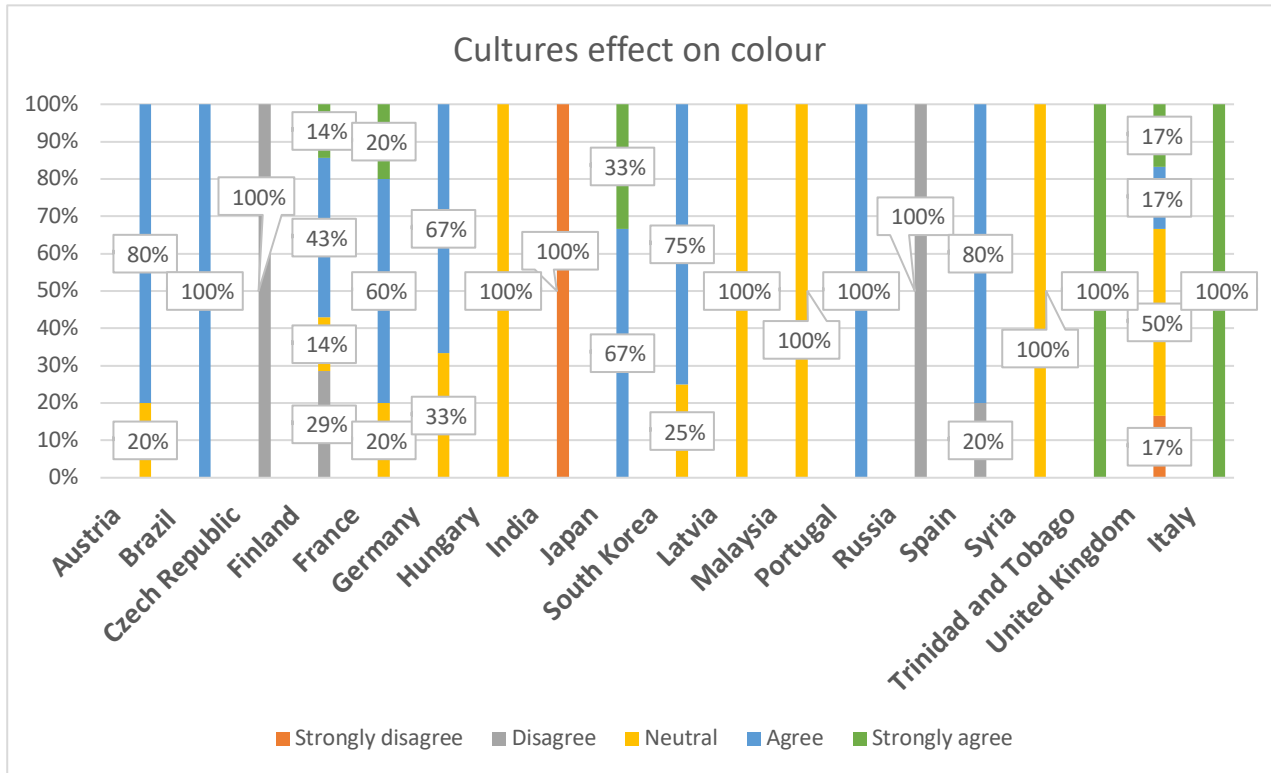


Figure 12. Cultures and colours

Respondents were asked to reflect on how their cultural backgrounds influence their colour perception. As illustrated in Figure 12, there is a slight divide among countries. For example, Finland exhibited one of the larger divides compared to the United Kingdom, where many participants either agreed or remained neutral about the influence of culture on colour interpretation.

In Finland, 29% expressed disagreement with the idea that cultural background affects colour perception, while 43% agreed, indicating a variety of perspectives. In contrast, respondents from France showed agreement, with four out of five agreeing or strongly agreeing with the statement. Overall, there was a general tendency towards agreement or neutrality regarding the influence of culture on colour perception among respondents.

