



CONSUMER ATTITUDES ON THE ACCEPTANCE OF AÇAÍ FRUIT JUICES



Sara Sabbe^a, Wim Verbeke^b, Rosires Deliza^{c,d}, Virginia Matta^e, Patrick Van Damme^a

^aDepartment of Plant Production, Ghent University, Belgium; ^bDepartment of Agricultural Economics, Ghent University, Belgium; ^cEmbrapa Labex, Montpellier, France; ^dINRA-UMR, Dijon, France; ^eEmbrapa Food Technology, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

1. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

- To which extent does health information changes consumers' acceptance of two açai fruit juices that have a low versus a high a priori overall liking?
- Are there differences in information effect due to interactions with consumers' background attitudes, i.e. tendency to avoid novel foods (Food Neophobia or FNeo) and interest in healthy eating (General Health Interest or GHI)?

2. METHODOLOGY

Belgian participants ($n=86$) evaluated two açai fruit juices (4% açai and 40% açai) in two different sessions.

- Session 1 (Day 1): Sensory evaluation of both açai juices WITHOUT health information.
- Session 2 (Day 8): Sensory evaluation of both açai juices WITH health information + background attitude questionnaire.

95.3% of the respondents indicated to be unfamiliar with açai.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. EFFECT OF HEALTH INFORMATION

Table 1 - Mean rating scores for the 4% and 40% açai fruit juice without (- Info) and with (+ Info) health information

Attribute	4% açai		40% açai	
	- Info	+ Info	- Info	+ Info
Overall liking	6.71 ^A	7.07 ^B	3.79 ^A	4.12 ^B
Taste	6.87 ^A	7.22 ^B	4.56	4.56
Nutritional value	5.85 ^A	6.09 ^B	6.34 ^A	6.69 ^B
Perceived healthiness	6.15 ^A	6.70 ^B	5.90 ^A	7.07 ^B
Purchase intention	4.47 ^A	4.70 ^B	2.33 ^A	2.71 ^B

Attributes measured on a 9-point scale; purchase intention measured on a 7-point scale

^{A,B} For each juice, means between both information conditions with different superscripts are significantly different

- There is a positive, though small, effect of health information.
- There is a preference for the good tasting or 4% açai fruit juice in both information conditions, although the least-liked or 40% açai juice is perceived healthier and more nutritious in presence of health information.

3.2. EFFECT OF BACKGROUND ATTITUDE – FOOD NEOPHOBIA (FNeo)

Table 2 - GLM Repeated Measures Analysis results with FNeo as between-subjects factors

Effect	Overall liking	Taste	Perceived healthiness	Nutritional value	Purchase intention
	p	p	p	p	p
Info	< 0.001	0.091	< 0.001	< 0.001	0.001
Juice	< 0.001	< 0.001	0.563	< 0.001	< 0.001
FNeo	0.012	0.011	0.608	0.631	0.003
Info x Juice	0.879	0.045	0.001	0.498	0.247
Info x FNeo	0.106	0.152	0.124	1.000	0.442
Juice x FNeo	0.118	0.047	0.055	0.410	0.104
Info x Juice x FNeo	0.993	0.541	0.428	0.588	0.479

Note: Bold type indicates significant values ($p<0.05$)

- Consumers with low levels of FNeo evaluate both açai juices better on overall liking and taste and show a higher purchase intention.
- Consumers with a low FNeo like the taste of the 40% açai juice significantly more as compared to consumers with a high level of FNeo, despite similar evaluations of the 4% açai juice.

3.3. EFFECT OF BACKGROUND ATTITUDE – GENERAL HEALTH INTEREST (GHI)

Table 3 - GLM Repeated Measures Analysis results with GHI as between-subjects factors

Effect	Overall liking	Taste	Perceived healthiness	Nutritional value	Purchase intention
	p	p	p	p	p
Info	< 0.001	0.067	< 0.001	< 0.001	< 0.001
Juice	< 0.001	< 0.001	0.626	< 0.001	< 0.001
GHI	0.563	0.828	0.575	0.617	0.727
Info x Juice	0.810	0.047	< 0.001	0.505	0.293
Info x GHI	0.776	0.514	0.619	0.201	0.876
Juice x GHI	0.210	0.110	0.425	0.051	0.026
Info x Juice x GHI	0.592	0.478	0.377	0.420	0.458

Note: Bold type indicates significant values ($p<0.05$)

- People with a low GHI show a significantly higher purchase intention for the 4% açai juice than respondents with a high GHI. The high GHI group has a significantly higher purchase intention for the 40% açai juice as compared to the low GHI group.
- Both low and high GHI groups show a higher purchase intention for the 4% açai fruit juice than for the 40% açai juice.

4. CONCLUSION

- Health information provides little added value to fruit juices as these are considered to be intrinsically healthy.
- Consumers' acceptability and intention to purchase açai fruit juices is driven most by their sensory pleasure and less by the claimed health benefits.
- Health information does not interact with consumers' background attitudes.
- Background attitudes effectively matter in shaping consumers' acceptability and are to be taken into account when positioning unfamiliar foods.

5. REFERENCES

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MORE INFORMATION

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Sara.Sabbe@UGent.be or www.pavuc.soton.ac.uk