

CONSUMER BUYING BEHAVIOUR OF EDIBLE OILS
(A STUDY CONDUCTED IN GAMPAHA AND ANURADHAPURA DISTRICT)

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Edible oils as a cooking medium play a major role in preparing daily diet. At present, there is a high substitutability of a wide range of edible oils in the domestic market in Sri Lanka. Those are mainly coconut oil and other vegetable oils such as palm oil, soybean oil, sunflower oil, corn oil, etc. Coconut oil production in Sri Lanka has been declining over time and the importation of various edible oils has increased due to the removal of trade barriers under liberalized economic policies. At the same time, traders have begun to adulterate coconut oil with low priced imported palm oil. As a result of quality deterioration of coconut oil has resulted reducing its consumption.

The purpose of this study is to examine the consumer buying behavior of edible oils. More specifically it is aimed to study the factors affecting the consumer buying behaviour of edible oils and to find out the most popular edible oil in different communities based on the monthly per capita oil consumption. The study was conducted in selected Grama Niladhari (GN) divisions in Gampaha and Anuradhapura districts. A questionnaire survey was carried out with 120 households by interviewing the person who does purchasing. A binary logistic model was used in analyzing survey data to study the factors affecting the purchase of edible oil.

The result revealed that 58% of the respondents have purchased coconut oil and 21 % of them have purchased other vegetable oils, while the rest have purchased both coconut oil and other vegetable oils. Even though, the consumers of the urban sector tend to use more vegetable oils than those of the other sectors, the binary logistic analysis showed that the community, gender, price and monthly income have significant effects on the purchase of coconut oil. Mean per capita consumption rates of coconut oil were 0.49, 0.44 and 0.52 liters/head/month in urban, semi- ban and rural sectors respectively.

Based on the findings the study it is recommended to conduct further studies and to create awareness among consumers about the present situation in edible oil market. It is better to control the retail price of edible oil in domestic market and to adopt proper marketing strategies in order to increase the efficiency of edible oil marketing.

Key words: Edible oil, Coconut oil, Vegetable oil, Buying behavior, Binary Logistic Model