

**AWARENESS AND CONSUMPTION BEHAVIOR
ON FOOD DYES AMONG SCHOOL TEACHERS
IN BOTAHTAUNG TOWNSHIP, YANGON**

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ABSTRACT

Food dyes are one of the food additives that are used to modify their color and aesthetic value. A cross-sectional study of assessing the awareness and consumption behavior on food dyes was conducted among school teachers in Botahtaung Township, Yangon Region from August to December 2023, by using self-administered questionnaires. The study participants were 228 school teachers from total 13 schools. More than 40% of school teachers were aged 50 years and older. Most were female, married, primary school teachers, got a Bachelor's degree, and had a monthly income of 200,000 kyats and above. Nearly half of the teachers had total working experience for more than 20 years and worked in their current place for more than 5 years. Regarding knowledge on food dyes, 53.9% had good knowledge. Most of them got information about food dyes from Facebook (93.9%), Television (85.1%) and their working environment (86.4%). Regarding their attitude, 21.9% of the school teachers had positive attitude on food dyes. Most teachers had a positive attitude that food should be sold as natural color without using food dyes, and they responded to avoid the foods which are brighter than natural color and to read the food colorant on every labeled package. Majority disagreed with using textile dyes as food dyes. Only 13.6% consumed the food with dyes that are brighter than natural color. But almost all responded that they prohibited their family from eating foods with synthetic dyes. Knowledge was significantly associated with age ($p=0.039$), gender ($p=0.044$) and duration of current work in years ($p=0.038$). Attitude was significantly associated with age ($p=0.025$). Moreover, there was statistically significant association between knowledge and attitude on food dyes ($p=0.001$). Although knowledge about food dyes is described in life skill curriculum for teachers' guideline, the detail information is still limited. Therefore, it is necessary to improve the awareness and to have good consumption behavior on food dyes for the teachers. If the awareness of the school teachers on food dyes is good, they can also share to their students. Moreover, awareness raising, training programs, health education and health talks about the food dyes should be given to both school teachers and students to create a healthy school environment.