



Pork Preference, Consumption and Retailers Pattern in Hassan District of Karnataka

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Abstract

A study was carried out in Hassan, a southern district of Karnataka to study the preferences, consumption and retailer patterns of pork as the availability and consumption of pork in this area is high. Data from the respondents of different pork retail shops and the pork consumers were collected in the study area through pretested interview schedule. The social-economic profile along with behaviour pattern of consumers in terms of meat preference, taste, digestibility and cost were studied. The consumer behaviour pattern of pork depicted as preferential, tastier, digestible easily and costlier by (40%, 45%, 12%, 23%) of respondents respectively. A large majority of the respondents preferred pork followed by chicken and the order of reasons for pork preference by the respondents was its taste and the cost. In addition, the trend of pork consumption pattern revealed the other major factors influencing high consumption of pork i.e., during weekends (100%) and preferably from home (62%). The consumers preferred pork in the form of fry (41%) and of the indigenous breed variety (82%). In reference to retailers, 46.8 per cent purchased animals both on daily basis or weekly basis but not in bulk amounts because of lower infrastructure facilities. The economics of retailers were calculated among the pork retailers and found to be profitable. The major constraints expressed in this study influencing the retailers were non availability of indigenous pigs locally, shortage of kitchen/hotel food waste and sale of temple sacrificed pork at cheaper price.

Keywords: Consumption; Hassan; Pork; Preference; Pattern; Retailers

Introduction

Pork is the most consumed meat globally. However, in India, consumption of pork is limited to few regions of the country. In India, as per 20th Livestock census, the total Pig population is 9.06 million predominantly present in north eastern states of the country. In spite of pig being an efficient feed converter and can solve the problem of increasing meat demand due to population rise

and also supplement the income of poor and small/marginal farmers, piggery is not yet wide spread in the country. Three states of India, like Assam, Jharkand and Meghalaya together constitute 45 per cent of the pig population of the country. The pig population is on decreasing trend from 2007 livestock census onwards and has decreased by 12 per cent over previous Livestock Census (2012). Among the South Indian states, Karnataka has highest pig popula-

tion of 6.25 million. Contrary to negative trend at the national level, the pig population in Karnataka has increased by 6.25% over previous Livestock Census (2012), indicating potential of the state in pig production and livelihood security of the farmers involved. Hassan, a southern district of Karnataka state is well known for meat consumption in the state. District imports meat livestock such as sheep, goat, pig and poultry from other districts of the state as well as from other states to meet the demand for meat in the district. Further, presence of several animal sacrificing temples such as Puradamma, Malaliyamma etc. in the region makes it the destination of meat lovers especially pork. The present study was undertaken to know the present scenario of pig production, marketing, pork demand, its preference and consumption pattern in Hassan district of Karnataka.

Materials and Methods

Data on various relevant aspects was collected from ten pork retail shops and fifty pork consumers from in and around Hassan through a pre-tested, reliable and valid interview schedule. The data thus collected were scored, compiled and tabulated as per the established norms and procedures and were subjected to appropriate statistical analysis in order to arrive at a conclusion.

Results and Discussions

Pork consumers

Profile of the respondents

Only adult persons who consume pork were considered as respondents, no discrimination regarding gender, religion/caste, region, employment and income was made. Further, respondents were selected randomly and were from different families.

The average age of the pork consuming respondents was 38.63 ± 12.5 years. All the respondents were literates, with school education (55%), below graduation (26%) and graduation and above (18%), even though all were literates, majority of them were school dropouts or never continued education after school. Of the respondents, majority belonged to nuclear families (69%), followed by joint family (31%) indicating higher disintegration of joint family system in the area. The median family size in nuclear family and joint family were four and seven respectively. Even though 54 per cent of the respondents were Agrarian and remaining 46 per cent from non agriculture families, it clearly indicated the increase in urbanization and shift of agriculture to non agriculture based occupation in the region. The findings also received support from the findings of [1,2].

