

New Innovative Interdisciplinary study Uncovers the Secret Behind the Taste Changes of Plain Packaging Cigarettes

Claims of changes in cigarette taste is an issue faced by many countries who implemented the WHO tobacco product plain packaging initiative.

RIYADH, SAUDI ARABIA, May 18, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- An issue faced by many countries who implemented the tobacco product plain packaging initiative recommended by the [WHO Tobacco control framework](#). The researchers used virtual reality and ideas from food sciences to untangle the mystery. The study found that there were no differences in the ability of the participants to identify even their favorite cigarette brand.

In Australia and United Kingdom two of the first countries who adopted the Plain Packaging tobacco policy taste change claims were among the first complaints made by smokers. A few studies have investigated this issue in other countries that implemented plain packaging. These studies did not find significant differences in taste, but they highlighted the difficulties of measuring this variable, which may affect the results. The main difficulty is in the method of measuring the difference between the branded and the plain-packaged cigarettes without exposing participants to the brand they are trying during the study. No previous study was fully able to blind the participants to the cigarette branding, although the senses are known to affect the taste.

The same claims of taste changes raised in Saudi Arabia one of the countries who has recently adopted the plain packaging regulation. "These complaints persisted for more than 90 days, starting in mid-November 2019 and continuing until the writing of the first draft of this manuscript, on March 2020. Rumors that the cigarettes currently sold in Saudi Arabia in plain packaging have toxic chemicals or other non-tobacco substances intended to harm smokers are circulating widely in the media and by word of mouth" the study stated.

The researchers from [Sharik Association for Health Research](#) and Alfaisal University both non-profit organizations in Saudi Arabia promised to get to the bottom of the issue and find a logical scientific explanation for this cross-country phenomenon.

In their research article recently published in the scientific journal JMIR Formative Research under the title "Reporting of Differences in Taste Between Branded and Unbranded Cigarettes by Smokers Blinded to Cigarette Branding: Within-Person, [Randomized Crossover Study](#)" the

researchers used Virtual Reality application To blind participants from recognizing the type of cigarette, each participant wore virtual reality goggles, accompanied by special software to alter the visual reality of the smoker. In addition, the participants wore medical gloves to alter the feeling of touching the cigarettes with their hands. Then, participants received 6 sequences of different random exposures (3 puffs) to 3 plain-packaged cigarettes (2 from their favorite brand and 1 from another brand as a control) and 3 branded cigarettes (2 from the favorite brand and 1 from another brand as a control).

The study concluded “ After controlling participants’ visual and touch perceptions, no significant differences were observed in their ability to identify plain versus branded cigarettes, and more surprisingly, no significant differences were seen in their ability to identify their favorite brand versus non-favorite brands. No alarming findings emerged related to immediate cough or shortness of breath.”

In addition, the experiment convinced participating smokers that the taste has not changed after all. The study stated “In terms of participants’ pre-experiment opinions about changes in the new plain-packaged cigarettes’ taste and content, 16 out of 18 participants (89%) thought they detected a change compared to the old branded cigarettes. However, after the experiment, all participants reported that they had changed their opinion and did not believe any differences existed between plain-packaged and branded cigarettes.”

Finally, it is worth noting that sensory perception and sensory research are priorities within the tobacco industry because they have direct effects on commercial concerns. Sensory aspects contribute to smoker satisfaction and tobacco product acceptance, and they play an important role in controlling cigarette-puffing behavior. Tobacco companies have capitalized on distinct sensory preferences across gender, age, and ethnic groups by tailoring products for specific populations. This study provided evidence that with the use of virtual reality and gloves to blind participants, they were not able to differentiate between their favorite brand and other non-favorite brands. This highlights the fact that the tobacco industry understands such a topic in more depth and detail than regulators generally do.

Dr. Nasser BinDhim

Sharik Association for Health Research

+966 580033299

me@nassersite.com

Visit us on social media:

[Twitter](#)

[LinkedIn](#)

This press release can be viewed online at: <https://www.einpresswire.com/article/541437324>

EIN Presswire's priority is source transparency. We do not allow opaque clients, and our editors try to be careful about weeding out false and misleading content. As a user, if you see something we have missed, please do bring it to our attention. Your help is welcome. EIN Presswire,

Everyone's Internet News Presswire™, tries to define some of the boundaries that are reasonable in today's world. Please see our Editorial Guidelines for more information.

© 1995-2021 IPD Group, Inc. All Right Reserved.