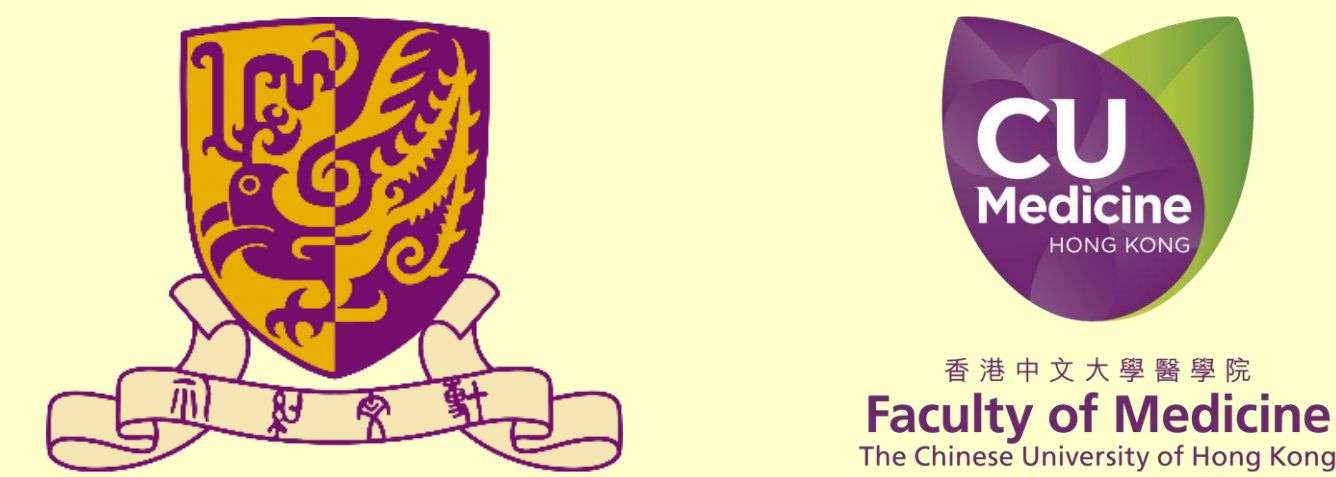


Randomized experiment on the effects of front-of-package sugar labels on sugar-sweetened beverage selection

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Objective

To compare the effects of six front-of-package (FOP) sugar label designs with no label on sugar-sweetened beverage (SSB) selection.

Methods

- **Online 7 × 2 factorial randomized controlled trial in Hong Kong**
- Participants were randomized to **7 label conditions** × **2 tax conditions**.
 - Label conditions are shown in Figure 1.
 - Tax conditions: no tax vs. tiered tax (10% on medium- and 20% on high-added-sugar SSBs).
- **Primary outcome: Selection of an SSB from 15 beverages in a hypothetical purchase task.**
 - **Bottled water + 7 paired beverage categories (SSB vs non-SSB):** soda; fruit drink/100% juice; flavored/plain milk; milk tea; tea; coffee; and energy drink.
- Each label condition was compared with the no-label control, adjusting for tax condition. P values were adjusted for multiple comparisons using Dunnett’s method.

