

Article

# Consumer Preferences and Willingness to Pay for High-Quality Vegetable Oils: A Cross-Sectional Analysis of Chinese Residents

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**Abstract:** The consumption of edible vegetable oil is an important source of essential fatty acids and vitamin E for the human body. Guiding residents to consume scientifically and reasonably control the intake of edible oils is an important part of promoting the construction of a healthy China. Currently, Chinese residents have an insufficient understanding of the scientific consumption of edible oils, leading to an intake exceeding the dietary recommendations, resulting in excessive fat intake and increasing the risk of chronic diseases such as obesity and cardiovascular diseases. Based on the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) and using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM), this study analyzed the cognitive preferences and willingness to pay a premium for edible vegetable oils among urban consumers in China. The survey included 1098 Chinese urban consumers of vegetable oils. The research found that attitudes, health value, monetary value, and environmental endorsement of urban residents are the main predicting factors of the intention to purchase high-quality vegetable oils. This study confirms the applicability of the Theory of Planned Behavior in the consumption of high-quality vegetable oils and provides theoretical contributions and insights for Chinese enterprises and policymakers in formulating marketing strategies for vegetable oils.

**Keywords:** vegetable oil; preferences; willingness to pay; consumers; TPB; structural equation model



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## 1. Introduction

The consumption of edible vegetable oil is indispensable for human beings, as it is rich in fats which are one of the three major nutrients needed by the human body, and also provide various other nutrients that play a very important role in human health [1]. At the same time, the healthy consumption of edible vegetable oil is an important indicator of the living standards of a country's people [2].

China is a major consumer of edible vegetable oil, and in recent years, the consumption of vegetable oil has been growing rapidly [3]. Currently, China's consumption of vegetable oil ranks first in the world. According to statistics, the per capita consumption of vegetable oil in China was 15.3 g/d in 1990, and it reached 69.8 g/d in 2020, representing a 457.8% increase in calorie intake compared to 1990 [4]. The rapid growth in the consumption of vegetable oil in China over the past 30 years has played a positive role in improving the living standards and dietary nutrition of residents during certain historical periods. However, due to insufficient understanding of the scientific intake of vegetable oil, there are prominent issues in current consumption habits among Chinese residents, such as excessive consumption and a limited variety of types. According to the China Resident Nutrition and Health Status Survey conducted in 2017, the average daily intake of cooking oil per capita in Chinese households was 43.2 g, exceeding the recommended upper limit (30 g) by 13.2 g.

# Analysis Of Consumer Preferences And Willingness To Pay

**JR Anderson**



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