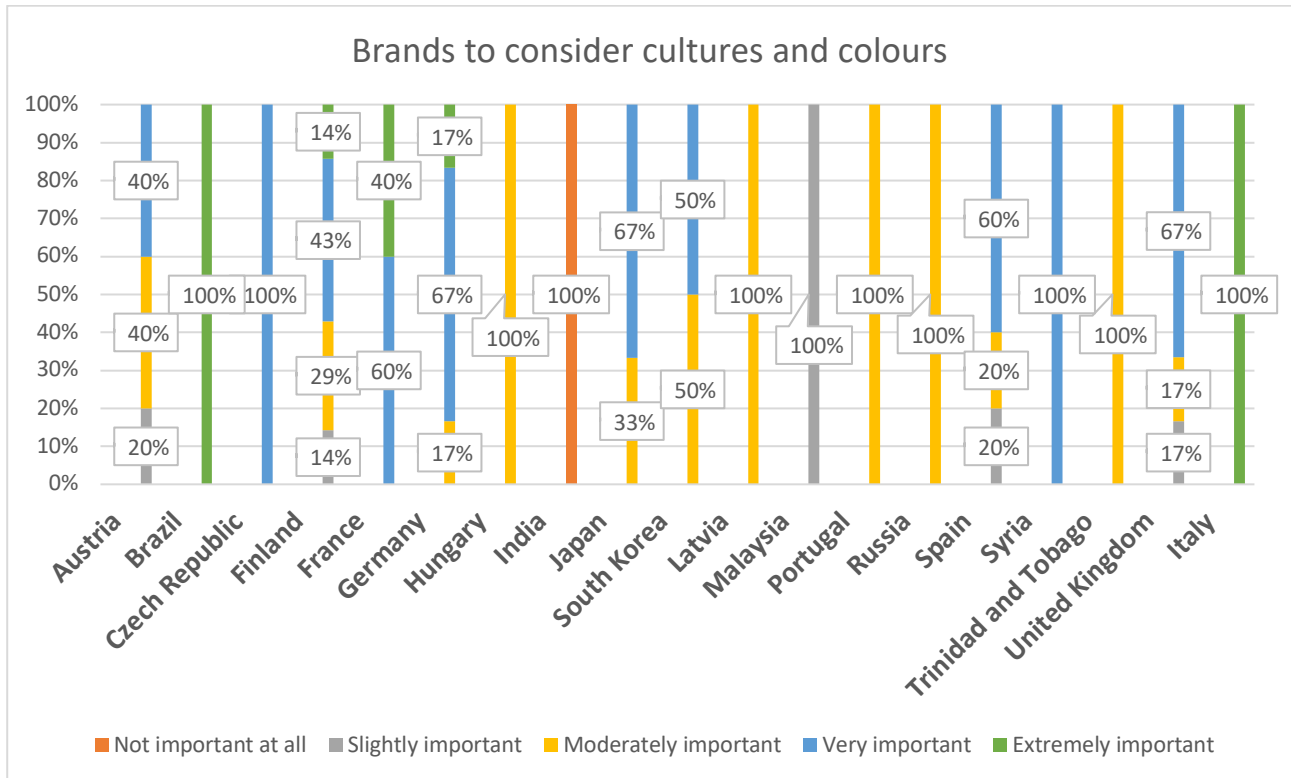


Figure 13. Brand, culture and colour

The next question focused on the importance of cultural differences in colour selection for marketing materials to guide respondents in considering the intersection of colour and culture. As seen in Figure 13, a notable percentage rated this as "very important," with respondents from Finland, France, and the United Kingdom consistently acknowledging the significant role of colour in marketing effectiveness.

In contrast, some participants, mainly from India, viewed colour as "unimportant at all" or "slightly important." Additionally, respondents from Japan and the UK rated this importance higher than those from Germany, highlighting differing cultural expectations regarding marketing practices.

