DOI: https://doi.org/10.67203/gjhrr.2025.ajumzbc3

AWARENESS AND PRACTICE OF EXAMINATION OF HEALTH PRODUCT LABELS OF CONSUMERS AMONG SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS OF SABON GARI LGA, KADUNA STATE NIGERIA

[1*]Shehu HARANDE, [2]HUSSEINI, I. M., [2]AYABIOGBE C. I., [2]Abdullahi Lawan, [1]YUSUF, A. T., & [1]YAKUBU, Safiya

[1]Department of Physical and Health Education, Federal University of Education Zaria, Kaduna State Nigeria.
[2]Department of Human Kinetics and Health Education, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Kaduna State, Nigeria
[*]Corresponding Author: Harande2013@gmail.com; +2348027941291

Abstract

The study assessed the awareness and practice of examination of health product labels of consumers among Senior Secondary School Students of Sabon Gari Local Government Area, Kaduna State. 300 Senior Secondary School Students Volunteered to respond to the questionnaire across public and private Secondary Schools. The instrument for data collection was a self-developed questionnaire which was validated and pilot-tested with a reliability index of 0.79 and tagged as a questionnaire on awareness of health product labels of consumers "QAHPLS". The other segment with a reliability index of 0.77 for the practice of examination of health products labels, which was tagged as Practice of Examination of Health Products Labels of Consumers "OPEHPLS". The research instrument was correctly filled and returned for coding and analysis with the use of Frequencies and Percentages, Infrential statistics statistics of independent sample t-test was used to test the Hypotheses at 0.05 alpha level. Based on the findings of the study, the findings revealed that a significant difference exists in awareness of the examination of health product labels of consumers among Senior Secondary School Students in Sabon Gari LGA ($p=.003 < 0.05$). Also, the study revealed that there was no significant difference in practices of examination of health product labels of consumers among Senior Secondary School Students in Sabon Gari. It was recommended among others that improvement is needed with regards to practices of examination of health product labels of Consumers among Senior Secondary School Students in Sabon Gari L.G.A.

Keywords: Awareness and Practice, Health Products, Labels, Consumers

Introduction

As a consumer of health products and services, you need to know how to evaluate advertisements, since many people are in the business of supplying goods and services to consumers, competition is keen for their money, and advertising is used to convince consumers of the superiority of one product over the other. Thus consumers rather than falling prey to the enticements of advertising, must learn to evaluate the various items which provide value received (Umar, Shehu, Akorede, Sa'ad, Suleiman & Umaru, 2024). Kajang and Jatau (2012) stated that government at different levels provide supervisory and regulatory food and drug services for consumer protection, these services are concerned with four possible dangers to health as follows:

1. It would be possible for infectious organisms to reach the consumer in or on food or beverages.
2. It would be possible for food or drugs to contain toxic substances.
3. It would be possible for some of these products to be adulterated with less expensive and less desirable material so that the consumer would not get what paid for.
4. It would be possible for some of the used to contain habitual farming or injurious substances without the consumer knowing.

Femi, Oluleye, and Ajayi (2010) stated that consumer health education is a formal educational program designed primarily to help consumers acquire the relevant knowledge and skills to protect themselves from or avoid inferior products. Also, Washi (2012) stated that examining labels information of health products is extremely useful for people who are on a special diet or with nutrition-related health problems and diseases such as obesity, diabetes, cardiovascular diseases and various types of cancers, as it helps them to make informed choices of food.

On the other hand, a study by Susannah (2011) reported that examination of product labels is an important way to get people to make healthy choices, and to educate them to read and use food and other product labels. Internationally, food labelling has effectively achieved healthier consumer consumption behaviour and product development which transcends into improved health outcomes. Moreso, Rani (2003) conducted a study titled, knowledge level of Nigeria College Girls about Consumer

Rights and reported that a significant level of utilization of consumer rights by consumers during the purchase of health products was noticed. Also, a 2022 research by Abugu and Orogun examined the influence of food labelling on consumers' buying choices among academic staff and students at Enugu State University of Science and Technology and the University of Nigeria, Enugu Campus. The findings revealed that certain label characteristics, such as information on food ingredients, nutrition values, label colour, and health and safety information, significantly and positively influenced consumers' buying choices.

