

Food safety awareness, knowledge and practices among students of Gurugram

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ABSTRACT

The present study was carried out with an aim to assess the food safety awareness, knowledge & practices among students of Gurugram. 50 students were selected from different areas of Gurugram. Questionnaire was used as a tool to collect the data. Informal discussion was held with the sample in order to draw more information about their awareness, knowledge and practices regarding food safety. After the collection of data, coding was done systematically and analysis was done accordingly. After the analysis of the present research, Intervention was done in order to make them aware regarding food safety and hygiene practices.

Key Words : Food handling, Food safety, Hygiene

INTRODUCTION

Food safety is a scientific discipline describing handling, preparation, and storage of food in ways that prevent food-borne illness. The occurrence of two or more cases of a similar illnesses resulting from the ingestion of a common food is known as a Food-borne disease outbreak. This includes a number of routines that should be followed to avoid potential health hazards. In this way food safety often overlaps with food defense to prevent harm to consumers. The tracks within this line of thought are safety between industry and the market and then between the market and the consumer. In considering industry to market practices, food safety considerations include the origins of food including the practices relating to food labeling, food hygiene, food additives and pesticide residues, as well as policies on biotechnology and food and guidelines for the management of governmental import and export inspection and certification systems for foods. In considering market to consumer practices, the usual thought is that food ought to be safe in the market and the concern is safe delivery and preparation of the food for the consumer.

METHODOLOGY

The present study was carried out to assess the food safety awareness, knowledge & practices

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among students of Gurugram; to see their level of understanding regarding the importance of cleanliness and personal hygiene and to carry out an intervention for bringing awareness among students regarding effective cleaning, food safety and hygiene. 50 students were selected from different areas of Gurugram. Questionnaire was used as a tool to collect the data. Informal discussion was held with the sample in order to draw more information about their awareness, knowledge and practices regarding food safety. After the collection of data, coding was done systematically and analysis was done accordingly. After the analysis of the present research, Intervention was done in order to make them aware regarding food safety and hygiene practices.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 reveals that majority (31%) of the sample were not aware about "Food labelling", 28% of them stated 'food labelling as nutritional facts and information on food products', 22% stated that 'food labelling is nutritive value of the food', 8% of them were unaware about this term.

Table 1 :	
Variables	No. of Respondents N=50 (%ages)
Food labelling is	
Manufacturing and expiry dates of the food product	11.1
Nutritional facts and information on food products	27.7
Nutritive value of the food	22.2
All the above	8.42
Not aware	30.5

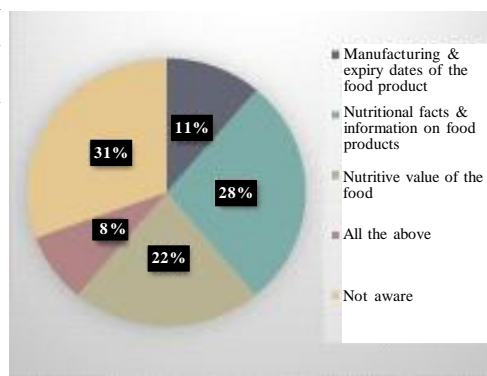


Table 2 reveals that according to majority (36%) of the sample food safety refers to prevention of occurrence of food borne disease, 30% of them stated that food safety refers to saving the food from damage, 14% referred "food safety is having hygienic food", 19% of them were unaware about food safety.

Table 2 :	
Variables	No. of Respondents N=50 (%ages)
Food is	
Save the food from damage	30.55
Prevent occurrence of food borne diseases	36.13
Having bygienic food	13.88
Not aware	19.44

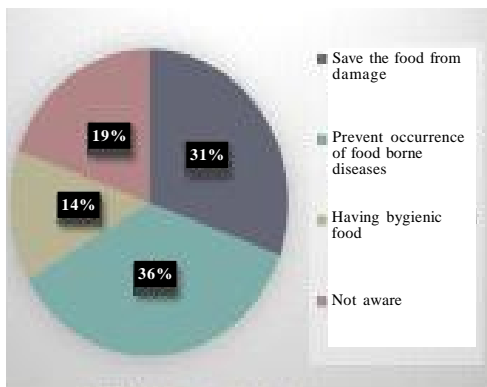


Table 3 reveals that majority (53%) of the sample correctly expanded the abbreviation FSSAI.