Table 4. Colour representation in different cultures

Austria	Green represents hope and elegance Blue represents luxury Red represents masculinity
Czech Republic	I think the usual. Black = sad, White = innocent, red, blue, white = national colours
Finland	1. red, white and blue

	<p>2. Not necessarily culturally symbolic but I think certain colors such as light blue is seen as calming and tranquil. And that certain colors are not seen as compatible with certain products. E.g. baby diapers would not be packaged in black</p> <p>3. The colours of the flag maybe, but I personally perceive using them in a more of a negative light for some reason.</p> <p>4. Blue in the Finnish flag (lakes) but as I said, blue is neutral to me in marketing.</p> <p>5. Red means danger White means clean and pure</p>
Germany	As a German the color combination of black/red/white is not good. This is color combination of the old Nazi regime so it's rather negative for us. But also - these days - it's light blue because it's also the color of the current right seated party
Latvia	White is associated with something good and high quality. Black is often associated with something negative, like death. So it's often avoided in marketing.
Malaysia	Yellow, royal colour commonly associated with Malay sultans red, is the traditional colour in Malay culture, used to denote the courage, bravery, heroism and loyalty
Portugal	Yes there are. For example: -White is marriage -Black is death - Green is Luck
Syria	White for peace Yellow for funeral or mourning Black for death Green for prosperity Red for blood
Trinidad and Tobago	Yes, the color red.



Italy	For sure, green represents freedom in Italy, I was born in in Italy, but my parents are originally from China. Red is a very symbolic and significant colour for the Chinese community. It is symbol of prosperity and longevity.
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Respondents were asked to share some of their cultural associations with colours. As seen in Table 4, an Austrian respondent connects green with hope and elegance, blue with luxury, and red with masculinity. In the Czech Republic, black signifies sadness, white represents innocence, and the national colours reflect pride.

Finland shows a mix of views; one participant sees red, white, and blue as necessary but notes light blue's calming effect. In Germany, the black-red-white combination evokes negative sentiments linked to its Nazi past, while light blue has political connotations.

Latvians view white as a marker of quality, avoiding black due to its associations with death. In Malaysia, yellow denotes royalty and red symbolises courage. Portuguese respondents link white to marriage, black to death, and green to luck.

Syria associates white with peace, yellow with mourning, black with death, green with prosperity, and red with blood. An Italian participant mentions green as a symbol of freedom and red as significant in Chinese culture, showing how colours can embody broader themes across cultures.

#### 4.4 Ethics and Colours

The last part of the survey focused on using colours ethically. The first question examined whether participants considered themselves manipulated by using colours in advertisements.