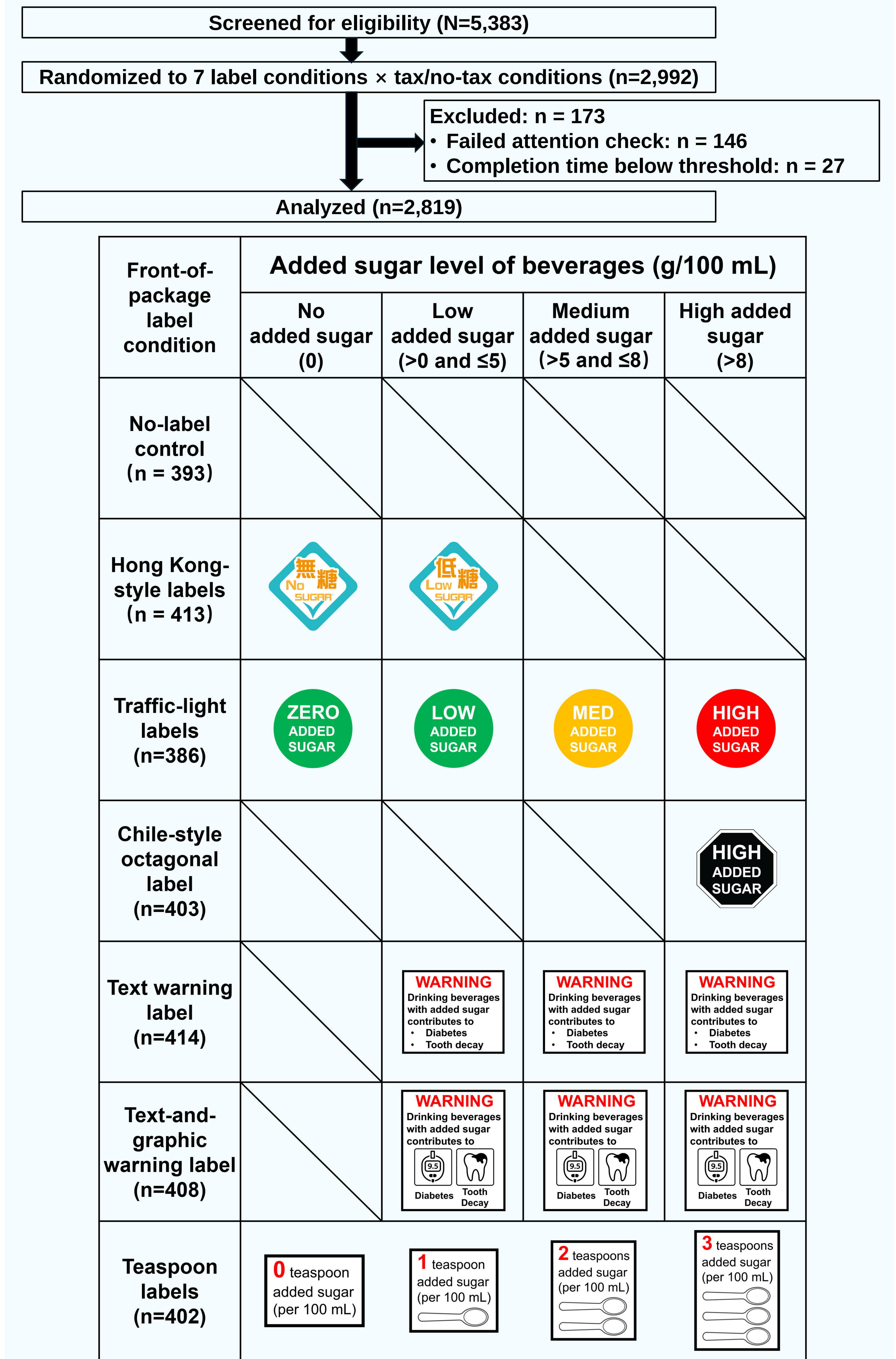
Results

- **No. of participants analyzed = 2,819.** 55.6% (1,566/2,819) were female. Median age was 51 years (IQR, 37–65).
- **No FOP label significantly reduced SSB selection** compared with the no-label control after Dunnett adjustment.
- **No-label control: 37.4% (147/393) selected an SSB.**
- **Traffic-light label: 33.2% (128/386) selected an SSB.**
- **Risk difference: –4.2 percentage points** (95% CI, –10.9 to 2.5; Dunnett-adjusted P = 0.629).
- The traffic-light label condition was also associated with a lower self-reported likelihood of choosing an SSB because of the packaging (proportional odds ratio, 0.70; 95% CI, 0.54 to 0.90; P = 0.005).

Conclusion

- None of the six FOP labels significantly reduced SSB selection compared with no label.
- The **traffic-light label condition** showed the **largest observed but non-significant reduction** and was associated with a **lower self-reported likelihood of selecting an SSB** because of the packaging.

Figure 1. Flowchart and label conditions



Adapted from the Hong Kong “Salt/Sugar” Label Scheme, UK Front of Pack Nutrition Labelling Guidance, Chilean “High in” warning labels, and UK Soft Drinks Industry Levy.

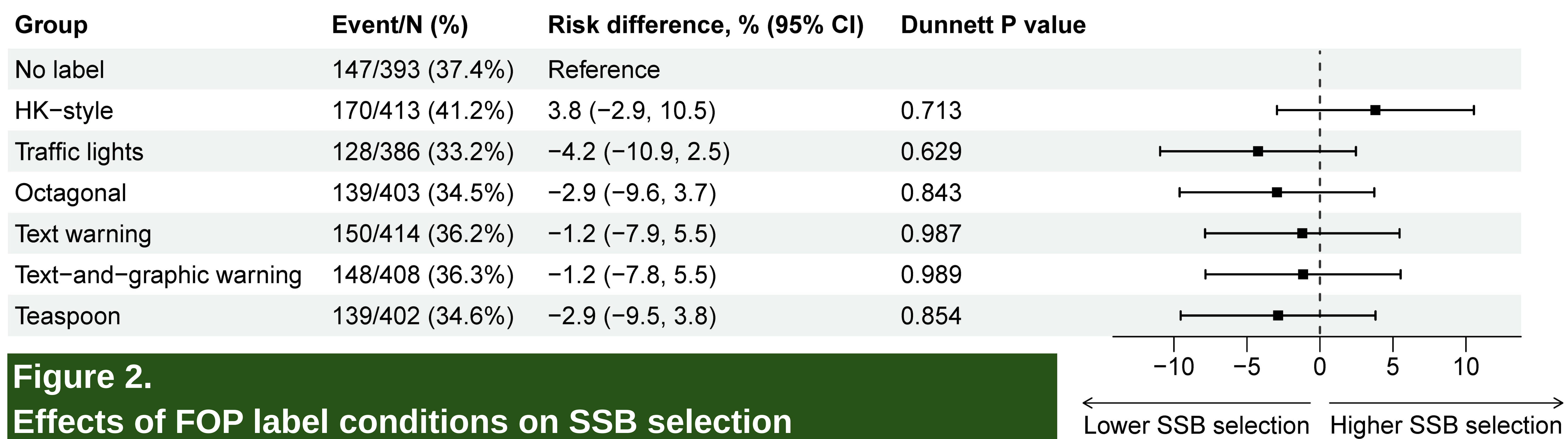


Figure 2.
Effects of FOP label conditions on SSB selection

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