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[7] ASSESSMENT OF THE COMPLIANCE OF SOME SELECTED FAST FOOD COMPANIES TO SAFETY AND HYGIENIC STANDARD IN NIGERIA. CASE STUDY; LAGOS METROPOLIS, ABEOKUTA AND IJEBU-ODE.

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ABSTRACT

The frequent occurrence of food poisoning in the public food units and at household levels remains a problems to be totally solved in Nigeria.

The study has highlighted the knowledge and compliance of Fast Food Companies in the southwest geopolitical Zones of Nigeria with established safety and hygiene standard. These are Lagos metropolis, Abeokuta and Ijebu—Ode in Ogun State. They are categorized into Zones A,B,C,E, for easy study.

The respondents were assessed and studied in the areas of food hygiene, equipment and untencil hygiene, personal hygiene, food safety and food and Nutrition education. 350 structured questionnaires were distributed to respondents, data collected were analysed.

Keywords: Assessment, Compliance, Fast Food.

INTRODUCTION

The frequent occurrence of food poisoning both in the public food units and at household levels remains a problem to be totally solved in Nigeria, both in the urban setting and rural areas. The disease profile of Nigeria is predominated with poor food, environmental and personal hygiene coupled with non or inadequate education (Raji, 1990).

Fast Foods are foods prepared and served quickly at a fast food restaurants or shop at low cost. The Nigerian Catering and fast food industry is unique in terms of its scope and nature of activities. It encompasses all kinds of foods-away- from home, which are "ready-to-eat" foods and beverages that are prepared and packaged for convenience and taste for sales in special places and (or) in public places. They include foods consumed in canteens, restaurants, hotels, buccateria, specialized joints and tourism centres locally.

The Food sold in the fast food centres depend largely on the local eating habit of the people and their socio economic environment (FAO< 1997). A food may look good, taste good, possess food textual properties and perform well in its intended application and still be unfit for consumption.

However, sensible food standards whether legally enforceable or merely recommended guidelines, server to protect the inefficient operations. Okhiria et al (2005). Nigerian Government established National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC) in 1992, for the control and regulation of food, drugs, cosmetics, chemicals and packaged water. Since the food industry is intended to promote human well being, some kind of assessment is required to determine that any such development activity is in fact beneficial, having regard to the costs and sacrifices and long term interest. Okhiria et al (2005).

Safety and environment protection in the food industry is intended as a tool for assisting and promoting the industry by guiding it along sound lines so that the available resources utilized, the quality of food, the environment cleanliness as a whole is not compromised.

Primary safety, hygiene and environmental problems relate to quality of water supply, water management, and food hygiene Adesan (2000)

Secondary environmental health problems borders on drinking water quality, rural and urban air quality, hazardous solid waste disposal and environmental pollution and safe use of pest control chemicals especially in food storage and food processing factories. Etc. F.A.O. (1997). Control of food additives is also essential in the area of safety in food consumption. FAO (1997).

Food additives chemicals are essential in food production, manufacture, marketing and storage, yet without proper control of its use, they could at times endanger public health. Frasier *et al* (1995). Food additives generally include any nutritive material that is used, recognized or commonly sold as an article or ingredient of food, Vitamins, mineral, spices, seasonings, flavoring, essential oils, natural extractives, pesticides, food packaging materials and the components drugs etc. Raji Adesan (200). The general aim of the study is to assess the safety hygienic practices in some selected fast food companies in the study areas. Specific objectives

- (a) To assess the level of compliance and hygiene standard as established by food and drugs Act 1992 in the areas of food, water, equipment and premises.
- (b) To assess the level of nutrition education of the personnel working in the various sections of the companies.

METHODOLOGY

The study was carried out in Lagos and Ogun State. The most popular fast food in the four axis of Lagos metropolis were chosen for this study. These are Fast Foods in Victoria Island, as categorized as B, Ogba,-Ikeja C, Ijana- Ipaja E, Ojo-Alaba D, in Ogun State the prominent Fast Foods in state capital, Abeokuta and Ijebu Ode A, were purposively selected on the basis of higher concentration.

A total of 400 structured and validated questionnaires were randomly administered to the respondents who are staffs working in the various sections of the companies, at Lagos metropolis, Abeokuta and Ijebu Ode in Ogun State. All these study areas are located in south West geopolitical zones in Nigeria. At the end of the study, 350 respondents gave information. Due to the exploratory nature of the study, the survey data were simply described through relative frequency distribution and percentage analysis.

Fast Food Zones

Fast Food at Abeokuta and Ijebu Ode-A, Victoria Island-B, IKEJA-Ogba-C, Ojo Alaba-D, Iyana Ipaja-E.

Results and Discussions

A. Food Hygiene

Table A- showed that as at this period of study, all the fast food companies in zone A,B,C,D,E. had high scores when assessed for standard source of food stuffs, storage of food stuff preparation, cooking and serving.

Their scores were in the range of 75.71-71.43%. Their scores of drinking water supply were also of good standard as they all scored above average in the rating of this study. In spite of the challenges being faced by all in area of energy and water supply, this study noticed that they all had bore holes water systems. However, they are low in their compliance with cooling, chilling and reheating standard. The scores were A 48.57, B 42.86, C 45.71 D 45.71 and E 47.14%. This could be as a result of energy problems prevailing in the country. All the companies lamented the high cost for fuel in their generating sets, as the government electricity is not reliable. The development is dangerous as food kept in between the temperature of 80C and 630C are favorable for breeding bacteria Ceserani (2000)

B. Equipment and utencil Hygiene. The study showed that their compliance and knowledge were in the average as these who scores highs were those in zones A and B, their scores were 61.43 and 62.86% respectively. This could indicate that adequate attention were not given to equipment and utencils as far as hygiene is concerned. Cesareni (2000) enlightened that clean foods and wholesome water can be polluted through cross contamination by unclean equipment, utencils and work surfaces.

C. Personal Hygiene

It is clean from the data obtained that all the zones scored well above average in the areas of bathing daily, care when ill of communicable diseases, hair covering, care of fingernails, wearing jewelries etc.

This is considered a commendable trend among the fast food companies. However, this trend may not be unconnected with the high competition going on among all the major companies hence, each management take special care and ensure that their staffs are well groomed and neat in appearances.

D. Food Safety

Here, the study showed that all the zones scored well above average A- 60%, B-60%, C, 57.14%, D- 75.71% E-71.43%.

This is an indication that they are aware of danger of cross contamination of micro organism when foods are left uncovered. However, in the area of storing food at the temperature of < 700C (1580C) all the companies barely scored averages. This is not a good development in any food producing company. Food poisoning is imminent where left over foods is not stored at 50C (410F) or below. Kinton et al (1999).

E. Food and Nutrition Education

The data collected showed that the respondent knowledge of food and nutrition education is low. Table E indicated that in the areas of knowledge of food and nutrients, energy giving foods, bodybuilding and body protecting foods the scores are extremely low as the scores were in the ranges of 44.26- 38.51%. A cross all the zones.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This study has highlighted the knowledge and compliance of the fast food companies in zones A,B,C,D, and E.

Their performances generally were fairly good and above average but special attention need to be placed on equipment hygiene, food and nutrition education.

The fast food companies in southwest of Nigeria cannot afford any loopholes in total compliance with all hygiene standards. The suggested remedies in areas of weakness include:

- (a) Improved staff development programmes through training, workshops and seminars.
- (b) Adequate monitoring and supervision of staff performances at all stages of food processing/preparations.
- (c) Favourable and well implemented staff welfare policy.

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