

Knowledge and Motives towards the Functional Food and Nutraceutical Consumption by Adults in Sri Lanka

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Functional foods and nutraceuticals (FFN) play an important role in adults' health by preventing and reducing the risk of non-communicable diseases (NCD). This cross-sectional study was designed to evaluate knowledge, attitude, and behaviour (KAB) towards the consumption of FFN by Sri Lankan adults. The study sample comprised of 441 adults above 20y of age living in Sri Lanka. A pre-tested online questionnaire was used for data collection and was analysed using SPSS 23 and AMOS software. Out of the participants, 60% were female and 74% were in 20 – 29y age category. Significant relationships were observed between knowledge and attitude ($p < 0.01$), knowledge and behaviour ($p = 0.004$), and behaviour and FFN consumption ($p = 0.003$). District of residence, education level, income, and use of medications for NCDs, significantly affected to the knowledge of FFN consumption. However, the above socio-demographic factors did not significantly affect towards attitude or behaviour. Gender and age did not significantly affect the KAB towards FFN. Average scores of knowledge, attitude, and behaviour were 72,72, and 71%, respectively. More than 50% of the respondents consumed plant-based functional foods, fruits and vegetables, and functional beverages at moderate levels while their nutraceutical consumption was inadequate. Vegetable curries, black tea, green leaves, dhal, and unpolished rice were identified as the top five foods consumed daily. In conclusion, knowledge of FFN affects the attitude and behaviour towards FFN consumption. Socio-demographic factors are associated with the knowledge of FFN consumption. It is required to make people aware of the health benefits of FFN and encourage FFN consumption.

Keywords: attitude, behaviour, functional food, knowledge, nutraceuticals, Sri Lanka