

Hygiene Practice: A key Factor in Limiting Food Poisoning in Hospitality Industry

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Abstract

Food hygiene practices to human existence cannot be over-emphasized. It brings about good health, growth and development of the people when it is properly maintained, while improper handling of hygiene practices could lead to illness and diseases, poor health, increased medical bills and reduced productivity. This study works on the state of hygiene practices and its importance in promoting good health and development of human growth in Ekiti State. The aim is to foster proper hygiene practices among people in the State. The research will show among others that the campaign for good hygiene alone does not assure quality and safety of hygienic practice; that high premium must be placed on ascertaining compliance with proper hygiene practice by people, food manufacturers and food agencies. It is suggested that citizens, food handlers and manufacturers should maintain a high level of personal hygienic practices, and health practices in line with regulatory standards.

Keyword: Food Hygiene; Hospitality Industry

Introduction

Good hygiene maintenance is what is keeping us healthy in all aspects of life both physically, socially and intellectually. A good hygiene provides us freedom from all the sickness and diseases. Good hygiene is a feeling of physical, social well-being and mentally. It is a costly and most precious gift of the life and necessary for living a purposeful life. Now-a-days, a good health is like a life given by God. It is a fact that good hygiene is real money of life. Health is a precious earning of a human throughout his/her life. Mahatma Gandhi (2000) said "It is a high standard of health which is wealth and not gold and silver". Though there have been substantial developments in food production and safety management, developed countries continue to deal with numerous and critical food safety problems (Anklan and Battaglia, 2001).

Food is any substance that when consumed provides nutritional support for the body for day-to-day running activities. It is of plant or animal origin which contains essential nutrients that aid the growth and development of the organism. History reveals that the early men secured their food through agriculture, as well as hunting and gathering. Most of the food consumed by the world population is supplied by the food industry. Food has been identified globally as not only a biological need but also an economic and political weapon. It is a potential source of socio-political problems in communities and nations of the world. Foods transmit diseases from individual to individual as well as serve as a growth medium for microorganisms that can cause food poisoning. Al-Weqaiyan, A. (2005).

Good hygiene practices are essential for food preparation not only in industry but in the domestic setting also, to avoid illness and even death. It has been demonstrated that the private home setting is considered the first place in which food-borne diseases develop due to poor personal and/or environmental hygiene with an increased risk of infection (Istituto superiore sanità 2003; Conodo et al. 2003).

Originally, foods were sought and gathered. Lakes, rivers and ocean, feed human beings with nutritious sea foods, wild animals

provide food for hunters and their families. as the population multiplied, the world expanded farming progressed trade developed and markets shared a variety of goods, so also the techniques for the preparation such as picking, salt and smoking were developed to deal with the new problem of storage, waste and food borne illness (Allen, 2006).

Research Questions

1. What is the level of awareness on food hygiene practices in Ekiti State?
2. What are the factors contributing to unhygienic practices in Ekiti State?
3. Does unhygienic health practices has negative effect on the health of families in Ekiti State?
4. Does regular practice of environmental sanitation assist in preventing domestic food poisoning?
5. What are the possible solutions in preventing domestic food poisoning?

Significance of the Study

This study will in great measures be of good advantage to the researcher, the reader, the society and the government in general. It is hoped that ensuring and maintaining good hygienic practices will drastically reduce diseases and sickness among people of the society.

Individual may benefit from practice of personal hygiene which will lead to good and healthy living, society will benefit greatly as communities will be free of contagious diseases through healthy and hygienic.

The government will find this study useful. It will assist the government to proffer easy way in reducing the problem of sickness and diseases in the country. Also, the study will assist the government greatly as the little available resource will be concentrated on other developmental projects rather than treating of sickness and disease emanated from unhealthy food practices when people adhered to good hygiene practices that prevent spread of diseases.

