

Infant Formula and Toddler Milk Marketing within the Grocery Store Environments

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Abstract

Nutritional-related behaviors and eating patterns are established during early childhood, and many parents struggle to get their children to practice healthy eating. Grocery stores are the primary venues that are vital in shaping eating habits and overall health. Many marketing companies use this fact to advertise Sugar-Sweetened Beverages (SSB) within the grocers, including toddler milk and breast milk substitutes. Nutrition Environment Measure Survey in Store (NEM-S) was conducted in 30 grocers located in immigrant enclaves of Dearborn, Warren, Hamtramck, and Detroit in Michigan. Scores were compared with the scores of the 48 grocers in Metro Detroit as a comparison group). Living in immigrant enclaves is linked with higher access to unsweetened beverages, such as formula and toddler milk, leading to higher rates of childhood obesity among this population.

Introduction

The commercialization of infant and toddler milk misleads caregivers in the benefits of SSBs, such as toddler milk and infant formula. It influences parents to purchase and serve these products to their young children. Studies have shown that an increase in the consumption of SSBs significantly increases body mass index over time. This issue is a public health concern.



Methodology

Data Collection

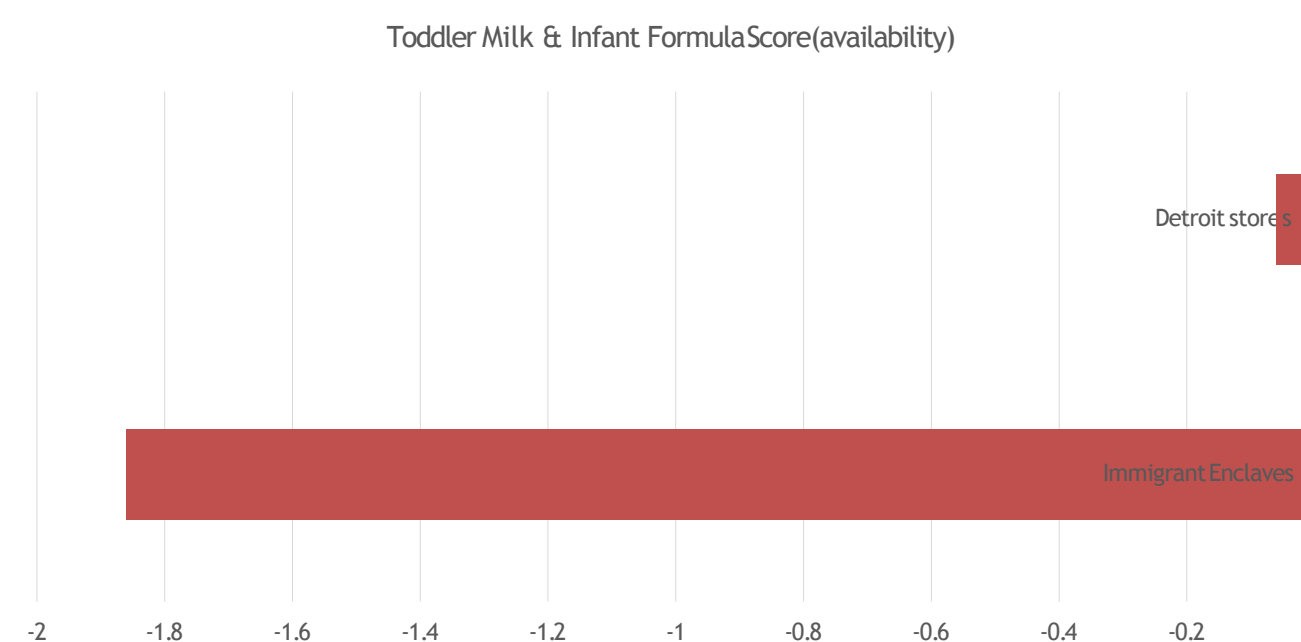
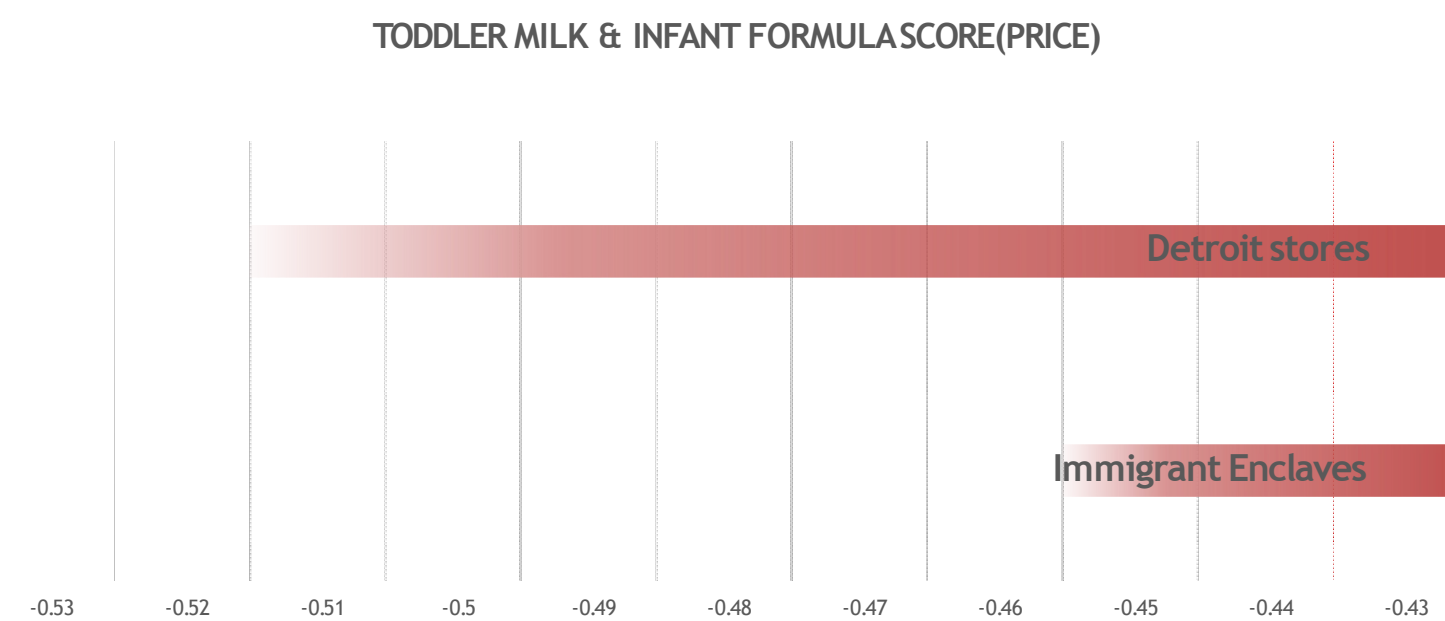
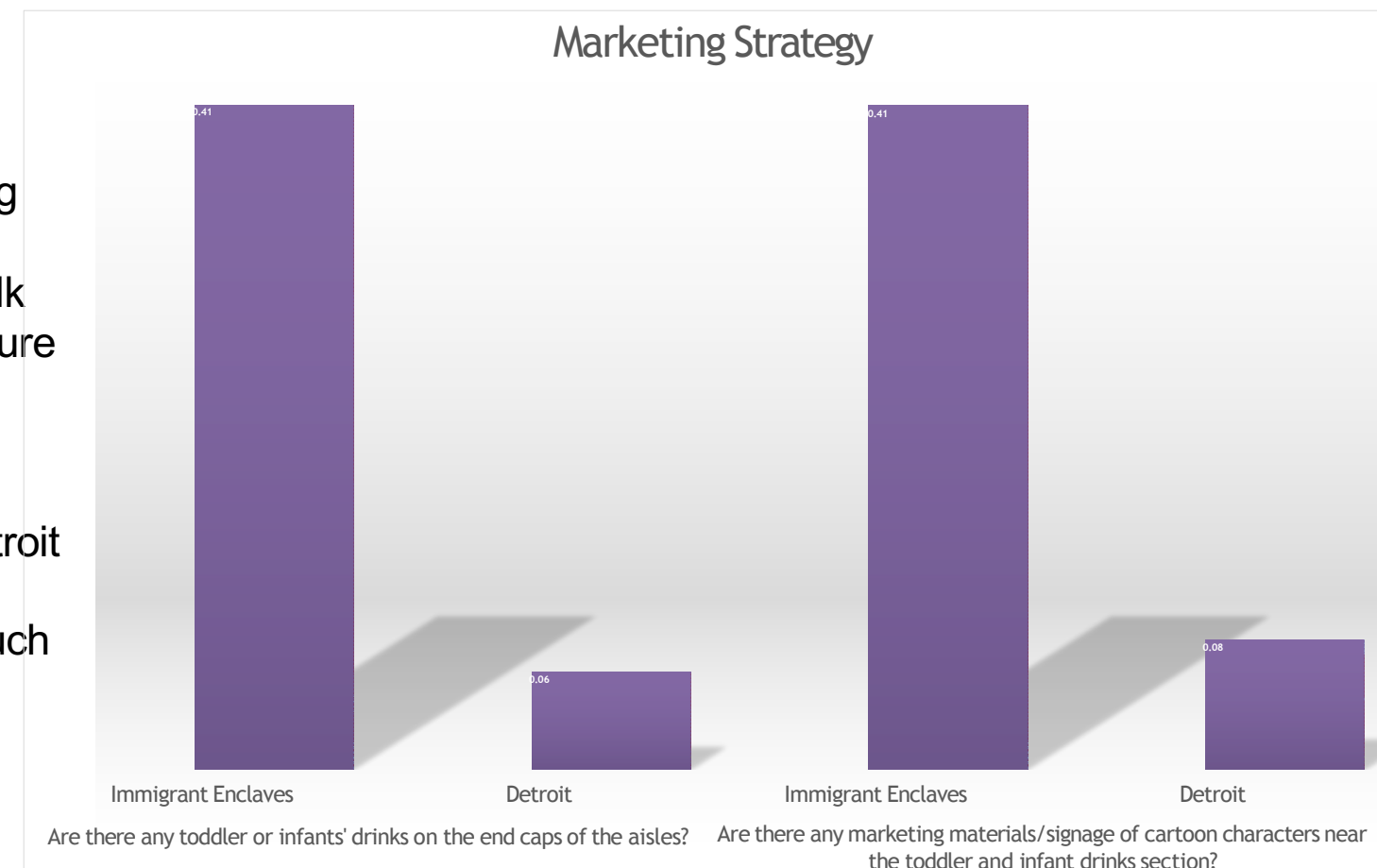
Quantitative data was collected by conducting the NEMS-S within the participating grocers. The NEMS-S is a nationally recognized tool to assess the community and consumer nutrition environments in food outlets.

Data Analysis

Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used to comparing the mean of NEMS scores of the participating grocers and determine whether a relationship exists between the two groups or not.

Results

In this study, the analyzed data showed significant higher availability of infant formula and toddler milk in immigrant enclaves' grocers than the comparison group in Metro Detroit. The price was cheaper for these products in immigrant enclaves but not statistically significant. Additionally, placement of these products on the end caps of the aisles with cartoons characters was the most marketing tactics As the analyzed data indicated. According to obtained data placing toddler drinks and infant at the end of aisle of the grocers in immigrant enclaves had the mean score of the 0.41 compared to the rest of the stores with the 0.06 of grocery stores in Detroit. In addition, using cartoons characters like signage to advertise SSBs had 0.41 mean score in the immigrant enclaves whereas other areas had a 0.8 mean score. Furthermore, the pricing is 52% below the average in other Detroit areas and 46% below in immigrant enclave areas of Detroit.



References:

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