The Effect of Consumer Characteristics and Behaviour on Pork Consumption in Malta. A Quantitative Study

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Abstract: The pig industry in Malta is important for the local economy and food safety. As is reported in Galli et al. (2016), Maltese people eat protein-rich diets although the Agriculture and Fisheries Census 2014 issued by the National Statistics Office reports a decrease in the number of pigs being bred on the island. This paper intends to analyse the pattern of Maltese consumer behaviour regarding pork consumption, eliciting the crucial factors affecting local consumption. This study forms part of an ongoing research studying the characteristics and behaviours of the Maltese pork consumer aimed to help the stakeholders in the industry to focus their strength on what is really expected by the consumers. Data was obtained through an online survey with questions/statements related to the demographic characteristics of the respondent, several Likert scale statements to analyse the purchase behaviour, and finally two questions to obtain the respondents’ weekly pork consumption. The research tool was tested for its reliability through an SPSS test, obtaining a Cronbach’s alpha value of 0.534. Data was reduced through Factor Analysis, from 17 factors to 5. The VARIMAX test was used to carry out the rotation necessary to reduce data. A resultant 5 factors gave 63% of the total variance in only 6 iterations and this was shown clearly in the scree plot. These five factors were named Product Quality, Peer Influence, Health Issues, Ethnocentrism, and Product Information. Statements found in the research tool were grouped according to their respective new factor and were analysed for their normality. Since the number of respondents was fewer than 100, the Shapiro Wilk test was used to determine if the data has a normal or non-normal distribution. All 5 new factors resulted skewed and therefore the Spearman Correlation test was used to test for the relationship between the Independent variables and the Dependant variables, between the Independent variables themselves, and between the Independent variables and the demographic information gathered. The correlation resulted significant in one Independent variable versus the Dependant variable, in 4 results between the Independent variables themselves, and in 4 results with regard to the relationship between the Independent variables and the Demographic factors. These results give a better picture of the local purchasing behaviour in relation to pork consumption as no previous study in this regard has been published locally before. It is intended to continue studying this phenomenon in the near future by increasing the sample size and making changes to the research tool in order to improve its reliability.

Keywords: Pork consumption; Malta, quantitative research; online survey; factor analysis; product quality; peer influence; health issues; product information; ethnocentrism; theory of planned behaviour.

Background to Study

Pig breeders always complain that local pork consumption is decreasing year by year although they insist that their product is of excellent quality and even superior to the...
imported one. The researcher feels these two statements contradict each other and this research attempts to find out what affects the choice of the Maltese consumer regarding pork. All this is sustained in various reports published over the years. According to the Agriculture and Fisheries Census (2014), there are 100 pig farms on the islands which supply the local market with fresh local pork. These farms are scattered around the islands as shown in Figure 1, with most of them concentrated in the central and southern part of the main island for the obvious reason that feed mills and the slaughterhouse are found in Marsa close to the harbour.

![Figure 1. Pig farms by district (Source: Agriculture and Fisheries Census, 2014)](image)

Table 1 illustrates what happened to the pig production in the Maltese islands between 2010 and 2014 which witnessed a decrease of 32.8% in the total number of heads and a 33% decrease in the breeding stock.
of food consumption higher than its ecological footprint of food production because more resources than ever are now being consumed, both per person and in absolute terms. By 2050 the world’s population will reach 9.7 billion, 32% higher than today (UN-DESA 2015). To feed such a great population, food production needs to increase. Alexandratos and Brunisma (2012) projected that a 60% increase in agriculture production is needed from 2006 to 2050 to provide an adequate food supply. Increase in population leads to an increase in the work force which also leads to an improved economy. If the economy of a country improves, this can lead to better wages and family income. Pimental and Pimental (2003) state that, with urbanization and rising incomes, typical dietary patterns are shifting towards consumption patterns based on animal products. Malta is not an exception because in the same study carried by Galli et al. (2016) it is stated that protein-intensive diets are found in countries such as Portugal and Malta. Malta has an ecological footprint of food consumption higher than its ecological footprint of food production because

