



Food Hygiene and Sanitary Condition Awareness among Street Food Vendors

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ABSTRACT: The objective of this study was to investigate the level of awareness among the street food vendors in Barangay Saber, Marawi City specifically regarding food hygiene and sanitary condition. The researcher utilized a descriptive-survey research design using survey-questionnaires as the primary tool to figure out the problems in sustaining food safeties for the consumers. These street food vendors play an important role in the economy by making goods more accessible and affordable, as well as providing livelihood opportunities for people with few job options in the city. The survey-questionnaires were contained of two parts, part one, socio-demographic profile of respondents and part two were the problems on food street vendors' food hygiene and sanitation awareness in terms of food serving and surrounding sanitation. A total of forty-one (41) street food vendors participated in the study. Moreover, the study employed frequency, percentage distribution and weighed mean with the aid of SPSS Software as statistical tools used to understand the data and interpret the results properly. The results revealed that all the identified indicators that may influenced the maintaining of proper hygiene and sanitary of food establishments of the street vendors were positively perceived by the respondents. The street food vendors were properly aware on the important of food hygiene which is part of food safety and ensuring the health and well-being of the consumers. The average weighted mean is 2.70 or "often" as descriptively define. Results implied that these street food vendors were observing properly the importance of cleanliness to prevent their customers from illnesses due to negligence on proper handling of foods and maintaining the positive environment.

KEYWORDS: Street Food Vendors, Sanitary Condition and Hygienic Awareness

1. INTRODUCTION

In today's fast-paced world, people love to eat outside like street foods because it offers a quick and cheap and accessible than preparing foods at home because of busy schedules and limited time, and to change bud taste they used to. However, it is important to note to select preferred restaurants or street foods especially the vicinity and observed food hygiene because food poisoning is possible happened anytime. Food asepsis practices help minimize the risk of cross-contamination since properly sanitizing tools and equipment can absolutely reduce the presence of contagious pathogens. Proper sanitation will also help reduce the risk of cross-contact contamination between allergenic and non-allergenic foods. Maintain a clean work environment because bacteria can grow on unsanitary surfaces and then contaminate food. The work surface looks clean does not mean that it is sanitary, this should always ensure that the area is clean and sanitize before starting to prepare food and check the foods before it serve. According to healthdirect, good personal hygiene is vital because it stop you from getting sick. It also helps stop you from spreading germs and infectious diseases. That is why chef cook should be very careful in preparing foods because germs that cause many diseases can be passed on by; touching other people, getting feces or other body fluids on their hands, handling contaminated food and coming into contact with dirty surfaces or objects. Likewise, according to Marshall (2024), sanitation is not merely a routine task – it's a critical component of ensuring food safety and maintaining consumer trust. Effective sanitation practices are essential for preventing contamination, ensuring compliance with regulatory standards and protecting public health. Moreover, adhering to sanitation standards is not only a best practice but also a regulatory requirement.

Due to the trend nowadays, the street food vendors rapidly increasing, likewise, young people love to eat street foods but it should be observed that both food handlers and consumers has to be careful on the foods they preferred. The food street vendors are the individuals who sells goods to the public without a permanent built-up structure for vending, where in the Philippines, these street vendors boost the economy, because they create jobs. Most of these individuals struggle to find permanent works in the government because they lack the necessary education and skills for the job they seek. In their pursuit for a living, they choose to take streets



and sell their products. In the study, the researcher took advantage to investigate the food hygiene and sanitary level of awareness of the street vendors in barangay Datu Saber, Marawi City.

As can be seen from figure 1, it presents the conceptual framework of the study. This conveyed the researcher’s goal to provide a simplified representation that summarizes the key process in determining the level of awareness of the street vendors on sanitary condition and proper hygiene. This also helps the readers to understand and visualize the complex concepts and relationships in the study. This study also adopt Peter Drucker Management Theory, were Drucker offers his view that the aim of marketing is to know and understand the customer so well, the product or service fits him and sells itself. This connotes that in food business it is important to know who your customers are to have a healthy relationship with them and the safe of foods production and preserves a healthy environment because these improved economic opportunities for the street food vendors.

