

MGT/PP/06

Investigation on Customer Perception of Processed Food Color in The Western Province, Sri Lanka

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Background: One of the most important organoleptic properties of processed food is its color. The purpose of adding color to food is to restore uniformity of color in the final product and to preserve the natural color that is lost during processing. Food color is known as a specific criterion that is a visual characteristic. It directly impacts the purchasing behavior of customers, as well as their eating preferences and choices. Additionally, the color of food has an impact on its acceptability and recognition.

Objectives: The aims of this study are twofold. Firstly, examine the level of customer perception of processed food color. Secondly, identify the customer perception regarding how food color affects nutritional value among customers in Western Province, Sri Lanka.

Methods: The researchers developed a survey based on previous research studies to collect information relevant to the Sri Lankan context. Data were collected from 297 respondents in Western Province, Sri Lanka. Descriptive statistics and binary logistic regression methods were used to analyze the dataset using the SPSS software.

Results: Our findings revealed that the level of perception of processed food color is high among customers when purchasing processed foods, and the effect of every relevant independent variable is significant on the food color, which affects nutritional value at a significance level.

Conclusion: The color of processed food matters to customer perception. These results can be utilized by various experts in the processed food industry who need to understand the perception of processed food colors among customers in Sri Lanka. This study is limited to the Western Province in Sri Lanka due to the population size and availability of data. Therefore, future research studies can be done using all provinces in Sri Lanka, and a variety of methods can be utilized to validate the dataset comprehensively.

Keywords: Processed food color, Customer perception, and Western province