

1 *Abstract*

## 2 **Consumer Attitude Towards Food Additives – A Case Study<sup>†</sup>**

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8 **Abstract:** Food additives are natural or synthetic substances which are added to foods to improve  
9 the technological or sensory functions of a food product. Consumers should possess a better under-  
10 standing of the application, functions, and safety aspects of the numerous food additives available.  
11 This study aimed to evaluate the attitude of Sri Lankan consumers towards food additives and to  
12 have a clear idea of their knowledge regarding food additives. A survey was conducted online, with  
13 a total of 504 respondents participating. The data collected from questionnaires were analyzed and  
14 interpreted using the Chi-square test of association at a significance level of 0.05. According to the  
15 results, only 16.70% of the selected respondents believed that the addition of food additives is es-  
16 sential while the majority rejected the application of additives. More than 46.00% of the respondents  
17 were ready to pay more for foods without additives while 76.79% of respondents had the attitude  
18 that food additives cause diseases and are unsafe. Approximately 40.00% of the respondents of all  
19 the groups believed food additives cause cancers and it was prominent in the 30-39 age group.  
20 Moreover, a greater proportion (19.60%) of respondents believed that food colorings are the most-  
21 unhealthy food additives followed by taste enhancers (15.10%). A significant correlation was found  
22 between the educational level and attitudes toward checking food labels, using food additives and  
23 being ready to pay more for foods without additives. Age, gender and level of education didn't  
24 show any significant relationship between the attitude towards the use of Mono Sodium Glutamate  
25 (MSG), food colorings as well as food regulation, but the majority of the respondents rejected the  
26 use of MSG. The respondents had the attitude of checking food labels for additives, and it was dis-  
27 tinct among the secondary (83.09%) and higher educated (79.93%) respondents. Therefore, the find-  
28 ings indicated a prevailing negative attitude among consumers towards food additives, underscor-  
29 ing the critical need for effective dissemination of accurate knowledge regarding food additives.

30 **Keywords:** Food additives, Attitudes, Sri Lanka, MSG, Colourings, Regulations

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