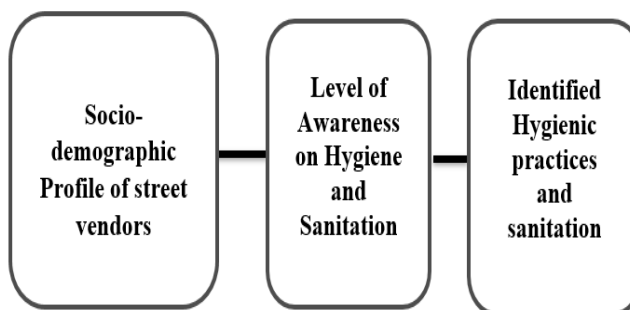


Figure 1. The Schematic Diagram of the Conceptual Framework of the Study

2. METHODOLOGY

This study utilized a descriptive-survey research design. The purpose of the design is to obtain information concerning the current status of street food vendors regarding their food hygiene and sanitation awareness. Thus, researcher used quantitative data analysis using a survey-questionnaires as primary tool of the study to obtain the objectives of the study. Since the primary agenda of the researcher were to collect and consolidate data that would elucidate the level of awareness of the street food vendors on food hygiene and sanitation, the identified forty-one (41) street food vendors participated on the study, who were currently vending within the vicinity of Barangay Datu Saber, Marawi City. In addition, the respondents of this study were clustered into two orders to accurately quantify the result of the data gathering. The first group was composed of the hawkers and the second group was the peddlers. Table 1 presents the numbers of street food vendors participated on the study.

Table 1. Distribution of Street Food Vendors

Street Vendors	Total Population	Sample Size
Hawkers		
Male	4	4
Female	4	4
Peddlers		
Male	12	11
Female	24	22
Total	44	41

The research instrument used in conducting and gathering data of the study was a survey-questionnaires. It was divided in two parts. The first part of the instruments included the street vendors’ profile in terms of age, sex, educational attainment, type of business operation, number of years operating, and the availability of sanitary permit. The second part include the food hygiene sanitation



and awareness in terms of surrounding and serving of food. Before the instrument was distributed to the identified street food vendors, it went through pilot testing for 10 street food vendors who were not part of the data gathering in order to determine the reliability of the instruments. In answering this part, 4-point Likert Scales were employed such are: 4 = always; 3=often, 2=sometimes and 1=never. To arrive at an accurate interpretation of the data gathered, the following statistical tools were used; frequency, percentage distribution and weighed mean were used to describe, distribute and analyze the street food vendors' socio-demographic profile in terms of age, sex, educational attainment, type of business operation, number of years operating, and availability of sanitary permit. The Statistical Package Social Sciences (SPSS) software were used for the analysis of statistical data and to make data-driven decisions.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents all the data gathered upon retrieving all the instruments used. Proper analysis of data and interpretation was applied.

On the Socio-Demographic Profile of the street vendors, 30.0% of them aged from 20 to 29 years old while 16.67% were 40 to 49 years old and 50 years old and above, surprisingly, 36.66% from the food street vendors aged from 30 to 39 years old. Results implied that adulthood is the exact aged of doing street businesses. They are old enough to have developed network of friends and community members who can play a role both in financing and in operating food business. There are numerous myths concerning older workers, but little research to substantiate the claims. Research indicates that the older worker is at least as productive as a younger one, less likely to leave or be absent. According to the Labor Code of the Philippines, under Article 139 which covers the Minimum Employable Age, no child below (15) years of age shall be employed, except when he works directly under the sole responsibility of his parents or guardian, and his employment does not in any way interfere with his schooling. Any person between fifteen (15) and eighteen (18) years of age may be employed for such number of hours and such periods of the day as determined by the Secretary of Labor and Employment in appropriate regulations. The foregoing provisions shall in no case allow the employment of a person below (18) years of age in undertaking which is hazardous or deleterious in nature as determined by the Secretary of Labor and Employment.