### Literature Review

Agriculture in Malta is in a decline but the demand for agricultural products in the world is on the increase. This is sustained by research carried out by Galli et al. (2016) who state that more resources than ever are now being consumed, both per person and in absolute terms. By 2050 the world’s population will reach 9.7 billion, 32% higher than today (UN-DESA 2015). To feed such a great population, food production needs to increase. Alexandratos and Brunisma (2012) projected that a 60% increase in agriculture production is needed from 2006 to 2050 to provide an adequate food supply. Increase in population leads to an increase in the work force which also leads to an improved economy. If the economy of a country improves, this can lead to better wages and family income. Pimental and Pimental (2003) state that, with urbanization and rising incomes, typical dietary patterns are shifting towards consumption patterns based on animal products. Malta is not an exception because in the same study carried by Galli et al. (2016) it is stated that protein-intensive diets are found in countries such as Portugal and Malta. Malta has an ecological footprint of food consumption higher than its ecological footprint of food production because

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MALTA</th>
<th>Total Heads</th>
<th>Type of Pig</th>
<th>Young (including piglets)</th>
<th>Pigs &gt;50 Kg</th>
<th>Pigs</th>
<th>Breeding Stock</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>70,583</td>
<td>36,062</td>
<td>27,631</td>
<td>6,890</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>46,287</td>
<td>23,686</td>
<td>17,567</td>
<td>5,034</td>
<td></td>
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<td>2012</td>
<td>45,209</td>
<td>24,093</td>
<td>15,838</td>
<td>5,278</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>49,451</td>
<td>25,067</td>
<td>19,102</td>
<td>5,282</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>47,465</td>
<td>23,048</td>
<td>19,803</td>
<td>4,614</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Percentage change in comparison to previous year |
| 2012 | 2013 | 2014 |
| -2.3 | 9.4  | -4.0 |
| 1.7  | 4.0  | -8.1 |
| -9.8 | 20.6 | 3.7  |
| 4.8  | 0.1  | -12.6|

The National Statistics Office (NSO) World Food Day Report (2014) also states that pork production in Malta decreased from 7,369 tonnes in 2009 to 5,920 tonnes in 2013. This shows a downward trend in consumption of local pork despite the average household income being over 41% higher in 2015 than in 2007 which shows increased spending power and a contributing decline in the inactivity amongst women from almost 69% to just over 56% in the same period (Bamber 2017). All this could change family time management and life-style, including pork consumption. This research studies 5 factors which, in the author’s opinion, can indicate sound reasons for the decline in local pork consumption.

### Table 1. Annual Pig Production by type (Source: Agriculture and Fisheries Census, 2014)
most of the consumed products are imported. This dependence can be reduced by increasing the demand for local products, such as local pork. Apart from reducing the ecological footprints, this will increase work opportunities, especially for young farmers. The local farming sector has an ageing problem; therefore an increase in the demand for local products will increase the interest in such an important sector which in Malta is slowly dying. According to Farrugia et al. (2016), knowing the behaviour and motivations of consumer purchasing can help the production and distribution companies to establish effective marketing strategies to maintain or increase their share of the domestic and international markets. Local industry needs such knowledge to improve their supply-and-demand chain.