In addition, Osei (2021) conducted a study on consumers' use and understanding of food label information and its effect on their purchasing decision in Kumasi Ghana and reported that 80% of the respondents accessed food label information before purchase, about 90% of the respondents reported they understood the nutritional information they read, respectively. Ndubisi, Anyanwo and Nwanko (2016) conducted a study on protecting Nigerian consumers. An expository examination of the role of the Consumer Protection Council reported that on label checking among consumers at Imo State University, Nigeria, the results showed that the majority of the respondents do not take time to study the labels on products before purchase and as a result, they do not have full information about the products that would help them to protect their rights as consumers.

The study conducted by Harande (2021) on knowledge and practices of consumer health education among the students of the Federal College of Education Zaria, Nigeria demonstrated that that both male and female students at the Federal College of Education Zaria had little or little knowledge of regards to consumer health education. Also reported that male and female respondents develop negative practices with regard to consumer health education. Another study by Yusuf (2022) on students' adherence to consumer rights and examination labels of health products in tertiary institutions in Kano State, Nigeria, reported that tertiary institutions in Kano State are examining the labels of health products which offer them room for selecting good products and promote their healthful living.

Problem Statement

Consumers have the power to control the producers, the producers depend on the demands of the consumers for goods and services, the producers produce what consumers buy, and the products that consumers do not buy will no longer be produced. However, Ijiwere (2000) stated that consumer education is the process of exposing people to the knowledge and skills needed by individuals, groups, families and corporate bodies to become competent consumers in a world that is constantly changing. One of the ways through which the Nigerian consumer can be protected against the activities of quacks is consumer education. This is because the individual will be equipped with the critical skills to be an intelligent buyer and user of health products.

Given the aforementioned, the researchers were motivated to conduct a study to Unearth information that will be helpful to the students, parents and governments with regards to awareness and practice of examination of health products labels of consumers among Senior Secondary School Students in Sabon Gari Local Government area of Kaduna State.

Research Hypothesis

The following hypotheses were formulated to guide the conduct of this study.

Hypothesis: (Ho_1) There is no significant gender difference with regard to awareness of the examination of health product labels of consumers among Senior Secondary school students of Sabon Gari LGA, Kaduna.

Hypothesis: (Ho_2). There is no significant gender difference with regard to the practice of examination of health product labels of consumers among Senior Secondary School Students of Sabon Gari LGA, Kaduna.

Methodology

The descriptive survey research design was used for the study. The study was carried out in Sabon Gari Local Government Area of Kaduna State among Senior Secondary School Students. The instrument for data collection was a self-developed questionnaire which was validated and standardized with the reliability index of 0.79 for the awareness of examination of health products labels, which was tagged as Questionnaire on Awareness of Health Products Labels of Consumer "QAHPLC. The other segment was validated and standardized with a reliability index of 0.77 for the practice of examination of health products labels, which was tagged Questionnaire on Practice of Examination of Health Products Labels of Consumers "OPENHPLC". Simple and systematic random sampling techniques were used to select public and private secondary schools and three hundred (300) consenting respondents. The copies of the questionnaire were administered across the schools with the help of seven research assistants using the method of distribution and collection on the spot. The administration of the questionnaire lasts for five weeks. The research instrument was correctly filled and returned for coding and analysis with the use of frequencies and percentages. Hypotheses were tested using inferential statistics of independent and one sample t-test at 0.05 alpha level to find out the significant difference among the respondents with regards to awareness and practice of examination of health products labels of consumers among Senior Secondary School Students of Sabon Gari Local Government Area.

Results

Three hundred (300) copies of the questionnaire were distributed among Senior Secondary School Students within the local government area of study and the return rate was hundred (100%) per cent.