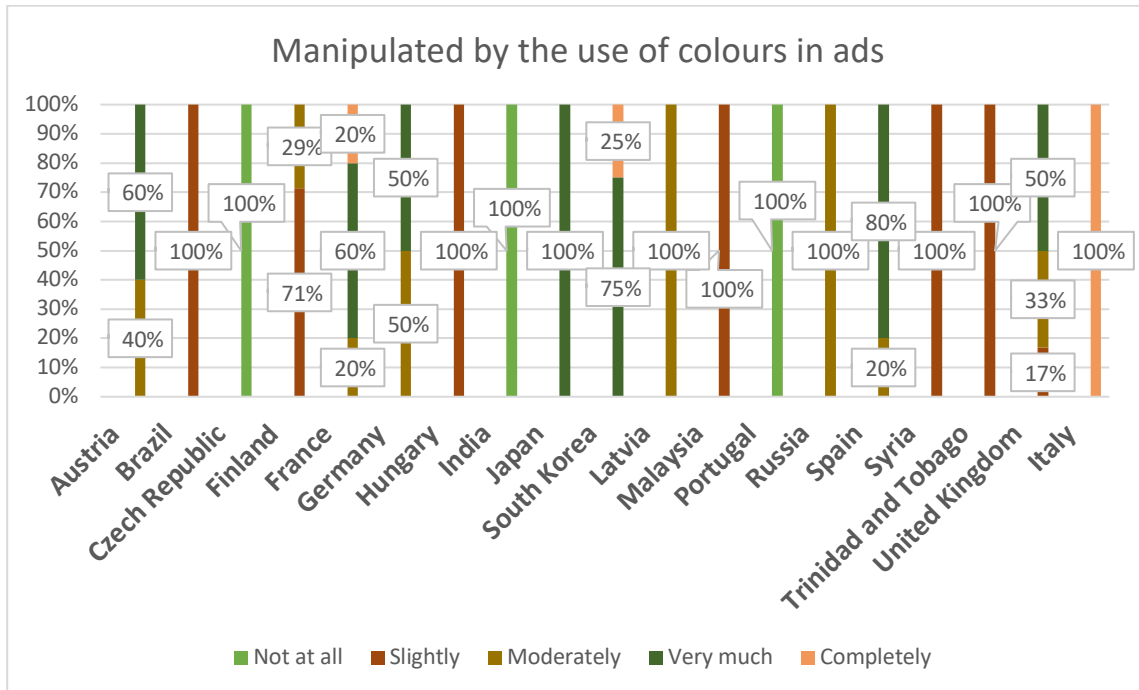


Figure 14. Colour manipulation in ads

As illustrated in Figure 14, most respondents—22 out of 52—reported feeling manipulated by colour, primarily or entirely. The remaining respondents tended to be more neutral in their feelings. This suggests a nearly even split in perceptions of manipulation. Notably, respondents from Germany and France were more likely to express feelings of manipulation than those in Finland, where the majority remained relatively neutral.

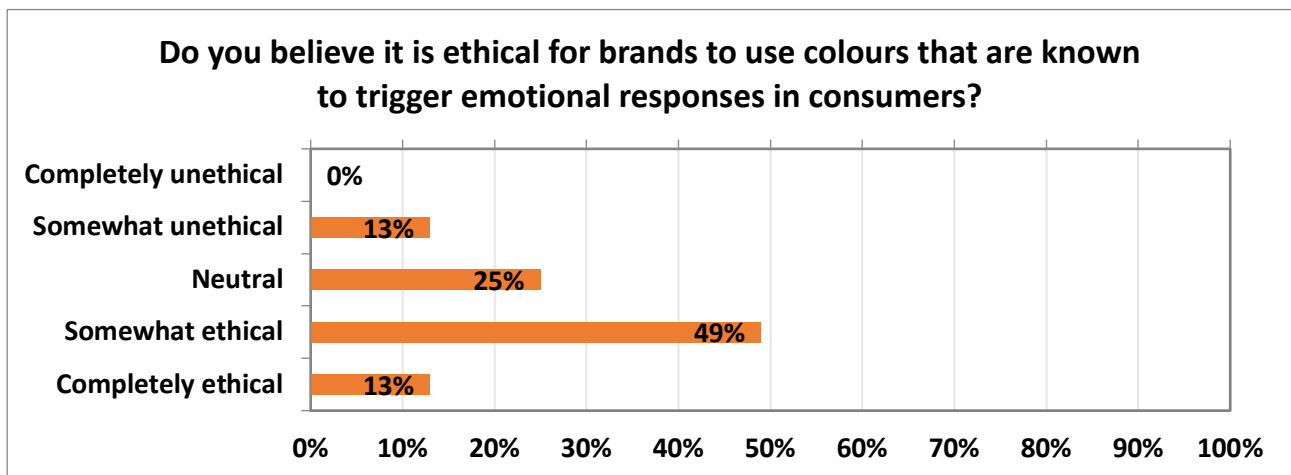


Figure 15. Ethicality of a brand using colours to trigger emotions

Next, respondents were asked to consider the ethical implications of brands using colour to provoke specific emotions in consumers. As shown in Figure 15, among the 52 respondents, 26 (49%)

agreed that it is somewhat ethical for brands to employ colours to trigger emotional responses, while seven respondents (13%) disagreed. Notably, no one completely dismissed this practice as unethical. This indicates that a slight majority view it as acceptable.

