

**A Study of Consumer Behavior on Demanding Indigenous Medications during COVID-19 Pandemic – With Reference to Sri Lanka**

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The COVID 19 pandemic situation has given risen to new trends of consumer behaviors due to disrupted buying habits. This study shed light to a situation in Sri Lankan markets which emerged during COVID 19 with an untypical demand towards the “Indigenous medications” including Coriander, Ginger, and Turmeric. The research question was to identify what the public opinion is, on the most reliable method of getting prevented from COVID 19. Primary data were collected on the objective of identifying the patterns of consumer behavior in demanding indigenous medications during COVID 19 crisis. Eighty students studying for a Bachelor of Arts degree in Economics were selected from University of Colombo representing all their family members, while focusing on gender representation of the sample. Required qualitative and quantitative data were collected through questionnaires as it was difficult to conduct interviews during COVID 19 Pandemic. Eighty-five percent of the total sample were practicing indigenous medicine with western medical treatments while the rest (15%) of the sample was using indigenous medicines only. Thorough statistical analysis the questionnaires revealed that 64% of the users who are using both indigenous and western medications have been biased towards using indigenous medications as method of prevention for COVID 19. The research was able to identify that behind these behavioral changes social media has done a 49% contribution while TV, Radio and rumors have also impacted with 19% of contribution to the changes in consumer behaviors. It was identified that 25% of the consumers who were using both indigenous and western medications are planning to continue using indigenous medications as a precautionary method of COVID 19 even at a higher price level than the normal price levels, concluding that majority of the sample have moved on with the trend of using indigenous medications as a precaution for COVID 19.

**Keywords:** Consumers, COVID 19, Indigenous medications, Western medicines, Pandemic