Assessing Food Hygiene Standards Practices Among Small Scale Food Handlers In Central Accra, Ghana

Elizabeth R. Turkson¹, Agnes S. Budu², Sophia Afful¹, Priscilla Amedeka¹, Hamida Osman¹, Janet Polkuu Chiiri¹ and Linda Sam-Dadzie¹

1. Department of Hotel, Catering and Institutional Management. Accra Polytechnic, P. O. Box GP 561, Accra, Ghana

2. Department of Nutrition and Food Science, University of Ghana, Box LG134, Legon-Accra, Ghana

*Corresponding author: erturkson@apoly.edu.gh

Abstract

This study was conducted to investigate food hygiene practices by small scale food handlers in the Accra Central Metropolis in Ghana. Observations and interviews were conducted on 25 small scale food service establishments to determine their level of knowledge and training in food hygiene and their compliance to hygienic requirements. Different types of foods were being sold within the study area. Cereals and grains constituted 36%, 20% were fruits and vegetables, 12% were beverages, 20% were meat and fish, whiles 12% were fried snacks. The study found that, about 75% of the respondents were ignorant about hygiene and did not comply with the hygiene requirement by respective regulatory bodies. In the area of food preparation, 40% of the food handlers were located in unkept places, whiles 60% were located in an acceptable area. 28% of the food handlers did not comply with cleanliness of their cooking utensils. With proper storage of raw and cooked foods only 70% of the food handlers had compliance, and 64% used equipments to serve. Cleanliness of cutleries for service recorded 65% of non-compliance. 58% had neat appearance and used cleaned napkins for service whilst 42% of them did not. 31% of the food service establishments did not put correct measures in place for the control of flies in their service area, and 5% cleaned their hands before serving food. There is the need for more effective information and creative ways to disseminate food hygiene principles to these small scale food service providers.