

**TEA MANUFACTURERS' ATTITUDE TOWARDS
IMPLEMENTATION AND MAINTAINING QUALITY AND
SYSTEM CERTIFICATIONS**

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ABSTRACT

Tea plays a major role in the economy of several underdeveloped and developing nations in Asia and Africa. Tea production in Sri Lanka, earlier the “Ceylon tea” which is the tea produced in Sri Lanka plays a major role in the country’s economy. The aim of this study is to investigate the factors influencing tea manufacturers’ attitude towards implementation and maintaining quality and system certifications to export trade. The overview and attitudinal characteristics of tea manufacturers were examined. For collection of data semi structured questionnaire was administrated. 82 respondents from three major tea growing categories based on the elevation, were participated in the survey. Awareness of market and certifications, cost and expenses, perceived benefits, perceived risks, demand for tea, extension support and competitive advantage were found to influence tea manufacturers’ attitude towards implementation and maintaining quality and system certifications. Findings of the research highlighted that, majority of the manufacturers in up country and mid country were maintaining at least one quality or system standard. In low country 79% of manufacturers were not maintaining any standard. Out of the noncertified manufacturers, 34% replied they don’t have a visible gain from those standards. Out of the certified manufactures, ISO 22000 and HACCP were the most obtained certification among the selected sample. There was a positive image within manufacturers’ point of view on ISO 22000. ETP and Rainforest Alliance were more prominent corporate social responsibility based system certifications within the selected sample. Factor awareness of market and certifications was the highest influencing factor for tea manufacturers’ attitude towards implementation and maintaining quality and system certifications. Furthermore these certifications could be used as one of the investment tool to increase the productivity and quality of the product.

Key Words – Tea, Quality and system certifications, Awareness, Attitude