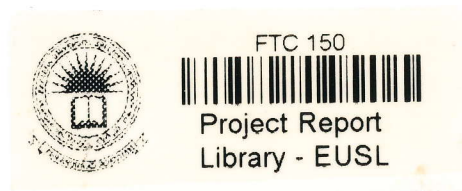


**CONSUMER PREFERENCE FOR WILLINGNESS TO BUY  
VALUE ADDED COCONUT-BASED FOOD PRODUCTS IN  
GAMPAHA DISTRICT**



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## ABSTRACT

The coconut industry plays a major role in Sri Lanka's economy, with value added coconut-based food products gaining prominence in domestic and international markets. This study investigates consumer preferences and willingness to buy value added coconut-based food products in the Gampaha District of Sri Lanka. The research aims to identify key factors influencing consumer behavior, including demographic characteristics, product attributes, and marketing strategies. A quantitative approach was employed, utilizing a pre-tested structured questionnaire distributed to 100 consumers across five divisional secretariat divisions in Gampaha. Data were analyzed using SPSS version 27.0, with multiple regression analysis to examine the relationships between variables.

The findings reveal that coconut milk powder is the most preferred product (33%), followed by coconut-based sweets (22%) and coconut oil (21%). Quality emerged as the most influential factor in purchasing decisions (28%), while supermarkets were the preferred marketplace (56%). Regression analysis indicated a strong positive relationship between the variables ( $R = 0.672$ ), with product attributes ( $\beta = 0.289$ ,  $p = 0.011$ ) and marketing attributes ( $\beta = 0.405$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ) significantly positively influence willingness to buy. The model explained 45.2% of the variance the consumer willingness to buy ( $R^2 = 0.452$ ). Conversely, awareness of value added coconut products showed a negative relationship ( $\beta = -0.238$ ,  $p = 0.007$ ), suggesting potential gaps in consumer education or product perception.

The study highlights the importance of targeted marketing strategies and product quality improvements to enhance consumer acceptance and market penetration of value added coconut products. These insights provide valuable guidance for producers, marketers, and policymakers in the coconut industry to align their offerings with consumer preferences and drive sustainable growth in the sector.

**Keywords:** Consumer preference, Willingness to buy, Value added coconut products, Regression analysis, R value

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