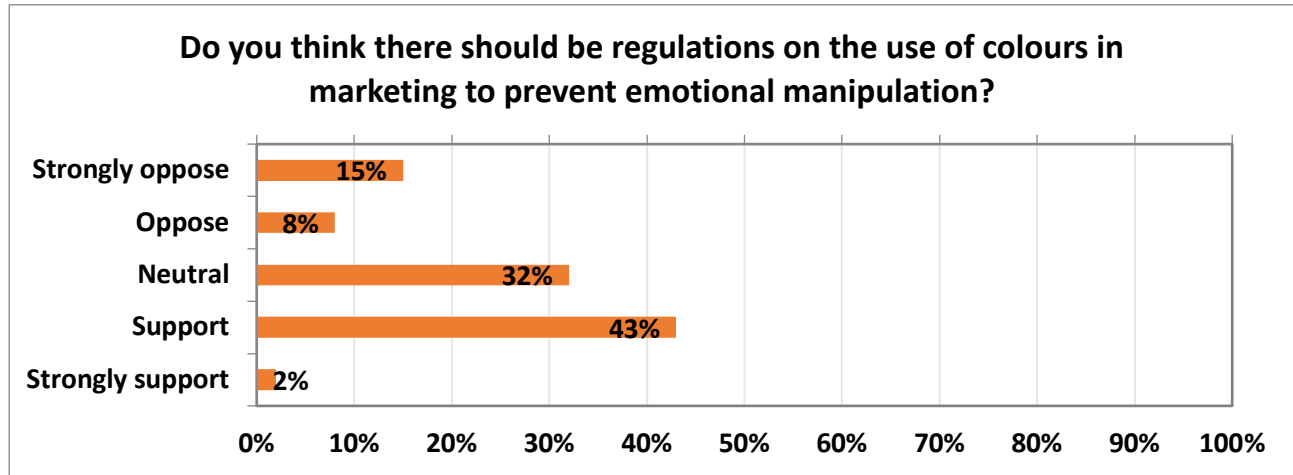


Table 16. Regulations on the usage of colours in marketing

Respondents were asked whether they believe regulations should be implemented to prevent emotional manipulation in marketing as a follow-up to the previous question. As shown in Figure 16, approximately 45% of respondents (24 individuals) expressed strong support or support for this idea, while 32% (16 individuals) remained neutral. The remaining respondents were somewhat opposed to the concept. This suggests a consensus that some level of oversight would be beneficial in the future.

Lastly, respondents were asked whether they would be more likely to purchase or find a well-known product, such as Coca-Cola, appealing if it had a different colour scheme from what they were accustomed to.

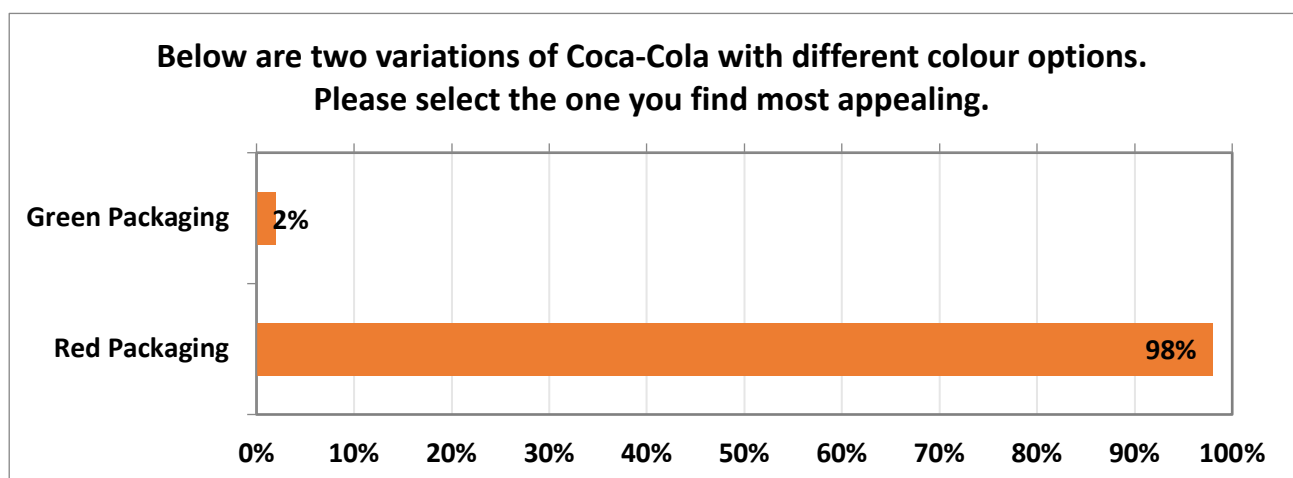


Figure 17. Coca-Cola variation opinions

As shown in Figure 17, only 1 out of 52 respondents found the green-packaged Coca-Cola more appealing than its traditional red packaging. This indicates a strong preference for the familiar red packaging among most respondents.