Pork consumers as pig farmers

Among the respondent consumers involved in animal husbandry, majority were involved in dairying (50%), followed by backyard poultry (28%), sheep and goat (16%), pig rearing (3%) and mixed livestock (15%). Even though, pork consumption was higher in Hassan region, astonishingly people involved in pig rearing were very less and the demand for pork is met from the pig imported from northern districts of Karnataka. The major reasons put forth by consumer for not taking up pig rearing was because of the difficulty in managing (43%), non availability of feed/kitchen left out (31%), less profit (14%) and social taboo (12%). These findings were in support with studies of [2].

Meat preference of the respondents

The preference of livestock species for meat depends on several factors such as availability, cost, taste, digestibility, social taboo and health concern. Hassan district has all major types of agro-climatic conditions suited for different livestock farming, thus all types of meat are available in local market for the consumers. Further, higher demand for meat, good transportation connectivity has established good livestock marketing system in the region. Cost of meat and consumer purchasing power are important factors influencing meat consumption. In Hassan, an average price per kilogram of meat for pork, mutton/chevon, native chicken and fish is rupees 200, 600, 500 and 200 respectively, and the sales also has similar trend. Consumer also opined that mutton (53%) and pork (23%) are costlier than chicken (18%) and fish (4%). Of the people surveyed 27.20 per cent were vegetarians who have tasted meat and remaining 72.80 were non vegetarians. Among non vegetarians 96 per cent consumed chicken, 92 per cent consumed fish, 72 per cent consumed mutton, 63 per cent consumed chevon and 48 per cent consumed pork. Chicken and fish are consumed with no social taboos, however, pork is not consumed by Muslims and some Hindu families who consume other meat. Mutton/Chevon was also considered a taboo in certain Hindu families. The opinion of the consumers, who eat all types of meat such as pork, mutton/chevon, chicken and fish were collected and were asked to indicate their most preferred meat among all types of meat. They opined that pork (40%) and chicken (32%) as the most preferred meat, followed by mutton (21%) and fish (7%). Further, on overall basis 63 per cent of the consumers preferred meat of local breeds, 12 per cent preferred improved or outside breeds and 25 per cent had no preference for any particular breed. These findings received support from the study of [1,3,6,12].

Taste of the meat is influenced by several factors as species, breed, age, sex, portion of meat, slaughtering and cooking method and meat characters such as tenderness, flavor, juiciness and fat content or marbling etc., Pork consumers are of the opinion that red meat is tastier than white meat. Further, with respect to taste, majority ranked pork (45%) as their first choice followed by mutton (23%), chicken (19%) and fish (13%). Further, consumers opined that meat of local breeds of pig, sheep and poultry were tastier than outside breeds. These findings were similar to findings of [2,4,5,9,11,14].

Meat is said to be slowly digestible compared to vegetarian food and is the major reason for not being commonly offered to children and aged. Consumers are of the opinion that white meat i.e. chicken (43%) and fish (44%) as highly digestible where as pork (12%) and mutton (1%) are not easily digestible. However, majority of general eaters in the present survey preferred pork than other meat in spite of it being less digestible and costlier. These findings were in support with studies of [2,10].

Pork consumer's preferences and views

Among 83 per cent of households the decision on purchase of pork for family consumption is made by male head of the family. Among pork eaters 62 per cent households allowed pork utility at their houses where as remaining 38 per cent of the pork eaters consume pork from hotels, friend's house or other places as pork is totally prohibited in their houses. Only 50 per cent household allow cooking of pork inside the house, where as 42 per cent cook pork in backyard of house and 8 per cent does not cook but purchase pork dishes from outside. Even though consumption frequency greatly varied from daily to occasionally, majority of consumers, eat pork twice a week (25%) or occasionally or once in a month (25%). Sunday is the most preferred day (100%), where as Monday is the least preferred day (34%) for pork consumption followed by Saturday (56%) and Thursday (54%). About 34 per cent of consumers don't mind eating on any day of the week. Religious sentiments (38%) and non affordability (25%) are the major reasons for non consumption of pork every day. Majority of consumers do not mind consuming pork in any season (42%), where as summer (22%) and winter (22%) are equally preferred and rainy season (14%) is the least preferred season for pork consumption. About 20 per cent of consumers abstain from pork consumption during Shravana or Karthika masa of Hindu calendar months or during festivals months however, about 32 per cent who consume pork don't mind consuming pork during that period. Even though 80 per cent of the consumers feel eating pork is healthy some 3 per cent of consumers feel it is unhealthy to consume pork. Most consumers prefer to consume pork as fry (41%) and curry dishes (22%). Only

11 per cent of consumers prefer to have Biryani made out of pork. Most of the consumers (36%) wish to have pork during lunch or supper, about 8 per cent preferred it as breakfast and 20 per cent does not have preference of time for pork consumption. Majority of local pork consumers (82%) preferred local indigenous black pig for pork and 77 per cent of the respondents have tasted pork of wild boar atleast once. Similarity in findings could be derived from the study of [2,4,7].

