

Socio-Cultural Parameters Associated with Purchasing Patterns of Meat and Meat Products: A Case Study in Kurunegala District, Sri Lanka

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Abstract

Sri Lanka is a multi-ethnic and multi-religious country with diverse meat consumption patterns, hence, the socio-cultural factors exert a strong influence on meat purchasing patterns of the country. A survey was conducted in Kurunegala district by interviewing 273 respondents since no such previous studies have been carried out. Ten supermarkets were randomly selected from different cities of Kurunegala district for the survey. The effect of each demographic character on purchasing behaviour of meat and meat products was evaluated by employing a univariate test. Only six percent of the respondents did not consume any type of meat. This category exhibited antipathy for killing animals (71%), religious beliefs (59%) and financial issues (53%) as the most cited reasons for being non-meat consumers. Only monthly income ($p=0.017$) had an influence on purchasing processed meat products while both age ($p=0.012$) and gender ($p=0.008$) showed an effect on purchasing behaviour of raw meat types. When assessing purchasing of different raw meat types, chicken (95%) was the most preferred meat type followed by beef (43%), pork (38%) and mutton (24%). According to processed meat products, the most purchased type was sausages (82%) followed by meat balls (72%), ham (20%) and bacon (12%). Above findings have proved that financial issues, religious beliefs and antipathy to animals were the major driving forces in determination of purchasing of meat and meat products. Among processed meat products, ham and bacon were not popular among the community. Therefore, maintaining an affordable price is important for people to consume meat and meat products. Popularization of other processed meat products in the country except sausages and meatballs is also suggested.

Keywords: *Kurunegala district, processed meat, purchasing patterns, raw meat, socio-cultural parameters*

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