Review of Related Literature

A food is a substance when taken into the body to maintain life. According to Eastham, Sharples, Ball, (2001) food is contaminated when it contains any unacceptable matter which can be in the form of microorganisms, poisons, or physical contaminants such as pieces of glass or metal. According to Blanch (2003), food safety is a science of describing preparation, storage and handling of food in ways that prevent food borne illness. These include a number of routine practices that must be done to avoid potential health problem. There is need to avoid foods that are contaminated with harmful bacteria, viruses, toxins, chemical, parasites, and physical contaminants are vital for healthy eating. Contamination can occur at any point through its preparation, handling, storage and consumption. Ensuring food safety is key to preventing food borne illnesses which are contracted from consumption of unsafe foods. Food borne diseases are an important cause of morbidity and mortality world-wide but the full extent and cost of unsafe food, and especially the burden arising from chemical and parasitic contaminants in food is still unknown, (WHO 2015). Said signs and symptoms of food borne illness ranges from gastrointestinal symptoms, such as diarrhea, fever, vomiting, abdominal cramps, dehydration and stomach upset to more severe illness, such as meningitis and paralysis, hence emphasizing the importance of food safety and hygiene in the prevention of food borne illnesses, (Wagh, V. 2010).

Food Poisoning

Food poisoning is the term used to describe a wide variety of food borne illnesses. These are illnesses caused by eating food contaminated by toxic chemicals and toxins produced by microorganisms. Food poisoning can also be seen as health problems arising from eating contaminated foods. The foods can be contaminated by bacteria, viruses, environmental toxins or toxins present within the food itself (FAO, 2010).

According to Husle (2009), food poisoning can also be seen as a common, usually mild but sometimes deadly illness which occurs after consuming a contaminated food or drink.

Research Methods

Research Design

This study makes use of survey research design that allow questionnaires to elicit information from the respondents.

Nworgu (1992), Design can be defined as a plan or blue print which specifies how data relating to a given problem should be collected and analyzed. It provides the procedural outline for the conduct of any given investigation.

Study Population/ Sample

Population of this study is the entire staff of a selected Hospitality industry in Ekiti State.

Sampling and Sample Size

One hundred and fifteen (115) respondents were randomly selected and administered but only one hundred (100) were duly completed and returned. The actual population of this study is the selected hospitality Industry in Ekiti State, considering the various constraints associated with the population; an appropriate sample was randomly selected to represent the entire population.

Source of Data

Data for the work is both primary and secondary sources. The use of questionnaire was employed to gather necessary and relevant data from the respondents. This method was used in order to minimize the problems associated with data collection and to ensure that the results from this are visible and free from bias as expected. The questions were designed to sample the views of the respondents on hygiene practice: a key factor in limiting outbreak of food poisoning in hospitality industry.

Methods of Data Analysis

This section entails the analyzing of data and interpreting data collected from the population sample. Data was analyzed using frequency table, likert scale, pie charts, distributive statistics (mean and standard deviation) Use of distributive statistics was considered because of the nature of data used by the researchers, the researchers made use of 100 responses from the study. In order to answer the research questions that have been set, responses from the respondents on items related to the research questions were analyzed using descriptive statistics tools.

Test of Research Questions

RQ₁: What is the level of awareness of food hygiene practices in Ekiti State?

Sl No	Items	Agree	%	Disagree	%
	Response on level of awareness of Food Hygiene Practices				
1.	I have been taught about food hygiene practices	90	90%	10	10%
2.	There is regular announcement on food safety on the radio	90	90%	10	10%
3.	I have adequate knowledge of food hygiene practices through media	69	69%	31	31%
4.	I have attended seminars on food hygiene	60	60%	40	40%

5.	Medical Experts do often organize lectures within the local communities to enlighten people on food safety.	50	50%	50	50%
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Table 7: Percentage Response on level of Awareness of Food Hygiene Practices in Ekiti State.