Moreover, 60% of food street vendors-respondents were females and 40% were males. According to Benitez (2021), aside from the common difficulties in kitchen workplaces, women chefs surveyed emphasize the discrimination felt regarding their recognition, compensation and support. Many writers and chefs discuss how the food service industry claims gender no longer impacts one's success but fail to recognize the subliminal ways gender roles impact the workplace. Research shows women remain in all areas of the food industry despite challenges of the environment, although they commonly make sacrifices to become 'one of the guys' or find alternate career paths to succeed. Additionally, on food street vendors-respondents' highest educational attainment, there are fifteen (15) or 36.59% of the respondents who finished junior high school, twelve (12) or 29.27% are college graduates, four (4) or 9.76% who graduated from elementary level, one (1) or 2.44% finished senior high school, four (4) or 9.76% completed technology/vocational course, and five (5) or 12.20% have no educational attainment. The data further manifest that more from the respondents were college graduates and junior high school graduates. The finding implies that some of the respondents were educated others were not, despite of educational differences they are all aware of the sanitation practices.

Furthermore, the results on number of years operating the food business revealed that that about ten (10) or 33.34% were operating the business for about 6 years and above, seven (7) or 23.33% were operating the business for 5 months, five (5) or 16.67% were operating for 4-5 years, four (4) or 13.33% were operating business from 6 months to 1 year. Another four (4) or 13.33% of the respondents are also operating for 2-3 years. The table further implies that several from the respondents were operating their business for 6 years and above. The results revealed that most of the respondent's business has been around for 10 years. They have been able to sustain their business and maintain the good hygiene of their business as well as how they treat their customers. Likewise, the table 2 presents the types of food business operating by the food street vendors.

Table 2 presents the frequency and percentage distribution of the respondents' profile in terms of the types of business operating. Eight (8) or 19.51% of the respondents were selling assorted "kakanin" (tidbits) as their business, seven (7) or 17.07% were selling frozen foods, four (4) or 9.76% were selling juices, seven (7) or 13.33% were selling pater (rice with a viand wrapped on banana



leaf), five (5) or 12.20% of the respondents were selling “*turon*” (fried banana roll), three (3) or 7.32% were selling “*mais*” (corn), four (4) or 9.76% were selling sliced fresh mango & pineapple, and three (3) or 7.32% was selling “*tapay*” (fermented crop). The results conveyed that majority of the respondents were operating assorted “*kakanin*” which is 19.51%. The table further implied that the respondents are the ones selecting which one from their assorted business should be displayed every day. These results supported by Poot, et al. (2022), Filipinos who are known to enjoy the average three meal a day plus dessert, race to the street to satisfy their hunger for their favorite “*pinoy*” street food for only a few pesos. Street food vendors are available to all and can be found everywhere; street vendors may be located outdoors or under a roof which is easily accessible from the street responding the daily need of the people.

Table 2. Respondents’ Profile in terms of the Types of Food Business Operating

Socio-Demographic Characteristics	Specification	Frequency	Percentage
Types of Business Operating	Kakanin (Tidbits)	8	19.51%
	Frozen Foods (Tempura, Squid-roll, Franks, etc.)	7	17.07%
	Juice	4	9.76%
	Pater (Rice with Viand wrapped on banana leaf)	7	17.07%
	Turon (Fried banana roll)	5	12.20%
	Maize/Mais (Corn)	3	7.32%
	Fresh mango & pineapple	4	9.76%
	Tapay (fermented crop)	3	7.32%
	Total	41	100.0%

As well, the food street vendors also acquired sanitary permit in order to operate their food business. It is presented in table 3.