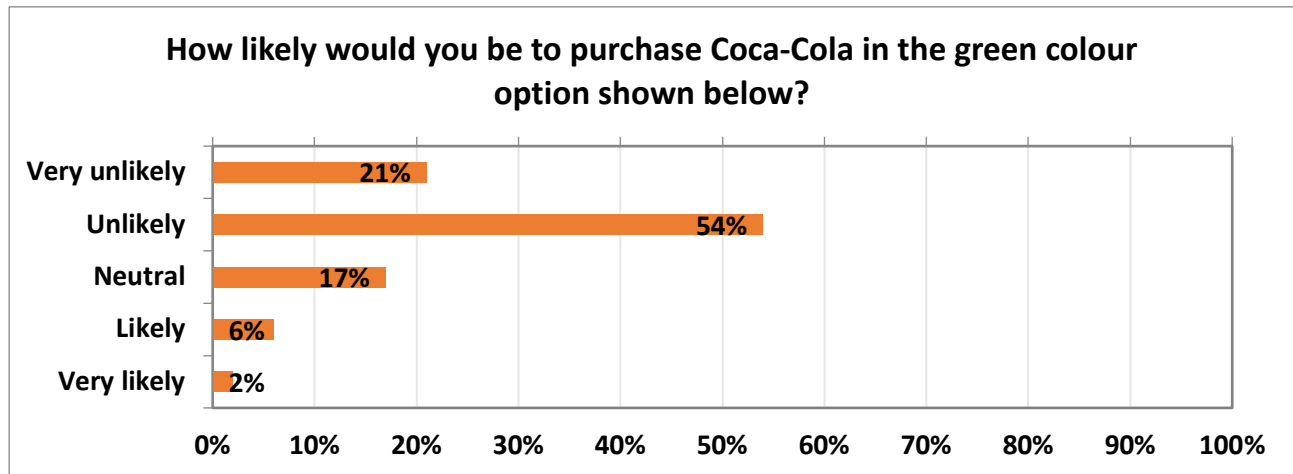


Figure 18. Likelihoods of purchasing green-packaged Coca-Cola

Among the 52 respondents shown in Figure 18, 4 people (7%) indicated they would likely buy green Coca-Cola if available. In contrast, the majority, 39 people (75%), said they would be unlikely to do so. This indicates a general hesitance towards the green variant, with most respondents preferring the traditional branding of the product.

## 5 Discussion

This study examined how the strategic use of colours in marketing influences consumer emotions, behaviours, and decision-making processes across different cultural contexts. Specifically, the research looked into understanding the psychological foundations of colour-emotion connections, exploring which emotions are tied to specific colours, and determining cultural differences' role in shaping these associations. This chapter discusses the key findings and their relevance to the research question and objectives. Also, the cultural and ethical complexities of using colour in marketing make recommendations for future research.

### 5.1 Key findings

The findings suggest that colours significantly influence consumer emotions, behaviours, and decision-making processes. Survey data revealed that most respondents believed the colours used in marketing directly impacted their mood and purchasing decisions. While the influence of colour is often intuitive and rooted in psychological mechanisms, cultural context adds complexity.

#### 5.1.1 Colours Influence Consumer Emotions, Behaviours and Decision-Making

This research focused on understanding how colours affect consumer emotions, behaviours, and decision-making processes. The results indicated that colours could shape how consumers perceive products, influence their moods, and affect their purchase decisions. With 77% of participants stating that colours impact their emotional state and decisions, it is clear that colour is a powerful tool in shaping consumer responses.