Pork retailers

Pig/Pork Trade

In spite of Hassan being major pork consuming districts of Karnataka, as per 20th livestock census the district pig population (1946) is just 0.6% of Karnataka pig population (323836). The pig-gery business in the district is controlled by pork retailers and pig traders who import pigs from outside. The interview with retailers revealed that 92 per cent of the retailers do not have their own piggery (breeding pigs) and purchased pigs from others. Pigs are purchased from traders who normally trade local indigenous pigs from out of Hassan district usually from northern Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh once or twice a week.

Retailers purchased the animals either daily, weekly or once in a fortnight. Significantly higher proportion of retailers purchased animals either on daily basis (46.8%) or on weekly basis (34%) compared to those purchasing once in fortnight (19.2%). Stocking of piglets by retailers was found to be based on their sales requirement, place to keep animal and availability of kitchen and vegetable waste. Similar findings were reported by [2,4,5].

Small traders who purchased animals regularly opined, lack of space and feed as the major reason for not purchasing in spite of higher profits on bulk purchase of animals. Retailers opined that 63.80 per cent of customers demand for muscular meat portion exclusively thigh region where as 23.40 per cent do not mind inclusion of fatty portion of meat. Of the edible organ portion the most sought are liver (41%), followed by heart (15%), intestine (11%), lungs (12%) and others / mixed (20%). The results were in support with findings of [8].

Pig and pork economics

The average purchase price of pigs and sale price of pork by retailers was not constant. The average purchasing price of live animal was Rs.120 /kg of live weight (Range Rs.100 to Rs.135) based on demand and body condition of the animal, where as average selling price of pork at their outlets was Rs.200/kg. (Range Rs.180 to 220 /kg) based on demand, bulk purchase, clearing off the stock of the day. Indigenous pigs of around 40 – 60 kgs were in

high demand. Retailers sacrifice and sell around 2 – 8 pigs per day. They opined that selling of at least three pigs per day will be profitable. Majority (73%) of the retailers hired labour on monthly basis to assist in all activities (transit of pigs, feeding, slaughter, sales etc.). The average salary paid to these labour is Rs. 15,000 /month (Range 10,000 to 20,000/-) for a period of 12 hrs (7.00 am to 7.00 pm) per day. However, at Puradamma temple premises labour for slaughter, cleaning and cutting was Rs.1000/- per animal.

Economics of pork retail shop (per month)

A retailer slaughtering and selling 3 pigs of 40 kg per day, hiring a labour- (Rs.15, 000/- per month)

Purchase Price --Rs. 120 / kg live weight, 90 pigs/mn @ 40kg / pig- Rs. 4, 32,000-00

Transport - Rs. 7000-00

Labour - Rs. 14,000-00

Feed /Vegetable waste - Rs. 3000-00

Expenditure- Rs. 4, 56,000-00

Income (70 % dressing percent, Rs.200/-/kg, 84kg pork)- Rs.5, 04,000-00

Net Profit per month- Rs. 48,000-00

Constraints for retailers business

Retailers opined that non availability of indigenous pigs locally and shortage of kitchen/hotel food waste were the two major constraints for their business. Further sale of temple sacrificed pork at cheaper price by few is considered as an emerging constraint. These results are in harmony with findings of [13].

Conclusion

Pork consumption in India is regionally concentrated, with pig farming facing challenges despite its potential. Pork's popularity in Hassan district contrasts with religious and social barriers directly or indirectly influencing consumption. Preferences for taste, digestibility, and affordability drive meat choices, with chicken and fish being favored. Piggery, especially of Indigenous breed needs to be promoted in Hassan district. Package of practices for rearing indigenous pigs in farms is to be developed and farmers need to be trained in this regard.

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