Table 1: Demographics of Respondents

S/N	Characteristics of Respondents	Frequency (F)	Percentage (100%)
1.	**Age**		
	14-16 Years	201	67.0
	17-19 Years	94	31.3
	20 Years and above	05	1.7
	Total	**300**	**100%**
2.	**Gender**		
	Male	155	51.7
	Female	145	48.3
	Total	**300**	**100%**
3.	SS III	100	33.3
	SS II	110	36.7
	SS 1	090	30.0
	Total	**300**	**100%**

Table 1 shows that the majority of the respondents (67.0%) were within the age range of 14-16 years, while another significant number of the respondents (31.3%) fell within the age range of 17-19 years. The results also reported that the majority of the respondents (51.7%) were male, while 48.33% of the respondents were female respectively. The results further revealed that most of the respondents (36.7%) fall in the category of Senior Secondary Class II (SS-II), followed by 33.3% of the respondents in the category of Senior Secondary Class III (SS III), then 30.0% of the respondents in the category of Senior Secondary class I (SSI), respectively.

Hypotheses Testing

Hypothesis: (Ho_1) There is no significant gender difference with regard to awareness of the examination of health product labels of consumers among Senior Secondary school students of Sabon Gari LGA, Kaduna.

Table 2: Independent sample t-test showing gender difference in awareness of examination of health products labels of consumers among Senior Secondary school students.

	Sex	N	Mean	Mean diff.	t. Value	df	P. Value	Decision
Awareness	Male	155	3.7300	0.23	10.73	298	.003	Rejected
	Female	145	3.5000					

Table 2 clearly shows that the mean score of male respondents on awareness of the examination of health product labels is 3.73, while female respondents had a mean score of 3.50. The mean difference is 0.23. The independent sample t-test results indicate t=10.73t = 10.73 t=10.73, df=298 df = 298 df =298, and p=0.003 p = 0.003 p=0.003. Since the p-value is less than 0.05, this indicates a statistically significant difference exists in awareness of health product label examination between male and female students. Therefore, the null hypothesis, which stated that there is no significant difference in awareness of health product label examination among Senior Secondary School students in Sabon Gari Local Government Area, is hereby rejected**.**

Hypothesis: (Ho_2) There is no significant gender difference with regard to the practice of examination of health product labels of consumers among Senior Secondary school students of Sabon Gari LGA, Kaduna.

Table 3: Independents sample t-test summary showing gender difference with regards to the practice of examination of health product labels of consumers among Senior Secondary school students.

	Sex	N	Mean	Mean diff.	t. Value	df	P. Value	Decision
Practice	Male	155	4.9176	0.35	1.852	298	.331	Retain
	Female	145	4.5701					

Table 3 reported that the mean score of male respondents on the practice of examining health product labels is 4.92**,** while female respondents had a mean score of 4.57**.** The mean difference is **0.35**. The independent sample t-test results indicated that (t=1.852 t = 1.852 t=1.852, df=298df = 298 df=298, and p=0.331p = 0.331p=0.331). Since the p-value is greater than 0.05, this indicates that there is no statistically significant difference in the practice of examining health product labels between male and female students. Therefore, the null hypothesis, which states that there is no significant gender difference in the practice

of examining health product labels among Senior Secondary School students in Sabon Gari LGA, Kaduna State**,** is hereby retained.

Discussion of Findings

The finding of the study clearly showed that there was a significant gender difference with regard to awareness of the examination of health product labels of consumers among Senior Secondary School Students with a minor factor of 0.23 which is a negligible mean difference. The finding corroborates a 2022 study by Abugu and Orogun examining the influence of food labelling on consumers' buying choices among academic staff and students at Enugu State University of Science and Technology and the University of Nigeria, Enugu Campus. The findings revealed that certain label characteristics, such as information on food ingredients, nutrition values, label colour, and health and safety information, significantly and positively influenced consumers' buying choices. Credence also goes to Osei (2012) who discovered that about 90% of the respondents reported having understood the nutritional information labelled during their purchase of health products. Similarly, the study was in agreement with a 2022 study by Adesina et al. assessed consumers' knowledge and use of nutritional labelling information in Lagos, Nigeria. The study found that 57.9% of consumers had a positive attitude towards using food labels, and 58% of the respondents' buying decisions were influenced by food labels.

