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Factors Affecting Consumer Preference on Mobile Specimen Collection Service in the Kandy Municipal Area: A Cross-sectional Study

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Background: The mobile specimen collection service (MSCS) is a well-established healthcare service worldwide. Although this service is well established, most of the people in Sri Lanka still visit the laboratory to fulfil the requirement of their diagnostic tests. A thorough literature review revealed six factors that influenced consumer preference on MSCS, including socio-demographic factors, knowledge and awareness, perceived usefulness, security, price, and health condition.

Objectives: To assess the factors affecting consumer preference on MSCS among the people in the Kandy Municipal Area (KMA).

Methods: A cross-sectional study was performed using conveniently selected 30 participants as a pre-test to validate the study and the main study was carried out among conveniently selected 216 participants in the KMA. A self-administered questionnaire was given to study participants and the reliability was checked using Cronbach's alpha analysis. Descriptive variables were expressed as frequencies and percentages. Pearson chi-square test and the independent sample t-test were used to assess the factors affecting MSCS.

Results: There was a significant difference between the participants' employment and their consumer preference, [$\chi^2(3, n=133)=12.485, p=0.006$]. Furthermore, results revealed that most of the public sector employees use MSCS (62.5%). When assessing the factors affecting consumer preference for MSCS, the perceived usefulness ($p<0.001$) and the perceived security of the service ($p<0.001$) showed a significant difference in consumer preference for MSCS. In addition, results revealed a significant difference between the perceived health condition of the patient and consumer preference on MSCS, [$\chi^2(2, n=133)=7.669, p=0.021$].

Conclusions: Employment status, perceived usefulness, security of the service, and the patient's health condition are the main factors affecting consumer preference on MSCS. Therefore, those factors are recommended to address while implicating MSCS for the Sri Lankan community.

Keywords: *Consumer behaviour, Kandy municipal area, Medical laboratory services, Mobile specimen collection service, Self-administered questionnaire*