

***Male and Female Broiler, Layer and Backyard Poultry Farmers in
Kurunegala District, Sri Lanka: A Case Study on Knowledge of
Government Policies and Regulations Pertaining to the Poultry Industry***

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The poultry industry in Sri Lanka which consists of broiler, layer and backyard sectors is regulated by the Sri Lankan government through policies and regulations. It is imperative that all stakeholders involved in this sector should be informed such that they can comply with these policies and regulations and be equipped with the required technical expertise in order to ensure the sustainability of the sector. In Sri Lanka, both men and women farmers are actively involved in poultry production, but their access to the regulatory framework governing the industry varies. Therefore, this study was conducted to investigate the awareness and understanding of male and female poultry farmers regarding government policies and regulations in relation to the poultry industry in Sri Lanka. The study focused on farmers residing in the Kurunegala District, one of the districts in Sri Lanka with a high poultry density. The study was qualitative in nature, thus focus group discussions were used to gather data. The sample comprised 30 broiler, layer, and backyard poultry farmers (22 male farmers and 8 female farmers) selected on a convenience sampling basis. The responses were audio-recorded, transcribed, and analyzed using thematic analysis. The findings of the study were twofold. Firstly, there was a significant gender disparity in the level of awareness: with males manifesting a higher degree of conversance with policies and regulations. Secondly, a notable difference could be observed between layer & broiler farmers and backyard farmers with the former showing a higher degree of familiarity with regulatory measures. The study highlighted the need for policy-level interventions to bridge the gap in knowledge and awareness of poultry-related policies between men and women farmers to ensure the equitability and long-term sustainability of the poultry industry in Sri Lanka.

Keywords: Poultry, Policies, Gender, Knowledge, Sustainability