

Investigation of Drawbacks and Misconceptions in Implementing ISO 22000: Food Safety Management System in Sri Lanka

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Abstract

In the modern agrifood economies, the development of food safety and quality management standards is crucial, and many firms in food alimentary chain usually face difficulties in implementing those standards. As far as Sri Lanka is concerned, it is vital to go for the concept of FSMS as it now finds themselves to participate in a global trade dealing in a wide range of food products. Therefore the main objective of the research was to investigate the major obstacles and misconceptions encountered during the ISO 22000 certification efforts within the Sri Lankan situation. A structured survey was carried out by using a random sample of 35 firms in food alimentary chain located within the Western and North Western provinces where the ISO 22000:2005 Food Safety Management System has already been put into the practice. Data were gathered by using a structured questionnaire. The scale adopted in questionnaire was five point-likert scale. Collected data were processed using Minitab 15 and Microsoft Excel statistical packages. Descriptive analysis was employed to analyze the collected data of the survey. Hypothesis testing was conducted separately for each factor to identify the major constraints among the factors. Null hypothesis was factor is not a major drawback/misconception while factor is a drawback/misconception was taken as an alternative hypothesis. For acceptance a measure as constraint, it should be greater than three (midpoint of the likert scale) and then P values were used to further evaluate the results. According to the P values and acceptance of the alternative hypothesis results were clearly emphasizes eight major drawbacks and out of them lack of personnel furnished with the sufficient knowledge of food science and standard requirements, lack of top management commitment, weak interdepartmental relationship, inadequate interpretation of standard requirements heads the list. Four major misconceptions identified were the external support is must for the system implementation, FSMS is a certificate or award gained by the company, implementation effort of the system is the responsibility of quality and production departments only and FSMS is a more complex and requirements are unachievable. Both barriers and misconceptions of FSMS lead firms to impede the successful implementation of the system within Sri Lankan situation. Out of them lack of personals furnished with the sufficient knowledge of food science and standard requirements has become the leading problem. Therefore need of competent personals furnished with required food science and system based knowledge is must for the industries and more intervention of the local and international accreditation bodies is highly essential to ensure successful implementation of the system.

Keywords: Food Safety Management System (FSMS), requirements, standard. accreditation bodies