



Tropentag, September 11-13, 2024, hybrid conference

“Exploring opportunities ...
for managing natural resources and a better life for all”

Influence of front-of-pack design of child food products on the choice behaviour of Beninese customers

IRIS SCHRÖTER¹, INA CRAMER¹, GEORGES DJOHY², MARCUS MERGENTHALER¹

¹*South Westphalia University of Applied Science, Agricultural Economics, Germany*

²*University of Parakou, National School of Statistics, Planning and Demography (ENSPD), Benin*

Abstract

Front-of-pack (FOP) design elements communicate directly to customers and are therefore considered a key factor in the point-of-purchase decision. This importance of FOP design prompted a series of conventional and participatory studies aimed at supporting women's groups in Nikki and Banikoara, northern Benin, to develop an appealing FOP design for their artisanal child food products. Based on this groundwork, a local designer created drafts of the FOP design for two products per location: porridge and stew in Banikoara; porridge and sweets in Nikki. Following an evaluation and selection procedure, the colour design and the position of the groups' logo remained under discussion. To clarify this issue, a field experiment was conducted with 64 potential child food customers in Banikoara and 99 in Nikki: The products were packaged in 500 g portions and labelled in four design variants, varying the position of the logo (bottom/top) and the background colour (pale/intense). Simulating an open market situation, participants were asked to select one pack of each of the two products offered at each location, to rate the attractiveness of the design and to provide an estimate of the realistic product price and the maximum price they would be prepared to pay. Each individual was financially compensated for participating in the study.

The results indicate that the design features analysed had no influence on the participants' choice for the porridge products. An intense background colour was preferred for both the stew and the sweets, with the latter also demonstrating a preference for the logo to be placed at the bottom ($p < 0.05$). The packaging design was generally considered attractive. However, it was rated higher in Nikki than in Banikoara ($p < 0.05$), indicating that there is still room for improvement. The estimated realistic prices for all products were found to be similar. However, approximately 20 % of participants in Nikki stated a maximum price below the realistic price, indicating that they do not perceive the product to be affordable for themselves.

The findings may be used to inform the refinement of the FOP design and the marketing strategy of the women's groups.

Keywords: Child food affordability, logo position, packaging attractiveness