Study on perception of street food vendors about food safety in Lucknow

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Abstract

The street food vendors in Lucknow operate from busy spots all over the city, lining streets, markets and traffic junctions. These foods are encompassing meals, drinks, and snacks and exposed to climate and temperature, unsafe water supplies, unsanitary conditions. A number of factors are taken into consideration when deciding on safety of street food products, such as food freshness, food adulteration, food preparation and perceived food quality. In order of these determinants, this study was conducted in urban area of Lucknow, to know the street food vendor’s perceptions about food safety. The results indicate that street vendors perceived that food adulteration (23.33 %) is main determinants of food safety and followed by food freshness, food preparation, and food quality (16.67%). Simultaneously, it was found that understanding about food safety was found highest in street food vendors of Chauk area followed by Gomati Nagar, Alambagh. And it was lowest amongst street food vendors of Mahanagar and Aliganj area. Therefore, from the practical standpoint, it is need to create awareness in order to increase awareness about food safety among consumers.

Key words: Food safety, adulteration, street vendors, street foods, perception, Lucknow

stirred up by conflicting motivations and influencing factors.

Street foods are ready-to-eat foods and beverages prepared and/or sold by vendors, especially on streets and other public places (Muleta and Ashenafi, 2001). The central characteristic of street foods in this definition is their retail location that is "on the street." To differentiate street food vendors from formal sector food establishments, such as restaurants, the Equity Policy Center (EPOC) adds the further qualification that street foods are sold on the street from "pushcarts or baskets or balance poles, or from stalls or shops having fewer than four permanent walls" (Tinker, 1987). In terms of production, street foods may be centrally processed foods made by the formal sector food industry, or they may be processed within the street food trade either by the vendor her/himself or another small-scale processor. The activities comprising the informal sector are marked by a number of characteristics: ease of entry, reliance on indigenous resources, family/household ownership of the enterprise, small-scale operatives, high labor intensity, use of traditional technology and skills acquired outside the formal education system, and operating in unregulated and competitive markets (Hart, 1973).

Street vendor’s perceptions of the food safety present evidence about the confidence people have in it. Regardless of the steps, farmers, businesses and government agencies alike take to insure a safe food supply; but food safety will ultimately reside alongside public perceptions (Andrew and Warland, 2004). Consumer behaviours based on these perceptions, whether accurate or not, can have significant impacts on the food industry (Bruhn et al., 1992; Fein et al., 1995; Frewer et al., 1994; Jordan and Elmagheeb, 1991; Jussaume and Judson, 1992; Lin, 1995; Schafer et al., 1993).

Materials and Methods

The study titled “Perception of food safety amongst street food vendors in Lucknow” was carried out during June 11 to 13, 2013. Sample used for the investigation were from Gomati Nagar, Indira Nagar, Aliganj, Mahanagar, Alambagh and Chauk in Lucknow. Thus total 30 samples of street vendors i.e. 05 vendors each from the 06 locations in Gomati Nagar, Indira Nagar, Aliganj, Mahanagar, Alambagh and Chauk were selected randomly and were studied separately using survey method for recording data on issues.

Research Design: In this study qualitative research approach was adopted.

Data Collection Tools: Primary data were collected by conducting a face-to-face interview using a structured close ended questionnaire and the secondary data was collected from magazines, newspapers, research papers, journals, etc.

Data Analyses: Collected data was arranged and tabulated in Excel and imported into SPSS version 12.0 (2003) for windows for analysis, including frequencies and %, for all variables.

Results and discussion

The findings of “Study on perception of street food vendors about food safety in Lucknow” have been arranged as following.

Data on perception issues about food safety amongst street vendors of selected areas of Lucknow were analysed and observation recorded are presented in Table 1. It is evident from above given table that there was not much variability in perception about food safety issues among street vendors of selected areas of Lucknow. The food safety issues like food freshness, food preparation food quality were analyzed separately and findings are as follows:

Food Freshness: - In Mahanagar 40 % street vendors understood about food freshness issue in food safety followed by 20 % street vendors in Gomtinagar, Aliganj and Chauk while in Indira Nagar and Alambagh vendors do not aware as food freshness is an issue for food safety.

Food adulteration: - In Gomti Nagar and Aliganj 40 % street vendors understand that food adulteration is an issue of food safety followed by 20 % vendors in Indira Nagar, Alambagh and Mahanagar, respectively whereas in Chauk vendor do not aware.

Food Preparation: In Indira Nagar, Mahanagar and Chauk only 20 % consider as food preparation is an issue of food safety while in other areas they neglect it.

Food quality: In Alambagh 60 % street vendors were aware about food quality is an issue of food safety followed by 40 % vendors of Indira Nagar and Aliganj. In other areas this was only 20 %.

Food freshness, food adulteration, food preparation and food quality all were considered as an issues of food safety by street vendors in Chauk (40 percent) followed by 20 % vendors in Gomati Nagar, Indira Nagar, Alambagh respectively while Aliganj and Mahanagar vendors were not giving any consideration about food safety issues (Fig.1).

In Lucknow, food adulteration issues 23.33 % street vendors perceived as issues of food safety followed by food freshness (16.67 %) and food preparation. Food quality was given minimum (3.33 %) while all of the selected issues taken as an issues of food safety by 16.67 % street vendors of the city (Fig.2)
### Table 1: Food safety Perception of street vendors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Gomati Nagar</th>
<th>Indira Nagar</th>
<th>Aliganj</th>
<th>Mahanagar</th>
<th>Alam bagh</th>
<th>Chauk</th>
<th>Lucknow</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Food Safety</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food Freshness</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>16.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food Adulteration</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food Preparation</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food Quality</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All of Above</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fig. 1: Bar diagram of perception about food safety issues among street vendors.

Fig. 2: Pie diagram of perception about food safety issues among street vendors in Lucknow.

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Conclusions

The street food vendor’s perception and understanding about food safety was found highest in Chauk followed by Gomati Nagar, Alambagh. It was lowest in Mahanagar and Aliganj. Study indicates that 16.67 % street vendors understood that food freshness, food adulteration, food preparation, food quality all are important issues of food safety while 23.33 % street vendors to food adulteration.

Limitations

This was a limited period study. Therefore, 03 days were very short time to cover all area of Lucknow.

Recommendations

It is obvious from the study that in Lucknow Street food vendors are not much aware and also not considers food safety issues at street outlets. Therefore, it is need to create awareness in order to increase awareness about food safety among street vendors.

References