The findings of the study further showed that there was no significant gender difference in the practice of examination of health product labels of consumers among Senior Secondary School Students with a minor factor (0.35) of mean difference with a value of .31 which is less than 0.05 alpha level (P = < 0.05) of significance. This outcome agrees with Osei (2012) who reported that 80% of respondents in Kumasi access food label information before purchasing their health products. The findings also agree with Mirsa (2007) who reported that a higher percentage of the respondents among College Students in Nigeria develop a positive attitude toward food label reading behaviour while purchasing their health products. On the other hand, Harande (2021) reported that male and female respondents develop negative practices with regard to consumer health education. In addition to the findings, credence goes to Yusuf (2022) who reported that students of tertiary institutions in Kano State, Nigeria, are examining the labels of health products which offer them room for selecting good products and promoting their healthful living.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it was concluded that there was a significant difference in awareness of the examination of health product labels of consumers among Senior Secondary School Students in Sabon Gari Local Government Area. It was also concluded that there was no significant difference in practices of examination of health product labels of consumers among Senior Secondary School Students in Sabon Gari Local Government Area.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusion of the study, the researcher made these recommendations:

1. Improvement is needed with regard to awareness of the examination of health product labels of consumers among Senior Secondary School Students in Sabon Gari Local Government Area, Kaduna State.
2. Improvement is needed with regards to practices of examination of health product labels of consumers among Senior Secondary School Students in Sabon Gari Local Government Area, Kaduna State.

References

Abugu, J. O., & Orogun, E. S. (2022). Promoting food preference at university shopping centre through food labelling: The Nigerian perspective. *British International Journal of Applied Economics, Finance and Accounting, 5*(6). https://aspjournals.org/Journals/index.php/bijbmr/article/view/211

Evaristus, A., Ajayi, B., Emmanuel, O. A., Babatunde, A., Mofoluwake, P. A., Tomike, O., Adebanke, O. I., & Mercy, E. U. (2022). Consumers' knowledge and use of nutritional labelling information in Lagos, Nigeria. *Sustainability, 14*(1). https://www.mdpi.com/2071-1050/14/1/578

Femi, J., Olulere, S., & Ajayi, A. (2010). *Comprehensive physical and health education.* Mercy Land Publishers Ltd.

Harande, S. (2021). Knowledge and practices of consumer health education among students of Federal College of Education Zaria, Nigeria. *Journal of Nigerian Association for Physical, Health Education, Recreation, Sports and Dance (JOURNAPHERSD), 9*(1), 87-98.

Ijiwere, A. A. (2000). Impact of education on consumer activities in Nigeria. *Africa Journal of Students in Education, 2*(2), 223-235.

Kajang, Y. G., & Jatau, A. A. (2012). *Basis for health and health education teaching.* Akings Press and Services Ltd.

Mirsa, R. (2007). Knowledge, attitudes and label use among college students. *Journal of the American Dietetic Association, 107*(12), 2130-2134.

Ndubisi, E. C., Anyanwo, A. V., & Nwankwo, C. A. (2016). Protecting the Nigerian consumers: An expository examination of the role of consumer protection council. *Arabian Journal of Business Management, 10*(2), 225-226.

Osei, M. T., Lawer, D. R., & Aidoo, R. (2012). Consumers' use and understanding of food label information and effect on their purchasing decision in Ghana: A study of Kumasi Metropolis. *Asian Journal of Agriculture and Rural Development, 2*(3), 351-365.

Rani, A. (2003). Knowledge level of college girls about consumer rights. *Journal of Family Ecology, 1*(2), 187-190.

Susunnah, T. (2011). *Design, format and impact of front-of-pack nutrition labelling: An independent review of refereed literature.* Australian Food and Grocery Council.

Umar, I., Shehu, H., Akorede, S. N., Sa'ad, U., Suleiman, M. A., & Umaru, M. (2024). Effects of health education intervention on use of food labels among students of Federal University Dutse. *Global Journal of Health Related Researches*, *6*(1), 40-47.

Washi, S. (2012). Awareness of food labelling among consumers in groceries in Al-Ain, United Arab Emirates. *International Journal of Marketing Studies, 4*(1), 38-47.

Yusuf, I. (2022). Students' adherence to consumer rights and examination labels of health products in tertiary institutions of Kano State. In *Contemporary issues and challenges in public health education and human movement in the 21st century.* Nuhu Bayero Centre, B.U.K Kano.