ABSTRACT

The main objective of this study was to assess consumer preference for mutton quality and safety attributes in three Addis Ababa city. Two hundred (200) households were selected using multi-stage sampling procedure. Rapid market appraisal and key-informant discussions were held to select five most relevant mutton quality and safety attributes i.e. hygiene, freshness, official stamp, fat content, and price. These were derived using an orthogonal fractional factorial design to create profile scenarios. The data from conjoint experiment were estimated using rank-ordered logit model in which the ranking of product profile was determined by the five quality and safety attributes. The relative importance for the selected attributes were estimated from the coefficient of rank-ordered logit result. All parameters from rank-ordered logit model were significantly different from zero with the expected signs, suggesting that the quality and safety attributes selected significantly influence consumer choice behavior at 1% significance level. The result of the analysis indicates that hygiene is highly valued by all consumers regardless of income strata, as indicated by part-worth utility, relative importance and the least preferred attribute is fat content. Hygiene contributes up to 37.41% of overall utility, followed by freshness (18.48%), price (16.02%), official stamp (14.29%), and fat content (13.80%). From these results, the most preferred combination of mutton quality and safety attributes was clean, fresh, price of 42 Ethiopian Birr, official stamp present, and low-fat content. Result from this study indicates that respondents from high income households were more concerned about hygiene and fat content than medium and low-income households. Conversely, respondents from the low-income households were more concerned about price, freshness and official stamp than their medium and higher income counterparts. It was also found that consumers have a particular preference for hygiene as the most dominant attribute influencing purchasing decision. This finding would have a positive implication for forming product differentiation strategies within the animal source food policy in general and the mutton industry in particular. Specifically, it could be a source of information for producers in the mutton industry about consumer preference for the selected quality and safety attributes.

Key words: Consumer Preference; mutton; quality and safety attributes; conjoint analysis; rank ordered logit; relative importance