

REVIEWER'S REPORT

Manuscript No.: **IJAR-52372**

Date: June 19, 2025

Title: EVALUATION OF THE ACIDITY AND MICROBIOLOGICAL QUALITY OF ARTISANAL MILK AND “DÈGUÊ” SOLD IN BAKERIES IN ABOBO (CÔTE D’IVOIRE)

Recommendation:

Accept as it is

Accept after minor revision.....

Accept after major revision

Do not accept (*Reasons below*)

Rating	Excel.	Good	Fair	Poor
Originality		X		
Techn. Quality		X		
Clarity			X	
Significance		X		

Reviewer Name: Dr Lakhdar Guerine

Date: June 19, 2025

Reviewer's Comment for Publication.

(To be published with the manuscript in the journal)

The reviewer is requested to provide a brief comment (3-4 lines) highlighting the significance, strengths, or key insights of the manuscript. This comment will be Displayed in the journal publication alongside with the reviewers name.

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Detailed Reviewer's Report

REVIEWER'S REPORT

This study evaluates the physicochemical (pH, titratable acidity) and microbiological quality of artisanal milk and “dèguê” (a traditional fermented dairy product) sold in five bakeries in Abobo, a district of Abidjan. A total of 150 samples (75 milk and 75 dèguê) were collected over five sampling sessions. The main findings reveal:

- Acidic pH levels (4.1–4.6), indicating fermentation.
- Titratable acidity above recommended levels (up to 115 °D), though kept within cold chain.
- High microbial contamination: Total mesophilic flora, total coliforms, *Escherichia coli*, *Listeria monocytogenes*, and *Staphylococcus aureus* exceeded standards in most samples.
- No Salmonella was detected.

The study concludes that regular consumption of these products may pose public health risks, despite their popularity, and calls for better hygiene and food safety practices.

Strengths

- Relevant public health topic, especially in urban African settings.
- Well-defined methodology, with compliance to international ISO standards for both physicochemical and microbiological analysis.
- Good sampling strategy: multiple bakeries, replicated sessions.
- Robust statistical analysis, including ANOVA and standard deviations.
- Clear identification of risks, backed by empirical data.

Weaknesses

- Lack of novelty: similar studies have been published on milk contamination in West Africa.
- Limited discussion on preventive actions, policy implications, or intervention strategies.
- Language quality needs improvement (some awkward phrasing, lack of clarity in places).
- Figures/tables are not always well-commented or visually engaging.
- No nutritional analysis despite mentioning “nutritional value” in keywords.

Recommendations: Editorial revisions are needed to:

- Improve clarity and English expression,
- Enrich the discussion with actionable insights,
- Possibly simplify or enhance the visual data presentation.