

FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH MEAT PURCHASING BEHAVIOUR IN THE *MONARAGALA* DISTRICT, SRI LANKA

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The objective of this study was to ascertain the factors associated with meat purchasing behaviour in the *Monaragala* district in Sri Lanka. A pre-tested structured questionnaire was used along with interviews to collect information *viz* socio-demographic information, purchasing, and consumption behaviour of 384 respondents who were selected using the cluster sampling method. Data were analysed using descriptive statistics, factor analysis, logistic regression, Chi-square and Kendall's tau-b test. Of all respondents, 30.0% were non-meat consumers. Among the consumers, 65.0% were males and 31.7% belonged to the age of 40-50 years. Most of the consumers (56.5%) purchased 500g to 1kg per time and 36.9% purchased fresh meat. The most preferred meat type was broiler chicken (54.1%) followed by pork (15.5%), and village chicken (11.0%). The most determinant factors for meat consumption are health concerns (41%), the preference of children (39.6%), and price (7.2%) while the least considered factor is the availability of substitutes (67.0%). Further, factor analysis identified the influencing factors on purchasing decision of meat as four main factors namely, (1) economic factors, (2) market factors, (3) household factors, and (4) health factors. The logistics regression revealed that the number of family members [(Odds Ratio) OR=1.532] and monthly income (OR=1.00) had significantly influenced the purchasing decision at 5% and 10% significant levels, respectively. Further, there was a significant association ($p < 0.05$) between the purchasing frequency and the factors, gender, age, educational level, occupation, religion, family size but not with the income and location of respondents. Age ($r = -0.34$), gender ($r = 0.33$), and occupation ($r = -0.27$) were significantly correlated with meat purchasing frequency, respectively. In conclusion, the factors determining the purchasing behaviour of the respondents are diverse and findings may help meat producers to make evidence-based decisions.

Keywords: Meat consumption, Purchasing frequency, Socio-economic facto