

ABSTRACT

Selected snack items imported from Latin America are priced lower than comparable snack items produced in Trinidad and Tobago. This study sought to explore the motivations behind household purchase of low-cost snack items of Latin American and Trinidad and Tobago origins. A non-experimental descriptive survey design was used, along with an orally administered questionnaire and supermarket survey. Study recruited 50 male and female participants aged 20 years and over from medium to large chain supermarkets located in Trinidad. The questionnaire examined seven aspects of snack consumer behaviour after which the participants were grouped into weekly purchasers, monthly purchasers and random purchasers. A supermarket survey was performed 21 snacks were identified as well as the corresponding retail price. Snacks enlisted were grouped into chips, biscuits, cookies, unflavoured crackers, salted flavoured crackers, non-salted flavoured crackers and mini-cakes. Percent Daily Values for the total fat, sodium and sugar contents were ranked: high, low and medium. Pearson's chi square test value co-efficient value was ignored and the corresponding Asymp.2 tailed value $p < 0.05$ was taken as the significant level. Dependent variable was the types of snacks purchased, independent variables were total monthly incomes, nutritional components and snack price. Nutrition ($p < 0.05$) and price ($p < 0.05$) considerations were overshadowed by convenience ($p = 0.014$) and familial obligations ($p = 0.05$). Overall factors of convenience, availability of brands, familial obligations and subjective snack definitions significantly outweighed the aspects of price and nutrition in the household purchasing of low-cost snack items.