Table 3 :	
Variables	No. of Respondents (N=50 (%age))
FSSAI stands for	
Aware	52.77
Unaware	47.23

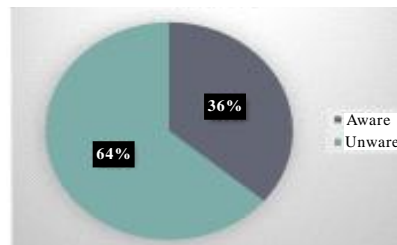


Table 4 reveals that majority (61%) of the sample could not expand the abbreviation HACCP correctly, only 39% were aware of this term.

Table 4 :	
Variables	No. of Respondents (N=50 (%ages))
HACCP stands for	
Aware	38.88
Unaware	61.12

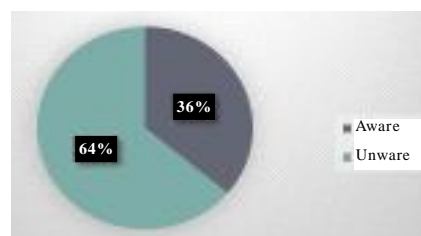


Table 5 reveals that majority (64%) of the sample could not expand the abbreviation FPO.

Table 5 :	
Variables	No. of Respondents (N=50 (%ages))
FPO stands for	
Aware	36.12
Unaware	63.88

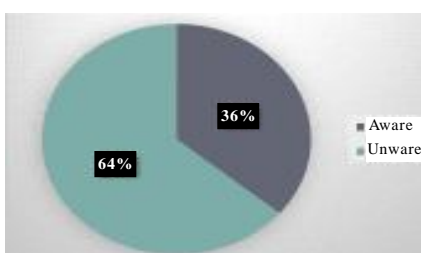


Table 6 reveals that majority (50%) of the sample were aware of the fact that use by date on the food label is its expiry date; 28% of the sample stated that "expiry date on the food label is its date of manufacturing", 19% of the sample was completely unaware about it.

Table 6 :	
Variables	No. of Respondents (N=50 (%ages))
What is use by date in the food label?	
Expiry date	50
Date of manufacture	27.77
Unaware	19.44

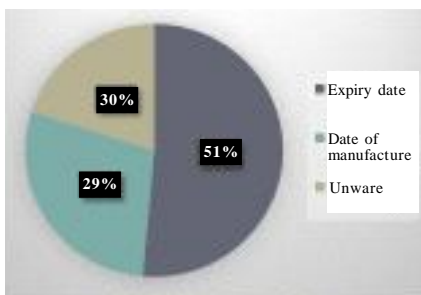


Table 7 reveals that majority (42%) of the sample stated that "food can be preserved in a refrigerator for 3-4 days"; 39% stated that "food can be preserved for 2 days in a refrigerator", 50% stated that "food can be preserved in a refrigerator until its expiry date", rest (16%) didn't answer the question.

Table 7 :	
Variables	No. of Respondents N=50 (%ages)
How long can a food be preserved in refrigerator?	
2 days	38.88
3-4 days	41.66
As long as expiry date is mentioned	5.55
Not aware	16.66

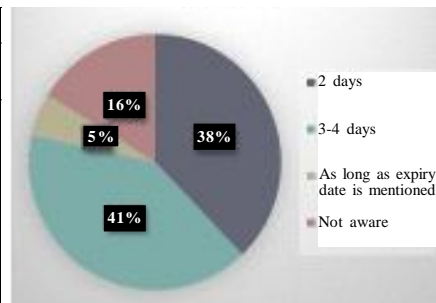


Table 8 reveals that majority (63%) of the sample were against the addition of food additives like anticaking agents, bulking agents, food colouring agents, flavour enhancers. Remaining 36% were in favour of addition of these substances in food.