To carry out a proper consumer behaviour survey, one needs to consider six demographic characteristics: age, sex, marital status, income, occupation, and education. All or some of these factors can affect the outcome of the survey as these demographic variables can reveal ongoing trends that signal business opportunities, such as shifts in age, gender, and income distribution. Schiffman et al. (2012) state that the product needs and interest vary with consumer age. Demographers draw an important distinction between age effects (occurrences owing to chronological age) and cohort effects (occurrences owing to growing up during a specific time period). The first stresses the impact of ageing, whereas the second stresses the influence of the period when a person is born and shares experiences with others of the same age. Gender roles nowadays are so blurred that this does not always help in distinguishing consumers in some product categories. One change affecting marketers nowadays is that women are not so readily accessible through traditional media as they once were. Nowadays, working women do not have much time to watch television or listen to the radio. People have more access to online information and they are more reachable there rather than on traditional media. According to Smith (2001), men tend to click on a website because they are ‘information hungry’, whereas women click on because ‘they expect communications media to entertain and educate’. With regard to marital status, traditionally the family has been the focus of most marketing efforts and the household continues to be the relevant consuming unit for many products and services. One-person households with income greater than €50,000 comprise a market segment that tends to be above average in the use of products not traditionally associated with supermarkets and below average in their consumption of traditional supermarket products (e.g. ketchup, peanut butter, mayonnaise). Income, education, and occupation categories play a role in consumer behaviour. Marketers commonly segment markets on the basis of income because they feel that it is a strong indicator of the ability (or inability) to pay for a product. In some studies, high income is combined with age to identify the important affluence of the elderly segment. ‘Education, occupation and income tend to be closely correlated in almost a cause-and-effect relationship. High-level occupations that produce high incomes usually require advanced educational training. Individuals with little education rarely qualify for high-level jobs. Insights on internet usage preferences tend to support the close relationship among income, occupation, and education. Research reveals that consumers with lower incomes, lower education, and blue-collar occupations tend to spend more time online at home than those with higher incomes, higher education, and white-collar occupations’ (Schiffman et al., 2012).

With more women joining the work force, people have less time for their families. According to Warde (1999) and Buckley et al. (2007), people are eating convenience food because they have other pressing obligations and it solves meal-scheduling problems. This means that more people choose to consume processed products or ready-made meals instead of buying fresh products and preparing their meals.

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themselves. McKenzie (1986) reports that, although working women contribute to financial enrichment of the household, a situation of ‘time poverty’ may develop. This leads to less time available for household chores and meal preparation (De Boer et al. 2004). Apart from the constraints emerging from a change in lifestyle, the subjective norm can be influenced by an individual’s desire to act in accordance with expectations of friends, family, and social groups (McKnight 2007). According to Vermier and Verbeke (2004), social pressure from peers can influence purchasing intentions regardless of relatively negative attitudes. On the contrary other studies have concluded that subjective norms have no significant effect on purchasing intention (Patch et al. 2005) because one can be affected by other factors such as the geographic, demographic, and social environments one grew up within. The lack of agreement on this point can be due to the effect of the country under study. People in different countries can behave differently. According to Kurajdova et al. (2015), such environments can influence people’s desires, needs, preferences, attitudes, and interests that ultimately have an impact on their consumer behaviour. Another paper by Farruggia et al. (2016) states that several studies have been carried out about the ethnocentric behaviours through which consumers express a priority, a preference to products originating in their country or region driven by the belief that the purchase of domestic products is valuable to support the economy of their countries. Similar thoughts are shared by Schiffman et al. (2012) in Consumer Behaviour, a European Outlook. The authors comment that highly ethnocentric consumers are likely to feel that is inappropriate or wrong to purchase foreign-made products because of the resulting economic impact on the domestic economy. On the other hand, non-ethnocentric consumers tend to evaluate foreign-made products more objectively for their extrinsic characteristics (e.g. ‘How good are they?’). The latter are more receptive to products made in foreign countries. Ethnocentrism can vary by country and product. Byeong-Joon Moon (2004) points out that the attitude of consumers with little knowledge about a product is more strongly influenced by country of origin perceptions than the product attitude of consumers with high knowledge.