Table 3. Respondents’ Profile in terms of their Sanitary Permit

Socio-Demographic Characteristics	Specification	Frequency	Percentage
Sanitary Permit	Business without Permit	29	70.73%
	Business with Permit	12	29.27%
Total		41	100.0%

Table 3 presents the frequency and percentage distribution of the respondents’ profile in terms of the availability of the sanitary permit to operate business. The table shows that out of the total of forty-one (41) respondents, twenty-nine (29) or 70.73% have no business permit, and twelve (12) or 29.27% has been operating with a business permit. The data disclosed that most of the street food vendors operating business in Barangay Datu Saber, even more than 10 years ago, have no sanitary permit, which implies that respondents were operating business without the control of the government. Stall vendors or owners should strictly follow the guidelines of Sanitary Codes of the Philippines to avoid any further problems in operating their business. Every stall vendor or owner shall provide the sanitation needs and other essentials to maintaining the cleanliness and safety of their stalls. Based on the results, most of the street foods vendors in Barangay Datu Saber, Marawi City are stationary or permanently staying in the place where they are selling. Some of the vendors are classified as non-stationary because they are selling occasionally or move to different places where there are more possible customers.



On the level of awareness of food hygiene and sanitation of the street food vendors, the table 4 presents the weighted mean of food hygiene and sanitation awareness of street food vendors in terms of surrounding sanitation. The table 4 revealed that among the ten (10) items on the food hygiene and sanitation awareness in terms of surrounding, item no. 8, “I segregate the cleaning cloth for my hand, table and chair and also for the tool” with the weighted mean of 3.43 is equivalent to a descriptive interpretation of “often”. In line with this finding, the table 4 displays that all the rest of the items, indicators or statements in terms of surrounding sanitation obtained a weighted mean which is equivalent to a descriptive interpretation of “often”, with the exceptions of two items, which are item no. 4, “During an infectious disease of the skin, I take leave from work” with a weighted mean of 2.40 which is equivalent to a descriptive interpretation of “sometimes”, and item no. 10, “Wearing of my face mask is an important practice to reduce the risk for food contamination” with a weighted mean of 2.23 which is equivalent to a descriptive interpretation of “sometimes”. In general, the average weighted mean of the items or indicators in terms of surrounding sanitation were found to be 3.05 which is equivalent to a descriptive interpretation of “often”. Therefore, the table further suggested that the respondents are “often” aware of the cleanliness of surrounding for the purpose of food hygiene and sanitation awareness of street food vendors. Food workers are potential sources of harmful microorganism and if good hygiene practice are not followed, infection can be transmitted to the consumer. To prevent the occurrence of food borne illness and other food safety hazards, employees should perform good personal hygiene practices and be provided with adequate training on a continuous basis. There are some recommended practices that should be followed by employees working in a food processing establishment, as shown in the table 5.

Table 4. Food Street Vendors’ Food Hygiene and Sanitation Awareness of in terms of Surrounding Sanitation

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation
1. There is the adequate available water or food disposal facilities.	3.33	Often
2. I clean and sanitize my tools and equipment properly.	3.37	Often
3. When coughing and sneezing I am turning my face away from the food.	2.97	Often
4. During an infectious disease of the skin, I take leave from work.	2.40	Sometimes
5. I use cover for adequate protection of food from flies and dust.	3.17	Often
6. I use cover for adequate protection of food from flies and dust.	3.30	Often
7. There is the adequate available water or food disposal facilities.	3.33	Often
8. I segregate the cleaning cloth for my hand, table and chair and also for the tool.	3.43	Often
9. My vending stall is protected from sun, dust and wind.	2.97	Often
10. Wearing of my face mask is an important practice to reduce the risk for food contamination.	2.23	Sometimes
Average Weighted Mean	3.05	Often

Legend: 1=Never, 0.00 – 1.50; 2=Sometimes, 1.51-2.50; 3=Often, 2.51-3.50; 4= Always, 3.51-4.50

Table 5 presents the weighted mean, descriptive and ranks of the food hygiene and sanitation awareness in terms of serving foods. Table 9 reveals that among the ten (10) items of serving foods, Item No. 2, “I wash my hands prior to preparing foods” has a weighted mean of 3.53 which is equivalent to a descriptive interpretation of “often”. Relative to this finding, there are at least four (4) items such as Item Nos. 2, 3, 7 and 10 which obtained a weighted mean which is equivalent to a descriptive interpretation of “often” respectively except at least five (5) items that obtained a weighted mean which is equivalent to a descriptive interpretation of “never.”