Table 8 :	
Variables	No. of Respondents N=50 (%ages)
Do you support in adding food additives like anticaking agents, bulking agents, food colouring agents, flavour enhance?	
Yes	36.11
No	63.88

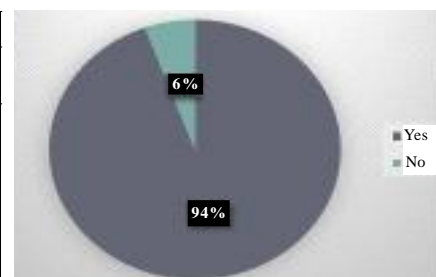


Table 9 reveals that everyone accepted the fact that expiry date of any food item matters.

Table 9 :	
Variables	No. of Respondents N=50 (%ages)
Do you think expiry date matters?	
Yes	100
No	0

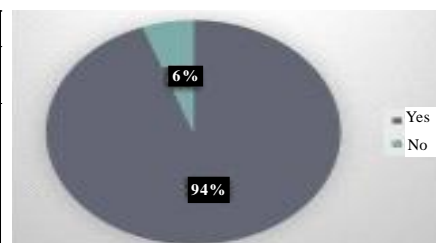


Table 10 reveals that majority (92%) of the sample stated that they will not prefer to buy poultry during bird flu outbreak but remaining 8% had no problem in buying pultry.

Table 10 :	
Variables	No. of Respondents N=50 (%ages)
Will you buy poultry when there is a bird flu outbreak happening	
Yes	8.33
No	91.66

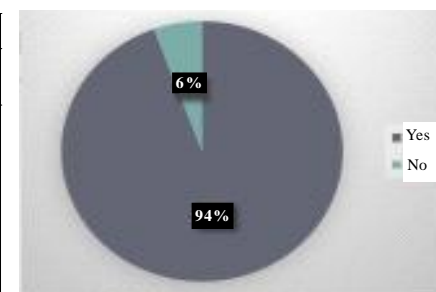


Table 11 reveals that majority (94%) of the sample stated that they would never try to buy or acquire a food item knowing he fact that it is banned by the food safety regulating body of the country. Remaining 5% didn't bother about the fact stated above.

Table 11 :	
Variables	No. of Respondents N=50 (% ages)
Will you try to buy or require a food item even if that is banned by the food safety regulating body of the country?	
Yes	5.56
No	94.44

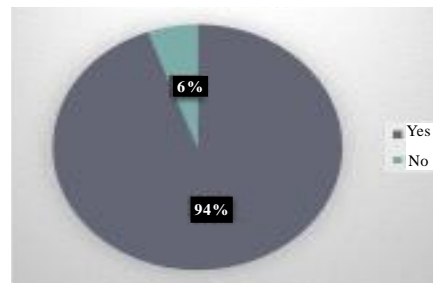


Table 12 reveals that majority (89%) of the sample wash their hands before they eat; rest 11% don't give any importance to this habit

Table 12 :	
Variables	No. of Respondents N=50 (% ages)
Do you wash your hands before you eat?	
Yes	88.89
No	11.11

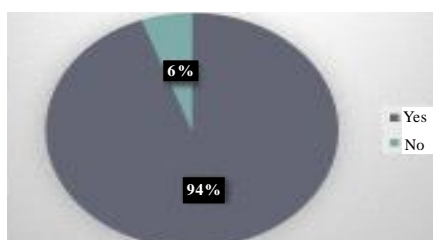


Table 13 reveals that majority (91%) of the sample wash the vegetables before they cut them.

