

## **Assessment of Food Safety Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices on Seafood Handling Among Onsite Fish Retailers in Western Province of Sri Lanka**

**Fernando W.A.M.C., Fernando P.R.M.K., Salwathura A.<sup>1</sup> Himali S.M.C.\***

Department of Animal Science,  
Faculty of Agriculture, University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya, Sri Lanka

Food safety plays a significant role in reducing the occurrences of food borne illnesses. When considering seafood safety, the fish retailers knowledge, attitudes and practices (KAP) play a vital role. This survey aimed to assess the KAP of the onsite fish retailers of the Western Province in Sri Lanka. Further the study aimed to find out the association between KAP and socio demographic variables of respondents. A pre tested questionnaire consisted of four main sections; socio demographic variables, knowledge, attitude and practices was used for the survey. Randomly selected 150 fish retailers were chosen to evaluate the KAP. Direct observation and in-depth interviews were conducted to collect the qualitative data. The data were analyzed using SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Science) version 26. Kruskal Wallis H test was ( $P < 0.1$ ) used to examine the socio demographic variables with KAP. Pearsons' correlation analysis was ( $P < 0.05$ ) conducted to measure the relationship between KAP. Linear regression model was used to assess the strength of the correlation ( $P < 0.05$ ) between knowledge and attitudes. Eighty-eight percentage of the participants were males and the highest number of responses were from the age group of 40 to 60 years. The overall score of the knowledge, attitudes and practices of the fish retailers were 38% (good), 95.33% (positive) and 0.6% (poor), respectively. There were significant relationships between practices with gender, knowledge with age and the attitudes with monthly income. The findings revealed a weak but positive correlation ( $r^s = 0.178$ ) between knowledge and attitude towards the food safety. There was a significant correlation between knowledge and attitude of fish retailers while food safety practices were independent. The knowledge and attitudes of fish retailers on seafood safety are good and positive respectively while their food safety practices on seafood safety is poor.

**Keywords:** Correlation, KAP, Pre-tested questionnaire, SPSS, Survey

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<sup>1</sup>Sri Lanka Standard Institution, 17, Victoria place, Elvitigala Mw., Colombo 08, Sri Lanka

\*smchimali@agri.pdn.ac.lk