Another variable that affects consumer purchase behaviour is price. Buckley et al. (2007) insist that getting value for money is important especially among low-income people compared to those who are better-off. For Williams et al. (2012) price is one of the main factors considered in purchasing decisions by consumers because it can gain more influence on consumer behaviour among low-income groups. This means that income plays a key role in consumer behaviour as well. According to Osman et al. (2014), the fast growth of disposable income among urban consumers has enabled them to have more opportunities to consider a wider array of products and services compared to those in rural areas. Schiffman et al. (2012) note that the consumer perceives a price as high, low, or fair and this has an effect on purchase intentions and satisfactions. Moreover, the authors comment that products advertised ‘on sale’ tend to create enhanced customer perceptions of savings and value. Consumers tend to compare price with quality as well. There are a number of studies which state that consumers rely on price as an indicator of product quality. Schiffman et al. (2014) state that consumers attribute different qualities to identical products that carry different price tags and that such consumers’ characteristics as age and income affect the perception value. Liechtenstein et al. (1993) have found that consumers using a price/quality relationship are actually relying on a well-known, and hence more expensive, brand name as an indicator of quality without actually relying directly on price per se. In most consumption situations, in addition to price, consumers also use such cues as the brand and the shop in which the product is bought to evaluate its quality, as is shown in Figure 2.
Health issues are another variable which affects consumer behaviour when they come to purchase food. According to Brunso et al. (2002) healthy eating is gaining considerable importance. Kurjadova et al. (2015) found that, the higher education, the more people identified ‘health issues’ as barriers. Conversely, Osman et al. (2014) report that people tend to eat fast food because it is inexpensive compared to eating salad or other healthy food. People who interest themselves in healthy eating note product appearance and label information more. Such an important variable cannot be ignored because, as Osman et al. (2014) concluded, food marketers should improve their product packaging and quality to reflect healthy convenient food. James et al. (2002) also conclude that colour plays a key role in the perception of the quality of consumables and it is in some way connected to health aspects. Grunert (1997) divides the quality in two attributes: quality expectation and quality experience. According to Erickson et al. (1984), quality expectation is when a consumer will look for the brand, country of origin, and price, while Olson and Jacobi (1972) state that the quality experience depends on the taste, smell, colour, freshness, and nutraceutical properties. These attributes can be earmarked by the consumer during purchase and after consumption. Probably the first attribute is more easily applied during purchase while the latter one, since it is classified as a physical characteristic, would be applied at home as far as pork is concerned. Olson and Jacobi (1972) also describe quality as a subjective concept that depends on the perception, the needs, and objectives of the individual consumer.

Another factor to be considered when studying consumer behaviour is purchasing behaviour. Schiffman et al. (2012) say that consumers make three types of purchase: trial purchases, repeat purchases, and long-term commitment purchases. In a trial purchase, the consumer tends to evaluate the product through direct use. Normally this type of purchase is done on consumables, such as food or detergents which cost a few cents. Consumers can be encouraged to try a new product through promotional tactics, like free samples and/or sale prices. On the other hand, repeat purchase behaviour is closely related to the concept of brand loyalty, which most firms try to encourage because it contributes to greater stability in the marketplace. A repeat
purchase usually signifies that the product meets with the approval of the consumer who is willing to use it again and in large quantities.

**Research Question and Objectives**

This research aims to identify the characteristics and behaviours that affect pork consumers. To reach this aim, the researcher intends to use the Theory of Planned Behaviour to explain the relationship between the independent variables of product quality, product information, ethnocentrism, peer influence, health issues, and the dependent variable which is consumer behaviour when consuming pork meat.

The main objectives of this study are:

i. To obtain a clear view of what affects consumer behaviour when it comes to purchasing pork meat;
ii. To analyse how product quality, product information, health issues, peer influence, and ethnocentrism interact between themselves and affect the dependent variable which is pork consumption.

**Hypotheses**

H1: There is positive relationship between product quality and pork consumption.
H2: There is positive relationship between ethnocentrism and pork consumption.
H3: There is positive relationship between peer influence and pork consumption.
H4: There is negative relationship between health issues and pork consumption.
H5: There is positive relationship between product information and pork consumption.

