



A Comprehensive Literature Review of Sugar Sweetened Beverage Consumption in Latin America

Introduction

Over many decades Latin America has been experiencing a shift in dietary habits, due in part to an overconsumption of sugary, processed foods- as well as an increase in sugar sweetened beverage consumption. Many sugar sweetened beverage companies have extensive marketing campaigns in this region therefore promoting increases in intake. This increase in intake is contributing to negative health outcomes including type 2 diabetes and decaying oral health. A comprehensive literature review was completed to examine the various marketing strategies used by sugar sweetened beverage companies to promote intake as well as the political tactics used to deter consumption. The purpose of the review was to provide a foundation for future research related to determining interventions to deter sugar sweetened beverage intake in Latin America.



Methodology

This Literature Review was conducted from July 18th, 2022 through December 14th, 2022. It was in collaboration with Dr. Cuy Castellanos for an independent research internship. 20 sources were read and analyzed during this review. The main themes found in this research are marketing techniques by SSB companies, the negative health implications of overconsumption of these beverages, and the tax regulations and policies put in place to lower SSB consumption.

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Findings

Marketing Techniques

- The ways in which food is advertised and marketed in the stores will impact if a person will purchase that product. A person is more likely to purchase a SSB is there was exterior advertising. The lower the exposure, the lower percentage and chance of a customer buying an SSB
- Additionally, it will have a direct correlation tot heir health in the long term.
- The marketing done in one’s food environment has a great impact on what type of food they purchase and eat.

Negative Health Effects

- Oral health is impacted by one’s SSB consumption, some of the negative implications are tooth decay and dental cavities. There is a correlation between the amount of SSBs consumed, and a person’s oral health. Therefore, the more SSBs one consumes, the worse their oral health will be
- Non-communicable diseases (NCDs) are more prominent and a person will be more susceptible to NCDs if they consume SSBs.
- Some of the NCDs that are most common, and a person will be more susceptible due if they consume high amounts of SSBs are: Type 2 Diabetes, Heart Disease, and Cardiovascular Disease (CVD). One has a risk for developing CVD the more sugar they consume.

