ANALYSIS OF CONSUMPTION PATTERNS OF PROBIOTIC INCORPORATED FERMENTED DAIRY PRODUCTS IN SRI LANKA

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Abstract

Probiotic dairy foods are considered one of the major functional food substances in the world. Consumers have been more health-conscious in recent years, and as a result, they are seeking more information on how to live a healthy life by consuming good food. Probiotic and probiotic products are having the possibility to attract those health-conscious consumers because of their health-promoting effects and lower cost. To our knowledge, there are no studies that analyze the consumer demand for probiotic fermented dairy products in Sri Lanka. This study focused on analyzing the consumer knowledge, attitudes, socio-demographic and economic factors that affect the consumption pattern of probiotic fermented dairy products in Sri Lanka. A total of 405 households from all nine provinces in Sri Lanka were surveyed with an online questionnaire. According to the results, 46% of the respondents have awareness of probiotics. Consumers were categorized into 4 groups based on the consumption level of dairy foods containing probiotic bacteria (per week) as never, low, medium, and high. The study showed that 53% of the respondents belong to the low-level consumption category, 27% have medium level consumption, 9% are in the high-level consumption category and 11% of the responders never consumed probiotic incorporated dairy products. An ordered logistic regression model was employed to analyze the relationships between the consumption levels of probiotics and number of demographics and socio-economic characteristics of consumers such as gender, age, marital status, household size, presence of children, household income, locality, education level etc. .Attitudes of the respondents on health and nutrition aspects of probiotics, sensory attributes of probiotic products, access to probiotic foods and the impact of product promotions were also assessed using descriptive methods. The results reveal that probiotic consumption level is significantly and positively influenced by gender, marital status, household income, advertisements, and consumer's attitude on health and negatively influenced by household size and poor availability. The findings of this study give useful information to producers for their production and marketing strategies which are most suitable to fit with the demand characteristics and consumer expectations.

Keywords: Probiotic; Dairy Products; Consumption Patterns; Ordered Logistic Regression; Sri Lanka