![Conceptual framework]

**Research Methodology**

The method of enquiry for this research is a cross-sectional study performed once to collect information about the behaviour of Maltese pork consumers. The researcher has taken in consideration the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB).

The main aspect of TPB is the person’s intention to perform the behaviour.
stronger the intention, the more likely the individual will perform the behaviour. The TPB assumes that there are three theoretically independent factors that jointly influence intention. Attitude and Behaviour beliefs refer to the degree to which the individual has a positive or negative evaluation of a certain behaviour. Subjective norm or normative beliefs are the social pressure to perform or not perform the given behaviour. It refers to the influence family and friends or colleagues have on the behaviour. The third factor is the control factor. People are expected to carry out their intentions when the opportunity arises or there will be no barrier between them and their intention (Ajzen 1991).

According to d’Ardienne et al. (2011), the TPB has proven to have strong predictive power. This model, originally developed by Fishbein and Ajzen in 1975 as the Theory of Reasoned Action, was expanded into the Theory of Planned Behaviour by Ajzen in 1985. Such a powerful model proved useful for this research, since the researcher used part of the factors affecting the TPB. Schiffman et al. (2012) state that, if researchers wish to ask consumers about their purchase preferences and consumption experience, they can do so in person, by telephone, by post, or online. Each of these survey methods has its own advantages and disadvantages. According to the literature, since most people nowadays work and so are very difficult to reach, the best method would be an online survey.

This cross-sectional study uses a questionnaire based on the TPB toolkit as explained by d’Ardienne et al. (2011) to develop the tool to gather the needed information. The Likert scale used is from ‘Strongly Disagree’ to ‘Strongly Agree’ as suggested by d’Ardienne et al. (2011). d’Ardenne and Nicholls (2010) found that using negative and positive items in a questionnaire can cause confusion in some respondents and they suggest that agree/disagree questions should not contain negative questions/statements. The online survey is divided into three sections. The first part contains five questions asking about the demographic characteristic of the respondent which are age, family size, locality, annual family income, and level of education. The age under research is between 20 and 60+, family size between a one person to a 5+ person household, annual family income up to €60,000+, and the level of education from secondary to doctorate level. As far as locality is concerned, three sections were identified, the North, Central, and the South part, as it is easier for the Maltese people to choose.

In the second part there are 17 statements related to the Control and Normative beliefs. The intention to focus on these two is due to the limited time and length of the questionnaire. The statements in this part of the survey are about the quality of the product, peer influence, ethnocentrism, health issues, and knowledge about product information. Answers for this part are analysed through a Likert scale because, according to Schiffman (2012) and d’Ardienne et al. (2011), it is the most popular form of attitude scale used as it is easy for the researcher to prepare and to interpret, and simple for the consumers to answer. A principal benefit of the Likert scale is that it gives the researcher the option of considering the responses of each statement separately or of combining the responses to produce an overall score. The latter is the intention of the present researcher after running a Factor analysis. The last part of the online survey contains two questions about pork consumption, relating to the frequency and amount of pork consumption per week. In this part, the data is collected through an interval scale. Therefore, the questionnaire has 24 questions in total. The questionnaire is developed through Google Drive and disseminated through Facebook. The sample was taken from Facebook contacts where the researcher uploaded the questionnaire and all meat-lovers had the opportunity to answer the questionnaire.
on a first-response basis. There was no control on who answered the questionnaire so as to reduce the risk of having a convenient sample as much as possible, but the population was stratified as only meat-lovers were asked to answer the questionnaire. This was because the research studied the behaviour of meat-lovers in relation to pork purchasing and consumption. The study intended to have a confidence level of 95% and a confidence interval of 10, based on a Maltese population of around 400,000 people. Therefore, according the survey sample calculator, 96 questionnaires needed to be collected (https://www.surveystem.com/sscalc.htm#one).

