

Marketing Methods and Chains of the Maldive-Fish Processors: A Case Study in Matara District

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The Maldive fish industry is quite popular among small scale processors, mainly females, who have settled along the coastal belt in southern Sri Lanka. The efficient marketing system is important considering the local marginal Maldive fish industry in both the consumers and producers. However, marketing aspects are remains neglected and exploitation of the producers in hands of intermediaries is identified in marketing chains. The economic statistics and marketing status are usually not well documented and inadequately reached. Therefore, this study aims to examine different marketing chains, market margin and marketing methods used by Maldive fish processors toward policy measures. Devinuwara, Mirissa and Gandara in the district of Matara were selected purposively. In-depth interviews with processors (n=20) and traders (n=15) were selected by using simple random and snowball sampling methods respectively. Results revealed that 40% of Maldive fish processors add cinnamon/gamboge/curry leaves and large scale processors (8%) add Sodium Benzoate and citric acid to the boiling water while others (52%) not add any ingredients to improve the product physical quality. Processors sell products in bulk (92%) and other (08%) forms as loose flakes, bottled flakes, and broken splits while 20% sell packed products. In addition, 50% of the processors sell products to traders who come from outside Matara. The 8% of processors use social media and posters as their marketing techniques, while others (92%) use word of mouth. There are four major marketing chains and majority processors (80%) sell to consumers through the wholesalers and retailers. The market margin is estimated at 55% for the major marketing channel. The profit share of producer, wholesaler and retailers are 9.25%, 35% and 20% respectively. It is evident that the processors are not making a reasonable profit through the marketing channel and the marketing methods in the region are inefficient. Therefore, an effective policy for a transparent marketing system is recommended to uplift national economy through the production and trade enhancement.

Keywords: *Maldive Fish, Marketing Chains, Marketing Methods, Profit*