Blue was frequently linked with feelings of calm, trust, and security, likely due to its link to natural, serene settings like skies and oceans. Such associations can create an emotional response that brands can use to create reliability and comfort. Green, meanwhile, is often used with thoughts of health, nature, and sustainability, ideal for brands focusing on wellness or eco-consciousness.

Red, however, has varied effects on consumer decision-making. Depending on the context, it can create images of excitement, urgency, caution, or even aggression. In marketing, red is commonly used to draw attention, provoke action, or illustrate promotions. These responses depend heavily on how they are presented—creating a sense of urgency in a sale or conveying danger in another setting.

The findings suggest that the impact of colours is both instinctive and context-dependent. While there are universal elements to how colours influence emotions, these are often shaped by a mix of individual experiences and broader cultural cues. This means that the effectiveness of using

colours in marketing relies on understanding the general emotional impact and the context in which they are used.

### **5.1.2 Psychology Behind Colour and Emotion Connection**

One of the investigative questions was about understanding the psychological basis for the relationship between colours and emotions. The Ecological Valence Theory (Schloss & Palmer, 2010) helps explain why individuals prefer certain colours. According to it, these preferences are shaped by positive or negative experiences associated with objects of the same colour. For instance, blue often invokes feelings of calm because it is tied to positive natural experiences like clear skies or calm seas.

The findings partially supported EVT, with participants frequently linking their colour preferences to specific personal experiences. Notably, by many participants, red was linked to energy and urgency, which is not surprising considering its common association with arousal and heightened emotion. One participant even mentioned feeling 'a surge of energy' whenever encountering this colour in promotional content. There was also the variation in responses, for example, with yellow—some participants viewing it as optimistic and others perceiving it as cautionary—which gives the situational nature of colour interpretation, indicating that personal context affects colour perception beyond the broad claims made by EVT.

The findings showed that muted tones such as beige and soft grey conveyed stability, and neutrality was consistent with participants' overall impressions of these colours, suggesting that such hues could foster trust and reliability, particularly in industries like insurance and wellness. Participants' reactions suggested that these muted tones could foster trust and reliability, particularly in industries like insurance and wellness.

### **5.1.3 Cultural Differences in Colour Perception**

While psychological theories help explain the broad impact of colours, cultural factors play a significant role in how these colours are perceived and interpreted. This is why another investigative question looked into cultures and found through the study that colours carry a different meaning across all cultures. They influence how individuals react to certain colours, adding layers of meaning that can be shaped by history, social context, and local traditions.

For example, green is often tied to nature and health, but according to the study in Malaysia, it symbolises prosperity, while in Italy, it signifies freedom. The variation shows these countries' cultural and historical context—green's link to agriculture gives it ideas of wealth in Malaysia, while in Italy, its association with national movements links it with ideas of liberty.

Blue similarly carries different cultural significance in Finland. It represents national pride due to its Finnish flag appearance and connection to natural lakes and landscapes. Such cultural differences are important for marketers to understand. What works in one market may backfire in another. Red, for instance, is celebrated as a symbol of prosperity in China but can be a signal of danger or a warning to others.

This nature of colour perception shows the evolving character of cultural symbolism. Globalisation and cultural blending create another layer of complexity, with meanings shifting and hybrid interpretations. This is important for brands, as they need to remain adaptable to these changes. While traditional theories often treat colour meanings as fixed, the study suggests that these meanings are subject to change and evolution.

#### **5.1.4 Ethical Issues in the Use of Colour**

Lastly, the investigative questions examined the ethical implications of using colour to influence consumer behaviour. Almost half of the survey participants believed it was acceptable for brands to use colours to influence emotions. However, the ethical boundary becomes blurred when colours are used to manipulate rather than genuinely communicate brand values. This means brands must strategically look into the colours and messages they want to send.

Green in marketing is a primary example of this ethical challenge. Many companies use green to signal eco-friendliness—a practice known as greenwashing—without having the environmental credentials to back it up. This deceptive use of colour can significantly undermine consumer trust and damage brand credibility. Goodgold's (2010) theory states that colours are central to brand identity, and consistency in their use is critical in maintaining consumer trust and loyalty.