Analytic Procedures

This research adopted a positivist philosophy with a deductive approach. Data was gathered in a quantitative manner, inserted in a database, and analysed through SPSS version 24. The survey tool was analysed for its reliability and checked for its alpha value. The statements with a Likert scale were analysed through a factor-reduction test known as Factor Analysis. The data was analysed through a Scree plot with the help of VARIMAX rotation method. The researcher was then able to reduce the number of factors to around five which made them more manageable while the means of each factor could be worked out after grouping the questions. The new five factors which came out from the reduction exercise were analysed for their correlation to see if there was multicollinearity between the new variables. The correlation test was selected after analysing the new factors for normality with a Shapiro Wilk test. As the data coming from the Likert scale questions resulted in a skewed distribution, the Spearman correlation test was used. Figure 4 describes Phase 1 of data analysis and Figure 5 describes Phase 2 of data analysis.

Figure 4. Data Analysis Phase 1

![Figure 4. Data Analysis Phase 1](image-url)
Research Findings

This research was quantitative and all data was analysed through SPSS. Respondents answered all questions, therefore no missing data was found. The data was tested for the average inter-item correlation with a reliability test and the Cronbach’s Alpha value came to 0.534. Factor analysis was used to reduce the number of factors from seventeen to five. This was carried with the help of VARIMAX rotation. Five factors with an eigenvalue of more than one were found in six iterations and showed 63% of the total variance. This was shown very clearly in the Scree plot in Figure 6. The new factors were associated with product quality, peer influence, health issues, ethnocentrism, and product information as seen in Figure 3. After analysing the Rotated Component Matrix (Figure 6), the thirteen statements in the survey were grouped according to the new factor and the average of each respondent with regard to the new factor was worked out. Factor One got four statements, Factor Two two, Factor Three three, Factor Four two, while Factor Five got two as well.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>1</th>
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<td>Q22</td>
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Figure 6. Rotated Component Matrix
Analysis showed some correlation between the Dependent and Independent variables and between the Independent variables themselves. Only one Independent variable achieved a correlation of 0.334 and a p-value of 0.004 with the Dependant variable. This Independent variable is product quality’s poor positive correlation means that when quality increases, consumption increases, but not always. The other Independent variables achieved a poor positive correlation with the Dependent variable except for product information where the correlation was close to zero. For these 4 Independent variables the p-value was more than 0.05; therefore no significance emerged. When it comes to multicollinearity, which means the correlation between the new Independent variables, only four obtained a significant result of a p-value less than 0.05. These were product quality versus peer influence, product quality versus health issues, product quality versus ethnocentrism, and product information versus ethnocentrism. With respect to correlation, all achieved a poor correlation which varied between 0.231 and 0.298. This is a positive finding because the researcher anticipated that his Independent variables would have a strong correlation with the Dependent variable which is pork consumption and a poor correlation between the Independent variables themselves. The latter finding was reached in this research as even the other results show low correlation between the Independent variables themselves but achieved a p-value higher than 0.05 as well. Regarding the demographics section this research found out that there is a low negative correlation between the annual family income and product quality, which means that as the family income increases the less priority is given to the product quality. The correlation between the two is
that of -0.244 with a p-value of 0.04. This agrees with the studies carried out by Warde (1999), Buckley et al. (2007), McKenzie (1986), and De Boer et al. (2004) as they state that the increase in income can result from having both parents working, therefore less time for meal preparations. This will lead to families consuming more prepared meal or processed products. Another significant correlation was observed between age and pork consumption. The researcher observed a negative correlation of -0.234 with a p-value of 0.05. This agrees with what is written by Schiffman et al. (2012) that product needs and interest vary with consumer age. Brunso et al. (2002) also comment that healthy eating is gaining considerable importance. Another two variables that achieved a correlation, were age versus family size. They achieved a correlation value of -0.465 and a p-value of 0.000. This can mean that as people get older their family size decreases which makes sense because as the parents grew older the children leave their home and therefore the family size become smaller. The last two variables that achieved a significant correlation were income versus education. Their correlation was that of 0.250 with a p-value of 0.036. This agrees as well with Schiffman et al. (2012) who state that high-level occupations that produce high incomes usually require advanced educational training.

