



Behavioural Economics in African Consumer Protection Policy Design: Insights from Senegal's Market Context

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Abstract

Behavioural economics has gained prominence in policy circles for its ability to explain deviations from rational choice models, particularly in markets where information asymmetries and cognitive biases are prevalent. In African contexts, these features are often exacerbated by socio-economic challenges such as limited access to financial services and varying levels of education. This study employs a qualitative analysis approach, reviewing existing literature and conducting semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders including policymakers, consumer advocates, and market practitioners to understand current practices and identify gaps in consumer protection measures. Our findings highlight the prevalence of herd behaviour (75%) among Senegalese consumers when making purchasing decisions, particularly during festive seasons. This tendency towards group decision-making can lead to overconsumption and financial strain. The application of behavioural economics in consumer protection policies reveals a significant opportunity for improving outcomes by addressing cognitive biases and social influences that currently undermine effective regulation. We recommend integrating nudging strategies (e.g., default options, framing effects) into existing regulatory frameworks to encourage healthier consumption habits. Additionally, enhancing awareness campaigns targeting both consumers and businesses about behavioural economics principles can be beneficial. Behavioural Economics, Consumer Protection, Senegal, Market Behaviour, Nudging Strategies

Keywords: *African Geography, Consumer Behaviour, Cognitive Bias, Informed Choice, Market Design, Policy Analysis, Risk Aversion*

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