

How Soft Claims on Child-Targeted Food Packaging Influence Parental Decisions

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Introduction

Food marketing often uses packaging claims to influence purchasing decisions, emphasizing attributes that do not always reflect the product's true nutritional quality. Particularly in child-targeted foods, the rise of unregulated Soft Claims like "natural" or "grandma's recipe" can mislead parents when choosing products. Despite existing regulations on nutritional and health claims, the lack of control over Soft Claims poses a risk to public health. This study explores how these claims affect parents' food choices, aiming to inform better regulation and promote healthier consumer decisions.

Methodology

The dependent variable of this study is parent's choices, while the independent variable is Soft Claims. Data collection was carried out using the Qualtrics tool.

The work was designed and developed through an experiment involving 89 parents of adolescents from schools in Cordoba, who completed the survey outside of school using mobile phones or computers.

Measure 1	Measure 2	t	df	p
Con claim	Sin claim	0.557	8	<0.001

Nota. Prueba t de Student

Results & Discussion

- Data from 89 parents was collected via Qualtrics and analyzed using Excel and JASP.
- Parents chose products with Soft Claims significantly more often ($M = 11.56$) than those without ($M = 5.10$).
- **Results confirm that Soft Claims influence parents' food choices (H1).**
- This complements previous research showing that other types of claims also affect parental decisions.
- Findings align with last year's study showing Soft Claims also influence children's choices (published).
- Highlights the need for government and organizational attention: Soft Claims on unhealthy foods may encourage poor dietary habits and contribute to childhood obesity.

Objectives & Hypotheses

This research aims to assess **whether Soft Claims on children's food packaging influence parents' food choices**.

The initial hypothesis of this research is to determine whether the presence of Soft Claims on packaging encourages the selection of the food product (H1).

Images and Tables

Estadísticos descriptivos	Con Soft Claim	Sin Soft Claim
Valid	89	89
Mean	11.562	5.101
Std. Deviation	1.224	1.001
Skewness	0.367	-0.903
Std. Error of Skewness	0.255	0.255
Shapiro-Wilk	0.927	0.861
P-value of Shapiro-Wilk	<.001	<.001
Minimum	9.000	2.000
Maximum	15.000	7.000

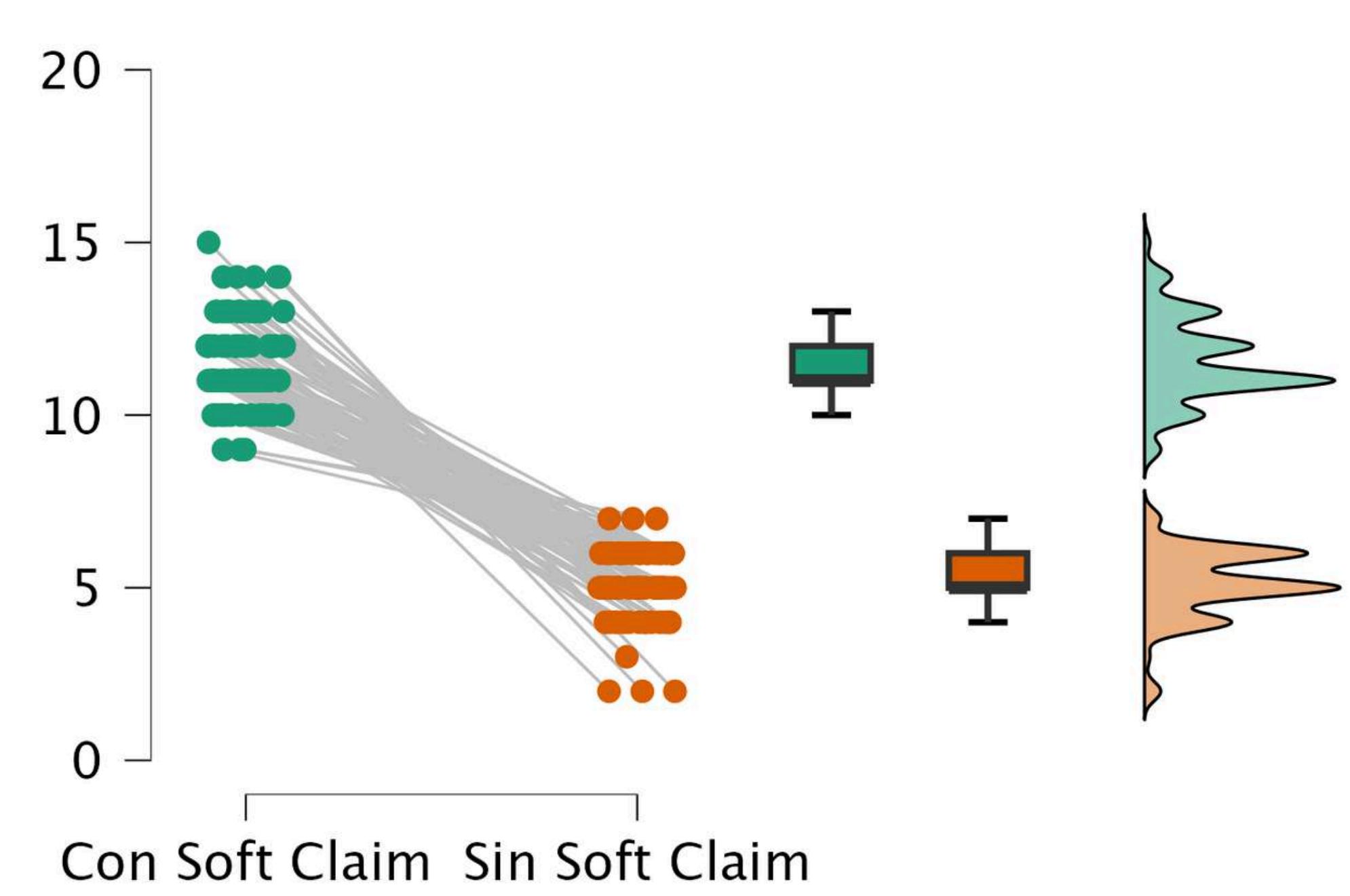


Figure 1: Raincloud plot comparing "Packaging with Claim" vs. "Packaging without Claim" choices