

A STUDY ON CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR PATTERN IN FISH MARKETING IN BORALANDA/WELIMADA AREA IN SRI LANKA

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ABSTRACT

The marketers should monitor current level of and forecast changes in consumer buying power in their own markets because buying power directly affects the type and quantities of goods and services that consumers purchase. This study was undertaken to assess the socio-economic parameters, fish purchase pattern, buying power, and preference to sea fish diet, and thereby analyze the marketing environment for fish in the Boralanda/Welimada area in Sri Lanka.

The majority of consumers are categorized under low-income group. The low-income obviously limits the personal expenditure pattern on fish in this area. About 62 per cent of the consumers are irregular fish buyers and make very less frequent fish purchases in the fish market. This situation leads to lower consumer demand for fish. However, majority of the consumer stated higher preference to fish. It was also found that the main socio-economic factors influencing the fish purchase pattern are household income, family size, education level and consumer's preference to sea fish. Apart from that, fish availability and prices have mild/insignificant effect on purchase pattern. Therefore, it is concluded that consumer income level, education level and family size play a significant role in the consumer's fish buying behaviour.

It is concluded that the buying behaviour of fish is not unique unlike buying behaviour of other consumables. Nevertheless the socio-economic environment of the consumers is still doubtful for the marketing of fish in the study area since these factors specially, income levels and education levels limit the purchase of high priced fishes very often. However a segment of consumers with higher income and educational and occupation pattern (Professional) could be targeted for a niche market with high quality fish in study area. Creating consumer awareness on fish consumption through education, establishing better fish stalls with modern cold storage facilities at fish market, and ensuring the proper and regular supply of fish would create a favourable environment for fish marketing in the area.

Key words: marketing environment, purchasing power, socio-economic parameters, consumer demand, buying behaviour.