

**IMPACT OF CONSUMER PERCEPTION ON THE BUYING
BEHAVIOUR OF PROCESSED FRUITS PRODUCTS IN
BATTICALOA DISTRICT**



By

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ABSTRACT

The consumption of processed fruits has a notable increase in recent years, due to shifting consumer preferences and lifestyle changes. The research investigates consumer perception and buying behaviour regarding processed fruits products in the Batticaloa district. The study aims to understand the relationship between consumer perception and buying behaviour of processed fruits. The research employed a structured questionnaire distributed to a sample of 220 consumers and used convenience sampling and using regression analysis, achieving a 90% response rate with 200 completed responses. The demographic analysis shown that the majority of respondents were aged between 19-35 years, with a slightly higher representation of males (55%) compared to females (45%). The study further examined various demographic factors, including age, gender, marital status, educational qualifications, occupation, monthly income, and family structure, to determine their influence on consumer behaviour. Key findings from this study most frequently purchased processed fruit product was fruit juice (43%), followed by fruit jam (24%). The purchase frequency varied, with a majority buying weekly (33.5%) and monthly (28%). Regression analysis indicates food safety ($p < 0.001$) most significant factor influencing buying behaviour, highlighting its important role in consumer decision-making. Both extrinsic factors ($p < 0.002$) and intrinsic factors ($p < 0.018$) significantly impacted consumer preferences. The study also found notable gender ($p < 0.021$) differences in buying behaviour, suggesting that marketing strategies should be gender-sensitive to effectively provide to preferences of male and female consumers. But, health consciousness and natural content did not show a statistically significant impact on buying behaviour, supporting with some previous studies indicating that these factors may not be universal determinants across all product categories. These insights can help stakeholders in the processed fruit industry develop targeted strategies to enhance product appeal and market penetration, ultimately contributing to the industry's growth and sustainability.

Keywords: buying behaviour, consumer perception, extrinsic factors, food safety intrinsic factors, processed fruits

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