Author’s response to reviews

Title: Pilot Randomized Controlled Trial Testing the Influence of Front-Of-Pack Sugar Warning Labels on Food Demand

Authors:

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Author’s response to reviews:

Dear Editor,

Thank you for the opportunity to resubmit our manuscript. We have addressed all remaining comments as noted below. Let us know if you have additional concerns.

Editor Comments:

As your manuscript reports the findings of a randomized controlled trial in human participants we would expect to see that your trial has been registered in a suitable registry. Please see: https://www.biomedcentral.com/getpublished/editorial-policies#trial+registration

Please add the trial registration number as the last line of your abstract along with the date of registration. Please indicate here if registration is retrospective.

- This has been added.

Please remove mention of branding from the manuscript. In Figure 1 if possible please try to mask brand names.

- Branding has been masked from all product-related images and text.
Reviewer reports:

Miranda Blake (Reviewer 1):

The authors have addressed the review comments well and I have just a few remaining queries.

- We thank the reviewer for the positive feedback.

Line 38. "4 percent points" should be "4 percentage points"

- Apologies for the oversight. This change has been made.

Lines 227-232. Please clarify whether these previous studies were hypothetical or real-world studies.

- These previous studies were hypothetical. This has been clarified in the revised text (lines 227-232), which now states:

A text-only warning label was shown to reduce purchase probabilities of SSBs, reduce perceived product attractiveness, quality and taste, and reduce perceptions of consumer “coolness” in a hypothetical experiment (33). Another hypothetical trial focusing on warning labels for SSBs showed that the labels increase parents’ understanding of health harms associated with over-consumption of SSBs and reduce intentions to purchase SSBs for their children (22).

Line 255 Suggest replace “proportions” with “dimensions” for clarity

- Agree. This change has been made.

Figure 3. Would participants see all 3 of the versions of a product like this at once? I think not. Figure 2 already demonstrates the differences in on-package labels between arms (and you could potentially add a control example to Figure 2). Could Figure 3 be replaced with an actual hypothetical choice scenario? (e.g. if you search for sour worms what would the range of products displayed look like?)

- To address this concern and that of the editor who asked us to remove any branded images, we have replaced Figure 2 with a modified Figure 3. In the revised Figure we show what participants would have seen in the three separate arms for a single product, where the product name is blurred out. We believe the revised figure sufficiently demonstrates both the differences
in on-package labels between arms and conveys what participants actually saw while also addressing the Editor’s concern.

Gaston Ares (Reviewer 2):

The authors have addressed all my comments.
- We thank the reviewer for the feedback.

Best,

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