

Environmental sustainability, food security and food labeling: a comparative analysis of nutrition labelling laws in select Asian jurisdictions

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Nutrition labeling laws could be seen to assume significance in relation to food security and environmental sustainability in the modern context. The objective of the research is to analyze the legal position regarding nutrition labeling in Sri Lanka in relation to the legal frameworks of India and Malaysia in order to identify issues which persist regarding the regulation of nutrition labelling in these jurisdictions. The research question is regarding the extent to which relevant legal instruments regarding nutrition labeling in these jurisdictions have adopted the recommendations made in international legal documents in the field of nutrition labelling. Qualitative research methodology was adopted in the research and reference was made to primary and secondary sources. Primary sources such as international standards, codes of practice and guidelines regarding nutrition labelling were considered. Secondary sources such as books and journal articles have also been referred to in the research. The research revealed that in spite of the recommendations made in international instruments such as “Guidelines on Nutrition Labelling” and “General Standard for the Labelling of and Claims for Pre-packaged Foods for Special Dietary Use”, different governmental approaches have been adopted to regulate nutrition labelling in national jurisdictions such as Sri Lanka, India and Malaysia. It could be seen that even though Codex Committees have been established in these countries, diverse nutrition labelling laws have been implemented in these jurisdictions. As a result, a diversity of laws with regard to nutrition labelling could be observed in these countries which would be problematic in the efforts to ensure uniformity in this area of law. In view of the importance of nutrition labelling in realizing food security and its implications towards environmental sustainability, achieving uniformity in national nutrition labelling regulations across the region could be considered as a timely need which deserves the attention of lawmakers in the region.