

STUDY ON EXPLORING CONSUMER PERCEPTIONS OF POULTRY MEAT QUALITY IN KALUTARA DISTRICT



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ABSTRACT

Consumer perception is crucial for the poultry industry as it directly affects purchasing decisions and brand loyalty. Quality poultry products meet consumer needs by ensuring safety, healthiness, and high nutritional value. This study aims to analyze consumer perceptions of poultry meat quality in the Kalutara District in Sri Lanka. This study employs a descriptive research design to explore consumer perceptions of poultry meat quality in the Kalutara district. Two hundred and fifty samples were randomly selected among the customers across 14 divisional secretariats. Both qualitative and quantitative data were analyzed using statistics from SPSS software. Key findings include that Nelna and Pussella are the most preferred brands, chosen by 28% and 27% of participants, respectively. Significant factors affecting perceived meat quality were the manufacture date, with 27.20% agreeing and 34% strongly agreeing on its importance, and the expiration date, with 30.80% agreeing and 39.60% strongly agreeing. The social factors, including gender ($P=0.06$), age ($P=0.746$), education level ($P = 0.660$), monthly income ($P=0.945$), and religious culture ($P=0.673$), did not significantly influence consumer perceptions of chicken meat quality. The study showed weak relationships between income level and willingness to pay for better meat quality, and a significant negative correlation between education level and the belief in the superiority of certified meat ($r=-0.134$, $P = 0.036$). Age and family size as significant predictors for preferences regarding texture ($P=0.023$), smell ($P=0.023$), and consistency ($P=0.025$). The factor analysis identified 12 components with loadings ranging from 0.352 to 0.752, revealing key consumer preferences for chicken meat, including overall quality perception, specific characteristics like color and texture, consistency, certification, and price sensitivity and the cluster analysis identified five distinct consumer segments with varying priorities in chicken meat selection, focusing on quality perception, certification, appearance, texture, consistency, and specific characteristics. The Friedman Test revealed that appearance was the most critical quality attribute (Mean rank = 32.79), followed by color (Mean rank = 16.32), smell (Mean rank = 15.97), consistency (Mean rank = 15.03), and texture (Mean rank = 14.01). These findings underscore the importance of visual and sensory attributes in consumer purchasing decisions while highlighting the need for enhanced education on meat quality certifications.

Keywords: Consumer perceptions, Food certifications, Food security, Meat quality, Poultry farming

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