The study mentions that while colours are an effective tool for influencing emotions, transparency is crucial. Consumers may accept some level of influence if it aligns with the brand's authentic values, but when colour is used deceptively, it often results in backlash and a loss of trust. As consumers grow increasingly aware of manipulation tactics, brands must be aware of these ethical issues, ensuring their marketing strategies remain truthful and transparent.

## **5.2 Recommendations**

Based on the study, a set of recommendations is provided for using colours in marketing, drawing on neuromarketing insights to guide practical applications. These suggestions are exploratory and intended to help people think strategically about how to apply colour psychology.

Neuromarketing research suggests that colours like blue and green evoke trust and calmness, making them effective in sectors such as finance or healthcare, where consumer trust is critical. This allows the creation of an atmosphere of reliability and safety. This aligns with the idea that the context in which colours are used matters significantly. The colour choice should align with the product's message and the context where consumers will see it.

Ethical considerations are crucial in deciding how to use colours, as they can be powerful and thus be used responsibly. For example, using soft pastel colours for a high-caffeine energy drink might allow consumers to think it has calming effects. Ethical marketing should ensure that emotional cues genuinely reflect the product's attributes, thus avoiding manipulation.

Understanding the Consumer Decision-Making Process can help guide which colours to use at different stages:

During problem recognition, bright colours like red or orange can effectively grab attention by evoking urgency.

In the information search stage, blue and green foster trust and calmness, encouraging consumers to evaluate options in a relaxed state.

Black or gold evokes a sense of exclusivity during the purchase decision stage, making them ideal, especially for high-value products.

After purchase, soft, comforting colours can reinforce positive feelings, creating satisfaction and loyalty.

These recommendations are to help marketers use neuromarketing and colour-emotion theories to make colour choices that resonate deeply with consumers. The approach is about creating genuine, meaningful connections rather than attracting attention. These suggestions are presented as a tentative framework that should be explored further and refined with additional research, allowing marketers to adapt their approach based on new findings.

### **5.3 Reliability, Validity and Relevance**

The study was designed to provide reliable, valid, and relevant data through a structured survey design and data analysis approach. Its quantitative nature and statistical analysis methods, such as cross-tabulation and descriptive statistics, allowed for insights into cultural differences and colour associations.



The survey sample included respondents from both European and Asian markets, allowing for a range of perspectives. However, the study could have benefitted from a larger sample size, which would have increased the generalizability of the findings. In-depth qualitative research, such as interviews or focus groups, could have also added richer data to complement the quantitative results.

#### **5.4 Further Research**

While this study provides insights, it has certain limitations, particularly the need for more representation from regions such as Africa and South America. Future research should incorporate a more globally diverse sample to understand cultural differences in colour perception fully. Also, exploring how demographic factors, such as age and gender, impact colour preferences would add further depth to our understanding, as these aspects were not covered in this study.

With globalisation continually shaping cultural values, it is important to understand how the symbolism of colours evolves across different contexts. Future research should investigate these shifts to help marketers adapt their strategies for an increasingly interconnected world.

Similarly, the long-term effects of colour manipulation on consumer trust and brand loyalty should be examined. Lastly, developing clear guidelines will help businesses navigate the ethical challenges of using colour in marketing, mainly to ensure that global companies use culturally appropriate and ethically sound branding strategies.

#### **5.5 Reflection on Learning**

At the outset of this research, I understood that colours were perceived differently across cultures, but I was surprised to find out just how widely those perceptions could vary. The findings showed the depth of these differences and revealed the complexity involved in using colour effectively in global marketing strategies. This experience has broadened my understanding of how cultures can shape consumer behaviour in ways I had not fully considered before.

Throughout this study, I also became much more aware of the colours in my everyday surroundings. I found myself paying closer attention to how companies use colour to convey specific messages—to evoke trust and excitement or to project an image of sustainability. This awareness has made me realise just how intentional these choices often are and how subtle yet powerful their impact can be on consumer perception.

Overall, this research has deepened my appreciation for the strategic role of colour in marketing and the ethical considerations of its use. At the same time, I have learned a great deal about conducting research and analysing data.

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