

FILIPINO YOUNG ADULT PERCEPTIONS OF MENTHOL AND FLAVOR CAPSULE CIGARETTES

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Background

- The Philippines has a high adult smoking prevalence (22.7%), large menthol tobacco market share, and a growing market for flavor capsule cigarettes
- We explored consumer perceptions of flavored cigarette packaging among young adult Filipinos

Methods

- 8 focus group discussions held with 63 young adults, ages 18 – 24 years, in Metro Manila
- Participants viewed and sorted 26 cigarette packs and answered questions about interpretations of packaging, relative harm and attractiveness
- Conducted thematic analysis

Results

- Most participants assessed relative harm of cigarettes based on strength; blue menthol perceived as less harmful and green menthol as more harmful
- Flavor capsule cigarettes perceived as attractive because of colors and expectations re: taste
- Participants compared flavor capsules in cigarettes to candy

Young adult Filipinos find flavor capsule cigarettes attractive and express an interest in trying them.



Responses regarding color, strength, and harm

“The darkly colored packaging creates the impression that it’s strong, thus harmful due to its chemical content.”

“These ‘lights’, we put them here because they seem to contain fewer chemicals, so we think they are less harmful.”

“Its whiteness suggests being light or mild.”

“It looks strong even if its menthol. Because its dark.”

“Because white pertains to light, so if it’s lights it has less negative effect.”

Responses reflecting interest in flavor capsule cigarettes

“I guess it has something to do with the “pop up” ...like [Esse Pop] and [Marlboro Ice Blast]. It kind of creates some anticipation of the taste when I reach this point while smoking this stick.”

“I just find them enticing.”

“And it’s nice to look at. If they’ll see this, they will try it.”

“It makes you ask and be curious about the cigarette.”

“I will try this because it has a button.”



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