Table 13 :	
Variables	No. of Respondents N=50 (% ages)
Do you wash vegetables before you eat them?	
Yes	91.66
No	8.34

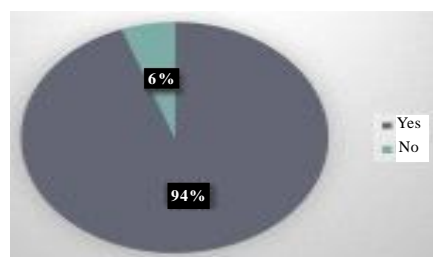


Table 14 reveals that majority (94%) of the sample wash the cutting board before switching between meat and vegetables.

Table 14 :	
Variables	No. of Respondents N=50 (% ages)
Do you wash the cutting bread when you switch between meat and vegetables?	
Yes	94.44
No	5.56

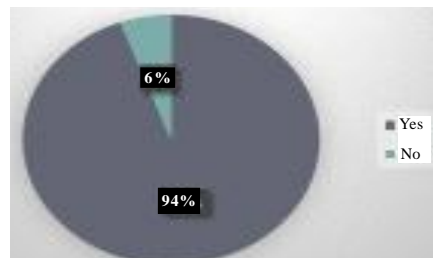


Table 15 reveals that majority (84%) of the sample prefer washing hands with water; 17% prefer to use sanitizer instead of water.

Table 15 :	
Variables	No. of Respondents N=50 (% ages)
Do you prefer to wash hands with water or hand sanitizer?	
Water	83.33
Sanitizer	16.67

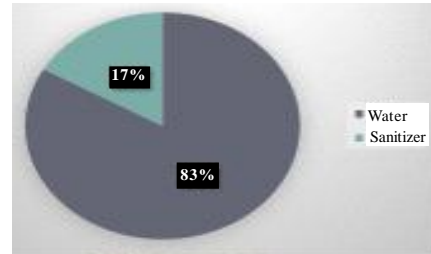


Table 16 reveals that majority (95%) of the sample don't wash eggs before breaking them; only 5% of the sample do so.

Table 16 :	
Variables	No. of Respondents N=50 (% ages)
Do you wash the eggs before you break them?	
Yes	5.56
No	94.44

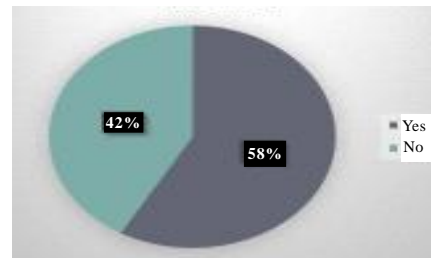


Table 17 reveals that majority (89%) of the sample prefer to wipe their hands with a napkin or to wash hands after a messy meal; remaining 11% don't practice any of the above ways to clean their hands.

Table 17 :	
Variables	No. of Respondents N=50 (% ages)
Do you prefer to wipe your hands with a napkin or to wash hands after a messy meal?	
Yes	88.88
No	11.12

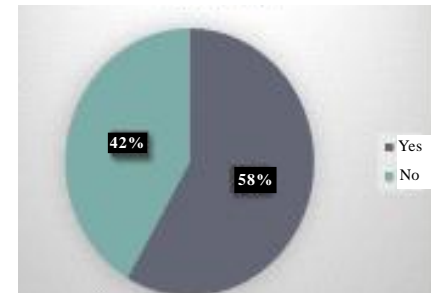


Table 18 reveals that majority (69%) stated 'they don't keep raw meat next to cooked meat'.

