

Assessment of the Nicotine and Flavor Chemical Composition of Velo Pouches Sold in Pakistan

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Background

Nicotine pouch sales are increasing, particularly in Pakistan where British American Tobacco’s Velo pouches are sold in a variety of flavors.

Flavors appeal to young people and the addition of flavor ingredients to products can be banned.

This study is the first independent assessment of Velo nicotine pouch ingredients (nicotine, flavor chemicals) and how they relate to product price. Findings can inform future nicotine pouch regulatory strategies in Pakistan.

Methods

We purchased 10 brand variants of Velo pouches in Karachi, Pakistan in 2022. Data collectors recorded purchase price and took a pack photo, which was examined for labeled nicotine content.

Within two weeks of purchase, each pack was chemically analyzed for nicotine and 180 individual flavor chemicals. Flavor chemicals were grouped into total fruit flavor chemicals (TFFCs), total non-menthol mint chemicals (TNMMCs), and total menthol/mint chemicals (TM/MCs).

Results

All brand variants were labeled with a nicotine content on the container (6, 10, or 14 mg/pouch). The 6 and 10 mg variants were sold at the same price, while the 14 mg variants cost 25% more. Measured nicotine levels were slightly lower than the labeled values.

In terms of flavors, our analyses found measurable levels of flavor chemicals across all brand variants, and we detected benzyl alcohol (cherry flavor), menthol, α -terpineol (cardamom flavor), and carvone (a mint flavor) in all 10 products. There was wide variation in the levels of TFFCs, TNMMCs and TM/MCs across products.

The level of total flavor chemicals present did not appear to be dictating purchase price.

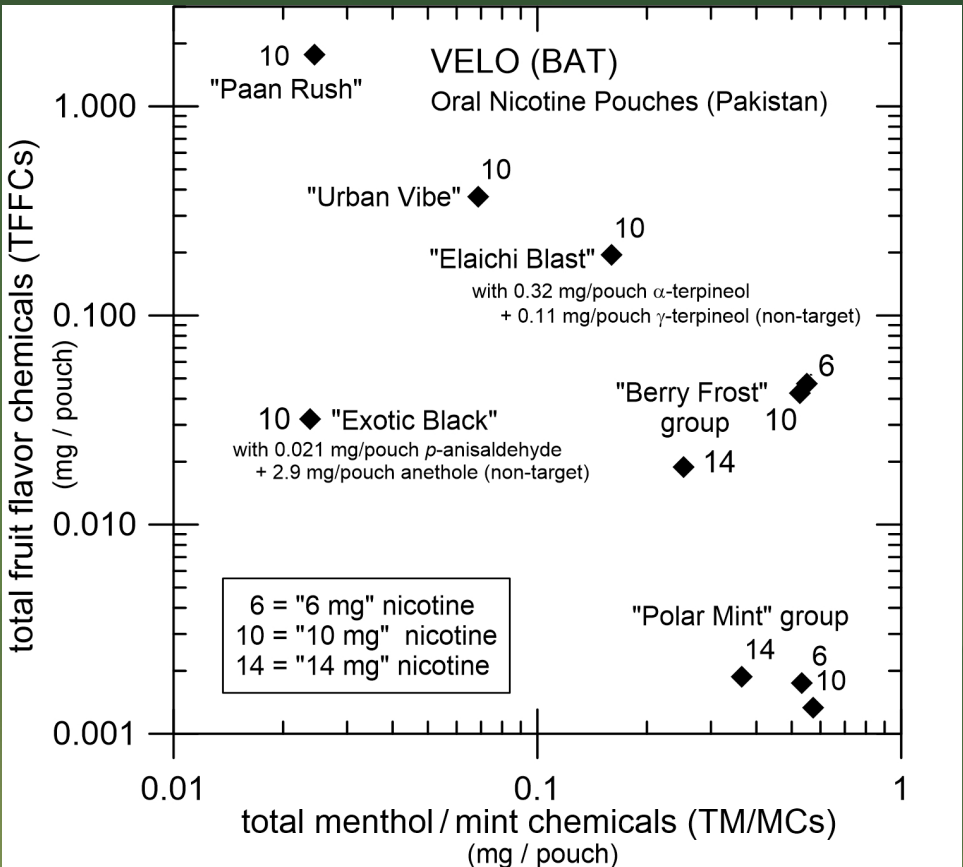
Conclusions

Consumers in Pakistan are being offered a buffet of oral nicotine pouch options, with a range of flavor levels, flavor mixes, nicotine levels and some price differentials.

Regulation of flavor chemicals in oral nicotine pouches should be considered given that flavors are known to increase product appeal, initiation by adolescents, and quitting difficulty.

Velo oral nicotine pouches are offered in a variety of flavor mixes in Pakistan; a flavor ban could reduce product appeal and use

Levels of Fruit and Menthol/Mint Chemicals



You can access more results and read the published paper here:
<https://bit.ly/WCvelo>



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Competing Interests:

None.

