Fish Market, Consumption and Consumer Behavior

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ABSTRACT

This article describes how fish is a primary source of nutrition and fisheries are a primary source of income. The health benefits for people eating fish are: reduction of risk of heart attack, lower blood pressure, reduction of risk of cancer, balancing dietary cholesterol and other health benefits. In addition to health, recreational fishing activity are contributing to a healthier population, where millions of people are finding pleasure but also sporting the fishing industry. Trend growth is expected in the future, even in developed countries. Factors which affect fish consumption are: culture and tradition, market, e.g. economic conditions, price, and income; personal factors e.g. taste, smell, bones, habit, awareness of health impact, ignorance of preparation; knowledge of these factors, views, preferences regarding fish. Kosovo has around 1,8 million inhabitants, with a fish consumption per capita of 0,8 kg of fish per year. This article will examine consumer behavior at Kosovo fish markets, based on data collected from the field research.

KEYWORDS
Consumer Behavior, Health Concerns, Nutritional ValueOmega-3, Preferences

INTRODUCTION

Fishing has occupied a very important place in human society for thousands of years. In the Middle Ages, with the development of better methods of storage and improving transport, commercial fishing began to grow in a big scale. Conservation is an important advancement in particular because it allows long term storage and delivery large scale of the fish products.

Mechanized fishing techniques and cooling, at the end of 1800 to ships with power steam, enabled the development of large scale industrial fisheries which still exist. During the last 1,000 years, the level of fishing is constantly expanding. A trend interrupted briefly during the two world wars.

After World War II, commercial fishing intensity grew dramatically (sensitive). Today commercial fishing continues to be a major economic sector in many countries. Except great worldwide value, about 36 million people are employed to capture and fish culture (15 million full-time, 13 million part-time and 8 million occasional).

Recreational fishing is lately activity that enjoy a large number of the people. The scale of recreational fishing was greatly expanded after World War II (especially in North America). Millions of people are supporting recreational fishing and sport fishing industry, earning millions of dollars worldwide. Example: fishing equipment, boats, motorbikes and guide, accommodation and meals.

Economy of fisheries as a branch of economy, relates to a large number of activities in industries such as manufacturing industry, food processing industry, animal production industry, shipping etc.

DOI: 10.4018/IJSEM.2018040103

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Most of the fish production in the world around (65%) is provided by economic fishing in oceans and seas, 10% is provided by the breeding of fish and 25% of freshwater (lakes, rivers, reservoirs and other).

The market is a place, space, where through supply and demand becomes the fish exchange (and other sea products) with a price which is formed as a market price. The offer and demand for fish affects the market price but also the market price affects the supply and demand. In demand and supply of fish (fresh fish but also fish products) affect many factors. Let mention some of these influencing factors as, taste and preference of consumers, income, price of fish and prices of fish substitutes, number of consumers and other factors. On offer, influencing factors are price, technology, related products, number of offers, offers’ expectations regarding prices and revenues.

Fish market prices are drivers that affect fisher behavior. Fish price may make the fishing of a particular species more or less attractive (Holley & Marchal, 2004). Tsikaris and Polymeros (2014), in their work examine the relationship of fish market price with body size (including other variables like: trophic level, abundance and vulnerability to fishing in fresh marine finfish). Large (body) species as: sharks, rays, tunas, cod and halibut (Stevens et al., 2000) secure higher prices so are targeted by fishers yielding greater profit. Higher fish market price makes higher potential profit which comes with increased body size (Anderson et al., 2008), making an overfishing trend by fishers.

Exchange is a process by which produced products pass from one owner to another owner, from a fisherman to a fish merchant or to an individual or both of them, fishermen (whole trade) to fish processors, retail trade to the consumer. The New Fulton Fish Market (New York City) is one of the largest fish markets, second in size after famous Tsukji fish market in Tokyo. This is centralized large market with highly differentiated products from 100-300 varieties of fish, gathering restaurants, retailers and consumers to examine fish themselves or by their agents (Graddy, 2006).

Looking at the fish market from different points of view (based on the fundamental properties), we distinguish different types of market. Examining market types is called market typology. Market types can be viewed from different points of view, such as: from the spatial aspect, from the territorial aspect, from the aspect of the type of goods (fresh fish, frozen fish, canned fish, dried fish, other fish products), from the aspect of market connections (perfect competition, imperfect competition), from the aspect of techniques and market institutions, from the aspect of the market structure and from the aspect of turnover volume. What does the market typology mean or why? Market typology enables to analyze the market using different criteria both statically and dynamically.

This paper aims to present the situation in the international fish market with a special emphasis on fish consumption, fish consumption in the regional aspect, fish consumption to the poor and rich people, expected consumption, trade and production trends.

Kosovo is a small country, a small market with 1.8 million inhabitants, with fresh fish consumption of only 0.8 kg / inhabitant, while the countries in the region consume 3.0 kg / inhabitant, or somewhere three times more (EU countries 26 kg / inhabitant).

It is seen in terms of consumption, Kosovo drops largely behind but it is estimated that Kosovo has a fish farming potential of 2,400 t / year (while consumption is estimated around 1,500 t / year). Current consumption of fish comes from domestic production as well as imports. If consumption increases, demand will increase but the question is what factors influence consumption and how consumers behave.

This research aims to enlighten:

- How much is preferred fish in Kosovo, the type of favorite fish, the factors that influence purchasing and consumption, consumers’ knowledge of health benefits from fish consumption, factors affecting non-fish consumption
- What should the institutions and (what policy makers) what should do domestic producers to lure buyers and consumers to increase consumption and thus production.
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