Table 5. Food Street Vendors’ Food Hygiene and Sanitation Awareness in terms of Food Serving

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation
1. I handle money with serving food.	2.27	Never
2. I wash my hands prior to preparing foods.	3.53	Often
3. I am serving a food even though I’m not yet ready.	3.13	Often
4. Even though I am sick, I am still cooking food.	1.63	Never
5. I am serving food without hairnet.	2.53	Sometimes
6. I use my dirty clothes when removing dust/dirt.	1.50	Never
7. I use the utensils to prepare raw and cooked food.	2.80	Often
8. I wear jewelry while preparing or serving foods.	1.30	Never
9. I blow my nose or touch my face while serving foods.	1.43	Never
10. I am not using gloves when serving.	3.23	Often
Average Weighted Mean	2.35	Sometimes

Legend: 1=Never, 0.00 – 1.50; 2=Sometimes, 1.51-2.50; 3=Often, 2.51-3.50; 4= Always, 3.51-4.50

In line with the following manifestation, the table further shows that the average weighted mean of the food hygiene and sanitation awareness of street food vendors were 2.35 which is equivalent to a descriptive interpretation of “sometimes”. Therefore, the table implies that food hygiene sanitation awareness in terms of serving food only happens “sometimes” only. In other words, the street vendors’ respondents are not fully aware and are not practicing the food hygiene and sanitation in terms of serving foods. According to Poot, et. al. (2022) the food industry is responsible for food supply, harvesting, processing, manufacturing, transportation, distribution, consumption, including waste. Because we all need food, the food industry has a huge impact and is one of the most important contributors to the economy. Therefore, the street food vendors are known for having the highest standards of food safety and sanitation. One minor misstep in handling food can easily turn into a nightmare. One major hazard to food safety is dirty utensils being used over and over. A big mistake one wants to avoid is cross contaminating the products by not properly cleaning utensils, cooking surfaces and cutting boards. This rule can be hard to follow when the workday gets busy and hectic and one feels of having no time, however, by cross-contaminating, there is a risk infecting a customer with a food-borne illness, a death-knell for a new. Clean facilities and equipment contribute to the consistent quality of food products. Any lapses in sanitation can affect the taste, appearance and safety of food, impacting customer satisfaction, Marshall (2024) additionally, he stated that commitment to high satisfaction standards helps build consumer trust and confidence. Negative incidents related to food safety can damage a restaurants / caterers’ reputation and lead to recalls and financial losses. Moreover, Personal hygiene is important to prevent food poisoning. When handling food, wash your hands thoroughly and often, if you are sick, do not go to work, because you can contaminate food more easily and food handlers should be properly trained in safe food handling according to <https://www.health.vic.gov.au/>.

4. CONCLUSION

The street foods are very popular in the Philippines specifically in Barangay Saber, Marawi City. This place has so many street food eaters since this is a busy place because it is a commercial place and the huge medical hospital in the region were situated. The results revealed in the study perceived that street food vendors’ food hygiene and sanitation awareness of in terms of surrounding sanitation was “often” practiced and food hygiene and sanitation awareness in food serving was also perceived to “sometimes”. It was noted that sanitation is the fundamental aspect of food safety Sanitation is a fundamental aspect of food safety; as safe food cannot be produced without food worker proper hygiene. Food and surrounding sanitation includes the methods, procedures, and chemicals used to clean food processing equipment, as well as hygienic design of facilities and equipment. The Street Food Vendors-participants have this mindset on the importance of food hygiene and sanitary condition on their business to protect customers from food-borne illnesses and poisoning because sanitation is good for business and customers prefer to see food handlers who follow proper hygienic practices and safe food handling.



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