The first part of the survey which was about the demographics of the respondents was not included in the statistical tests. This part was divided into 5 questions: age, family size, locality, annual family income, and education. With regard to age, 32.4% were between 20 and 29 years old, 32.4% were between 30 and 39 years old, 25.4% were between 40 and 49 years old, 2.8% were between 50 and 59 years old, and 7% were over 60 years old. This agrees with Schiffman et al. (2012) who states that young people have more access to the internet. The survey was filled by a very low number of one-person households as this resulted in only 2.8%; 15.5% were 2-person households, 36.6% were 3-person households, 26.8% were 4-person households, and 18.3% were households of more than 5 persons. Most of the respondents were from the central part of the island (47.9%), 28.2% from the north, and 23.9% from the south. This could be because most people in Malta live in the central part. Regarding income there were 11.3% earning less than €14,999, 35.2% earning between €15,000 to €29,999, 36.6% earning between €30,000 to €44,999, 14.1% earning between €45,000 to €59,999, and 2.8% earning more than over €60,000. The education level of the respondents was as follows: 2.8% secondary level, 29.6% post-secondary level, 40.8% graduate level, and 26.8% masters level. This difference in the demographic characteristics of the respondents may have affected the reliability and stability of the results. More in-depth research is needed in this regard. There were two questions at the end of the survey covering the Dependant variable. From them it results that 62% of the respondents eat pork once a week, 31% two to three times a week, 2.8% four to five times a week, and only 4.2% consume pork six to seven times a week. As regard consumption in kilograms, 40.8% consume less than 1 kg per week, 29.6% consume between 1 to 1.99 kg, 21.1% consume between 2 to 2.99 kg, 2.8% consume between 3 to 3.99 kg, and 8.4% consume between 4 to 6 kg weekly.

**Conclusion**

The main aim of this study is to help local stakeholders in the pork industry focus their effort more wisely to meet consumer demand. After analysing the data gathered through the survey, there resulted a positive correlation between product quality and pork consumption. This means that local consumers expect quality when they purchase pork for consumption. Another positive correlation found was that between product quality and peer influence. The best promotion comes from satisfied customers. Therefore, butchers and meat-processing outlets should focus more on
quality as this pays off. During data analysis, it was additionally found that pork consumers positively associate product quality with health issues. Nowadays people are more aware of health issues and reach for high-quality products. Something that goes hand-in-hand with this is the positive correlation between product information with health issues. This means that more information on the product label can lead increased sales. Normally consumers associate quality with a brand and a ‘Made in’ on the product label can help as well. This study showed a positive correlation between product quality and ethnocentrism which means that consumers put weight on the origin of the product with most preferring local products as they believe that they are of high standard and their purchase would help the local economy. Osman et al. (2014) and Erickson et al. (1984) sustain all this. As a suggestion for the industry, one should focus more on product quality and the information on the product itself which helps the consumer make the right choice. On the other hand, there was a negative correlation between annual family income and product quality and age versus pork consumption. If marketers would like to promote pork products, it would be wiser if they target teenagers and middle-aged people as there is a tendency for pork consumption to decrease as age increases.

This research is already shedding light on what the stakeholders in the pork industry can do to improve their output but, for this research to be more significant, it is important that the research tool should be improved to get a higher alpha value, i.e. more than 0.7. This will make the survey more reliable; by repeating the study, the tool can become more valid. The new tool must focus more on the newly emerged factors and, if possible, one must consider gathering the data with more than one survey method. In this research only an online survey was used. Future research can consider using the in-person or telephone survey technique to reach respondents who do not have a Facebook account or are not computer literate.

References


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