This table 7 reveals the responses of respondents to questions raised. Serial number one on the table revealed that 90% of the respondents were aware of the various hygiene practices in Ekiti State. Also, Serial number two on the table indicate that 60% of the respondents agreed that they have adequate knowledge of food hygiene practices through media. Serial number three on of the table 69% of the respondents agreed with opinion that they do attend seminars on food hygiene practices. Furthermore, Serial number four on also revealed that an average of 50% respondents agreed that Medical experts do often organize lectures within the local communities to enlighten people on food safety. Serial number five on the table revealed that 90% of the respondents agreed that there is regular announcement on the radio about food hygiene practices. This makes the information to be widely spread due to the wide coverage of the radio programme. In addition, 50% of the respondents agreed that medical experts do often organize lectures within the local communities to enlighten people on food safety. The inference one can draw from this review is that most people in Ekiti State were aware of various hygiene practices.

RQ₂: What are the factors contributing to unhygienic practices in Ekiti State?

SI No	Items	Agree	%	Disagree	%
	Responses on the factors contributing to unhygienic practices in Ekiti State				
1.	Presence of rodents in the home might expose your foods to contamination and leads to food poisoning	100	100%	0	0%
2.	Dumping of refuses in unauthorized places increases cases of food poisoning in the community	95	95%	5	5%
3.	Cooking of foods near sewage ground may expose foods to danger	94	94	6	6%
4.	The lack of toilet facilities in residential places resulted in domestic food poisoning.	85	85%	15	15%
5.	Exposure of food and food items to flies might leads to domestic food poisoning	80	80%	20	20%

Table 8: Percentages Response on Factors Contributing to Unhygienic Practices in Ekiti State.

Table 8 above reveals the responses of respondents on the factors contributing to unhygienic practices in Ekiti State. Serial number one on the table revealed that 100% of the respondents agreed that presence of pests in the home might expose your foods to contamination and leads to food poisoning. Another revelation was made in Serial number two the table as indicates that 95% of the respondents agreed that dumping of refuses in unauthorized places increases cases of food poisoning in the community. Also, Serial number one on the table reveals that 94% of the respondents agreed that cooking of food in an exposed environment may expose foods to danger and leads to food poisoning. Serial number one on of the table revealed that 85 respondents representing 85% of the respondents agreed that lack of toilet facilities in residential places resulted in domestic food poisoning. The last item of the table re-

vealed that exposure of food and food items to flies might leads to domestic food poisoning. It could be inferred from the analysis that there are some dangerous unhygienic practices from people that could pose danger to foods consumed by humans.

RQ₃: Does unhygienic health practices has negative consequence on the health of families in Ekiti State?

SI No	Items	Agree	%	Disagree	%
	Responses on negative consequence of unhygienic health practices on the health of families in Ekiti State Community				
1.	The outbreak of diseases is resulted from poor hygienic practices e. glassa fever, cholera e.t.c	84	84%	16	16%
2.	Unhygienic food practices leads to outbreak of epidemics in the community	80	80%	20	20%
3.	Unhygienic food practices leads to death of family members	76	76%	24	24%
4.	Unhygienic foods consumed may lead to regular visit to hospital for treatment of one ailment or the other.	71	71%	29	29%
5.	Eating of unhygienic foods may likely resulted into sickness of family members in various degree.	50	50%	50	50%

Table 9: Percentage Responses on the Negative Consequences on the Health of Families in Ekiti.

Table 9 above reveals the responses of respondents on the negative consequences of unhygienic practices on the health of families in Ekiti State. Serial number one on the table revealed that 84% of the respondents agreed that the outbreak of diseases is resulted from poor hygienic practices e.g. lassa fever, cholera. It was also revealed in Serial number twoon the table as indicates that 80% of the respondents agreed that unhygienic food practices leads to outbreak of epidemics in the community. Also, Serial number three on the table reveals that 76% of the respondents agreed that unhygienic food practices leads to death of family members. Serial number four on the table revealed that 71 respondents representing 71% of the respondents agreed that unhygienic foods consumed may lead to regular visit to hospital for treatment of one ailment or the other. Lastly, Serial number five on the table reveals that 50% of the respondents agreed that eating of unhygienic foods may likely resulted into sickness of family members in various degree. It could be inferred from the above analysis that the people of Ekiti State are aware of the negative consequences of unhygienic food practices on their family members.