Table 18 :	
Variables	No. of Respondents N=50 (% ages)
Do you keep raw meat next to cooked meat?	
Yes	30.55
No	69.44

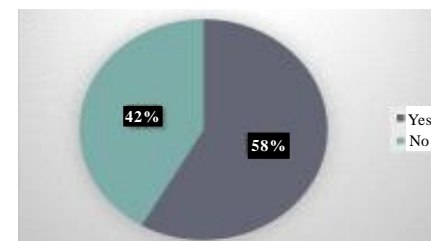


Table 19 reveals that majority (94%) do check the expiry date on the package before buying it; rest 6% don't do so.

Table 19 :	
Variables	No. of Respondents N=50 (% ages)
Do you check the expiry date on the package before you buy that?	
Yes	5.56
No	94.44

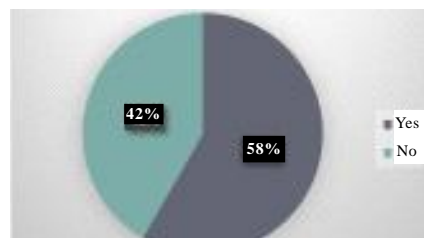
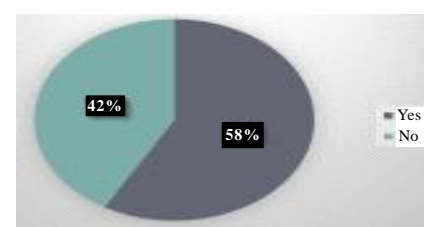


Table 20 reveals that majority (58%) of the sample buy the food on clearance sale and remaining 41% don't do so.

Table 20 :	
Variables	No. of Respondents N=50 (% ages)
Do you buy food that are on clearance sale?	
Yes	58.34
No	41.66



Overall it has been found that 50% of the total sample were aware about food safety but only 70% of those practicing it. After the analysis of the present research, Intervention was done on the same sample as majority of them were not aware about food safety measures and its significance in one's life. They were provided various tips regarding food safety- also made them aware about importance food labeling and food hygiene, as important components of food safety etc.

Intervention :

Food Adulteration : Food adulteration is the process in which the quality of food is lowered either by the addition of inferior quality material or by extraction of valuable ingredient. It not only includes the intentional addition or substitution of the substances but biological and chemical contamination during the period of growth, storage, processing, transport and distribution of the food products, is also responsible for the lowering or degradation of the quality of food products. Adulterants are those substances which are used for making the food products unsafe for human consumption.

Food Safety : Food Safety refers to handling, preparing and storing food in a way to best reduce the risk of individuals becoming sick from foodborne illnesses. Food safety is a set of standard practices in promoting the health and safety of food handling, storage and consumption. These practices are guided by the established researches of the Center for Disease Control Prevention (CDC), state health departments and related international safety and health organizations.

Hygiene is a set of personal practices that contribute to good health. It includes things like hand-washing, bathing and cutting hair/nails. Hand-washing is the single most important activity we can all do to encourage the stop of disease.

Personal hygiene refers to maintaining cleanliness of one's body and clothing to preserve overall health and well-being. It includes a number of different activities related to the following general areas of self-care: washing or bathing, including cleansing oneself after using the toilet; taking proper care of the mouth; grooming and dressing; and keeping clothing clean. Bathing,

dressing and undressing, and using the toilet are considered activities of daily living (ADLs), while doing one's laundry is considered an instrumental activity of daily living or IADL

Conclusion :

If the citizens of a country are not taking healthy and safe food then there will be probability of more no. of cases of food borne diseases. When they will be ill, then these patients will invest to cure themselves. If the food which will be available to them is safe then there will be fewer chances of food borne diseases and the burden which comes to an economy as a result of food borne diseases will be less. This is the case of an individual country but what happens when companies which not following FSMS want to enter in international market or want to be an exporter. Such types of companies enter but not just export food also export food borne diseases and another country becomes an importer of these food borne diseases. Customers who are good per capita income are very careful about to their health and heavily invest for good health. They always demand for same food. They always show great response to those products which is prepared under hygienic condition. This is the reason that Indian exporters are far behind than other countries in case of food export.

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