

Perception of Consumers on the ColorCoding System for Beverages

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Consumption of excessive sugar is one of the factors contributing to overweight, obesity, and non-communicable diseases such as type 2 diabetes and cancer. In spite of the negative health implications, the consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages is on the rise and sugar serves as one of the major sources of calories especially among children. The government of Sri Lanka introduced a colour coding system, commonly termed 'traffic light system', for carbonated beverages, ready to serve drinks, nectars and fruit juices in August 2016. However, the awareness of consumers on the colour coding system its impact on the purchase decision have not been studied. In this context, the current study aimed at determining the awareness of consumers on the colour coding system and its impact on the purchase decision of the consumers. The study was carried out in Negombo, Sri Lanka in 2017. Data collected from 210 randomly selected participants using an interviewer-administered questionnaire were analyzed. The results indicated that majority of the participants (64%) were concerned about the level of sugar they consumed. Approximately 79% of respondents were aware of the new labelling system implemented in Sri Lanka and they checked the colour code at the time of purchase. A significant proportion of the respondents (73%) preferred low or medium sugar levels in the drinks. Many respondents mentioned that they would like to have the same system implemented for other foods as well.

Keywords: *Colour coding system, Food act, Sugar, Sugar-sweetened beverages, traffic light system.*

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