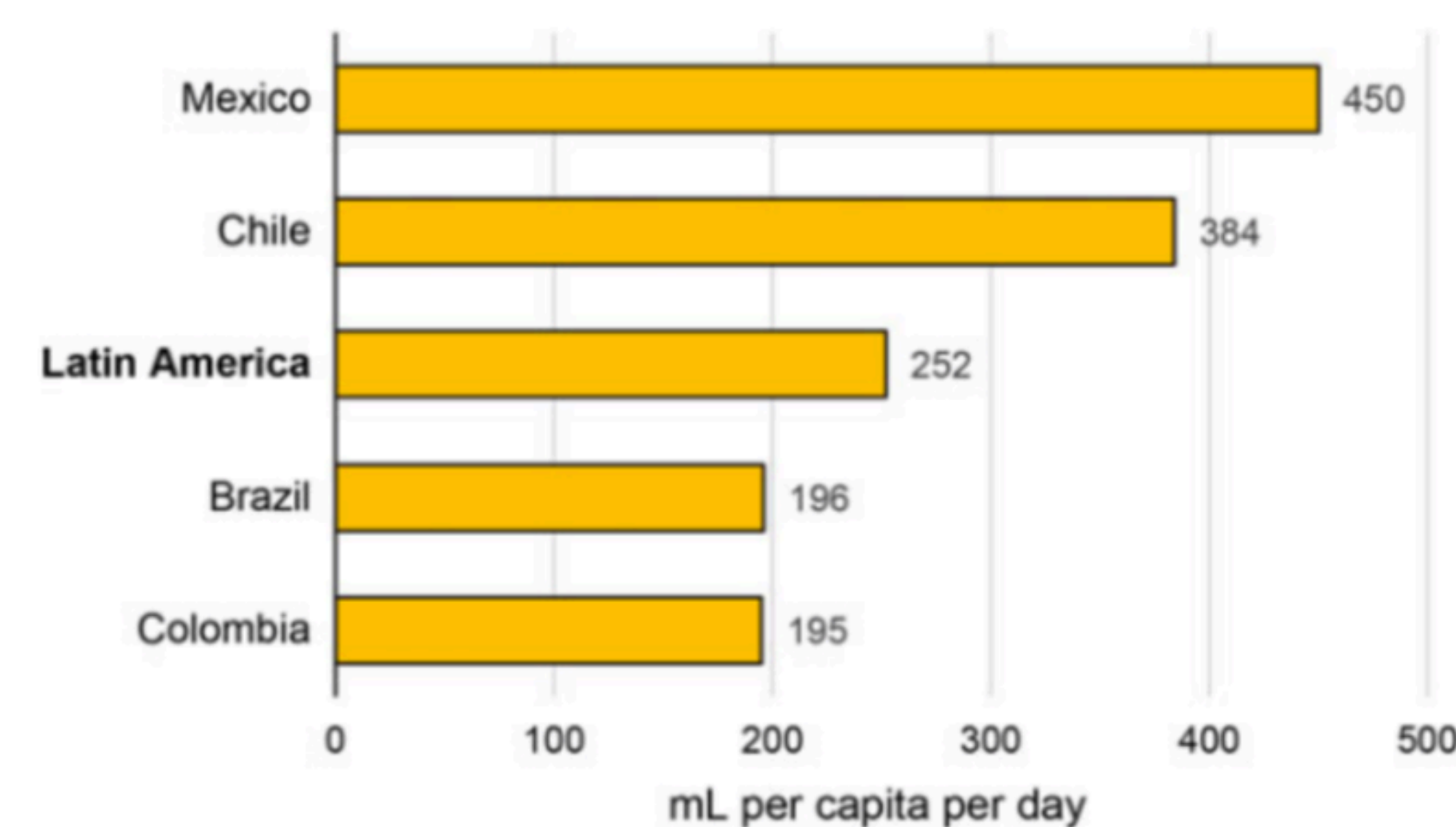


Figure 4 Total daily per capita sales of sugar-sweetened beverages in Latin America and select countries, 2017. Source: Euromonitor International Limited 2018© All rights reserved.

Tax Regulations & Policies

- Excise tax is a tax put in place on a certain manufactured good, which is put in place when it is manufactured, and not when it is distributed. Some SSBs have excise taxes on them, to help decrease the likelihood of purchasing.
- Sin tax is a tax put on items that are considered harmful, these taxes typically go on alcohol or tobacco; but more recently, have been placed on SSBs.
- In terms of taxation on SSBs, there is a correlation between the size of the SSB and how high of a tax is imposed; therefore, the more ounces a SSB is, the higher tax will be placed on it.
- One can conclude that the sin taxes / excise taxes in Latin America are a valid and plausible way to reduce the consumption of SSBs, and other harmful goods.
- Warning labels can influence a consumer’s decision when looking at beverage. Specifically, menu label regulations put in place (in stores and restaurants) were able to reduce daily energy intake by 19.3 kcal (source 12).
- Policy makers are also key players in this, because they must be aware of the problem and know which policies and taxation to implement so that their communities remain healthy and are not susceptible to NCDs.

Conclusion & Looking Ahead

- There is a clear correlation between SSB consumption and the overall health of an individual. The more SSBs a person consumes in their lifetime, the higher risk they have for NCDs, obesity, and even CVD.
- There is a clear correlation between taxation efforts and a decrease in SSB consumption. The higher sin or excise tax put on SSBs, the less likely a person is to purchase- and therefore consume the SSB. Additionally, this will assist in improving the health of the individual and the community.
- Further research on this topic can be done to understand more of the psychological factors and cultural influences that may go into the purchasing of SSBs and evaluating the “why” of the purchase. Through this research, one may find effective ways to combat the marketing strategies used by SSBs and improve the overall health of communities.