RQ₄: What are the possible solutions in preventing domestic food poisoning?

SI No	Items	Agree	%	Disagree	%
	Responses on the possible solutions in preventing domestic food poisoning				
1.	Regular environmental sanitization helps in reducing domestic food poisoning	98	98%	2	2%
2.	Regular routine inspection of sanitation officers helps in reducing and eradicating of domestic food poisoning	98	98%	2	2%

3.	All food items must be covered to avoid food poisoning.	98	98%	2	2%
4.	Cleaning of the places where food are stored can help in the prevention of food poisoning	96	96%	4	4%
5.	Provision of adequate and modern toilet facilities can help in reducing of domestic food poisoning.	94	94%	6	6%
6.	Dumping of refuses in authorized places can help in reducing domestic food poisoning	88	88%	12	12%

Table 10: Percentage Responses on the possible solutions in Preventing Domestic Food Poisoning.

Table 10 above reveals the responses of respondents on the possible solutions in preventing domestic food poisoning in Ekiti State. Serial number one on the table revealed that 98% of the respondents agreed that Regular environmental sanitization helps in reducing domestic food poisoning. It was also revealed in Serial number two on the table that 98% of the respondents agreed that Regular routine inspection of sanitation officers helps in reducing and eradicating of domestic food poisoning. Furthermore, Serial number three on the table indicate that all food items must be covered to avoid food poisoning as agreed by 98% of the respondents. Serial number four also revealed that 96% of the respondents agreed that Cleaning of the places where food are stored can help in the prevention of food poisoning. Serial number five on the table also revealed that 94% of the respondents agree that provision of adequate and modern toilet facilities can help in reducing of domestic food poisoning. Finally, item 6 of the table indicate that dumping of refuses in authorized places can help in reducing domestic food poisoning.

Summary

Result of the study shows that most respondents were conversant with various factors that could lead to domestic food poisoning number as well as measures to take in avoiding outbreak of diseases and epidemics in the society. One of the reasons for this level of awareness is the fact that most of these respondents do listen to radio where announcements were made regularly of food safety in the home and society in general.

From the result, it shows that food safety is a major concern to all irrespective of their status and income level. That is even the poor considers safety as an important factor in buying and consumption of food items.

Conclusion

The researcher has carefully examined the respondent's perception of safety of food both home and in the community in Ekiti State. All the respondents are educated and majority of them are resident in the urban areas, indicating that they are well exposed to the issues of food safety. They are to ensure that safety measures like having a modern toilet facilities in the home, dumping of refuses only in authorized places, Protecting foods in the home against pests, clearing of nearby bushes to check against influx of rodents that may poison their foods and cooking far away from sewage among others.

It is important to note that respondents showing concern over food safety in all situations in order to derive maximum satisfaction from even a little available food. A food that is not safe does not only result to ill-health and death, but also has tremendous economic consequences in the area of hospital fees, and both local and international trade losses.

Recommendations

The below recommendations were made based on the findings.

1. Food poisoning has been a serious issue as revealed by the study, that the stage of food chain that people perceived most unsafe is the processing stage. As a result of this there should be adequate sensitization both at individual family level and those involved in providing food for the public on the need for safe handling of food especially in preparation, packaging and storage.
2. Food handling which include receiving, cook, cooling and re-heating, packaging and storage should be taking serious to avoid food contamination.
3. Personal hygiene: appropriate degree of hygiene must maintain in order to avoid food contamination.
4. Appropriate facilities which include: hygienic washing and drying of utensils and equipment, water; lavatories of appropriate hygienic design; adequate facilities for the storage of food, ingredients should be provided
5. Hand washing before and after cooking should be encourage through intensive sensitization.

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