

**INFLUENCE OF EMPLOYEE KNOWLEDGE AND PERFORMANCE ON FOOD
HANDLING PRACTICES IN OUTSIDE CATERING FACILITIES IN THIKA, KIAMBU
COUNTY, KENYA (A CASE STUDY OF CASCADE HOTELS-THIKA)**

BY

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**A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF HOSPITALITY AND
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HOSPITALITY MANAGEMENT OF GREYSA UNIVERSITY**

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DECLARATION

This research project is my personal original work and has not been presented for the award of a degree or for any similar purpose in any other institution.

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This research project has been submitted with my approval as Gretsia University supervisor.

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DEDICATION

I want to dedicate this research proposal to my family for their encouragement, support, their sacrifice, patience and inspiration. My humble gratitude hereby goes to GRESTA UNIVERSITY fraternity for their support they have been giving me all through, your assistance is be highly appreciated and regarded whatsoever, thanks abundantly.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION	Error! Bookmark not defined.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	iii
DEDICATION	iv
TABLE OF CONTENTS	v
LIST OF TABLES	viii
LIST OF FIGURES	ix
ABBREVIATIONS AND ACCRONYMS	x
OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS	xi
ABSTRACT	xii
CHAPTER ONE	1
1.0 Introduction	1
1.1 Background of the Study	1
1.2 Statement of the Problem	3
1.3 Purpose of the Study	4
1.5 Objectives of the Study	5
1.5.1 General objective	5
1.5.2 Specific Objectives	5
1.6 Significance of the Study	5
1.7 Scope of the Study	6
1.8 Limitation of the Study	6
LITERATURE REVIEW	7
2.1 Introduction	7
2.2 Employee knowledge and employment in outside catering facilities	7
2.3 Food Handling Practices in Outside Catering Facilities	9
2.4 Relationship between employee knowledge and performance in outside catering and food handling practices	10
2.5 Theoretical Framework	11
The Health Belief Theory	11
CHAPTER THREE	12

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	12
3.0 Introduction	12
3.1 Research Design	12
3.2 Study Area	12
3.3 Target population.....	12
3.4 Sampling technique.....	12
3.5 Sample Size	12
3.6 Measurement of variables	13
3.7 Research instruments	13
3.8 Pre-Testing	13
3.10 Data Collection techniques.....	13
3.10 Data analysis.....	14
3.11 Logistical and ethical consideration	14
CHAPTER FOUR.....	15
DATA ANALYSIS, FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION	15
4.1 Introduction	15
4.2 General information.....	15
4.2.1 Response Rate	15
4.2.3 Age group of respondents.....	16
4.2.4 Period worked at Cascade.....	16
4.2.5 Academic Levels	17
4.3 Results of descriptive Statistics	17
4.4 Hypothesis Testing	19
CHAPTER FIVE	21
SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	21
5.1 Introduction	21
5.2 Summary	21
5.3 Conclusion.....	22
5.4 Recommendations for Practice.....	22
5.5 Recommendations for Future Research	23
REFERENCES	24

APPENDICES	24
5.1 Appendix 1: Letter of Introduction.	25
5.2 Appendix 2: Questionnaire	26

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1.1: Gender distribution.....	15
Table 1.2 Period worked at Cascade.....	17
Table 1.3 Academic levels.....	17
Table 1.4: Employee Knowledge & Performance Descriptive Statistics.....	18
Table 1.5 Food Handling Practices Descriptive Statistics.....	19
Table 1.6 Correlation results.....	20

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1.1 Conceptual framework.....	4
Figure 1.2 Age group distributions.....	16

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACCRONYMS

WHO – World Health Organization

KFC – Ken turkey Fried Chicken

PRC – Peoples Republic of China

HACCP – Hazard Critical Control Point

KNBS- Kenya National Bureau of Statistics

SPSS- Statistical Package of Social Sciences

OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS

Employee knowledge- the employees being aware of the rules and laws governing the hospitality industry. What is required of them, Acquired through training in hospitality institutions, by the hotels.

Employee performance- this is how employees carry out themselves in their daily performance, in interacting with the guest. The employees use their specific skills and knowledge to support the organizations program

Food handling practices- these are guidelines and accessing process of food product in order to prevent and rescue them from all the unwanted and unhealthy factors

Outside catering facilities- these are catering services provided in-home, events, offices, parties, offering food, cold drinks, snacks, and charged on the bases of food and distance.

ABSTRACT

There are over 2 million food poisoning situations in a year all over the world as reported by the World Health Organization (WHO) mostly in growing countries like Kenya. Food handlers are the main factors in supporting the success of hygiene measures and food safety. This study is meant to determine the influence of employee knowledge and performance on food handling practices in outside catering facilities. The objectives are; To determine employee knowledge and performance in outside catering facilities in Thika town, to establish food handling practices in outside catering facilities in Thika town, to find out the relationship between employee knowledge and performance and food handling practices in outside catering facilities in Thika Town. The researcher carried out this study in Cascade hotel Thika town, mainly focusing on the outside caterers of the hotel. The service providers were the respondents of this research. The researcher used descriptive cross-sectional survey design with a target population of 30 respondents of Cascade hotel who are the service providers of outside catering. Total census was done during data collection. The study utilized questionnaires as the main research instruments. A pilot study was carried out at the Sagret Hotel in Thika. The researcher used SPSS software to analyze information gained from the questionnaires. Objectives 1 and 2 were analyzed using descriptive statistics while objective 3 was examined using inferential statistics as correlation was adopted. Representation of the data was presented by the use of graphs and tables so as to make informed conclusions concerning the study. From the findings of the study, there exists a statistically significant relationship between employee knowledge and performance of food handling practices in Cascade hotels, Thika. This can be attributed to the fact that the hotel's management does not carry with so much weight, cross-training of employees from time to time about better food handling methods. There also exists a positive strength of relationship between the study variables meaning that indeed, food handling practices need to be taken seriously by hotel management.

CHAPTER ONE

1.0 Introduction

This chapter entails background of the study, statement of the study, purpose of the study, conceptual framework, the general and specific objectives of the study, the hypotheses of the study, the significance of the study, the scope of the study, the limitations of the study and the assumptions of the study.

1.1 Background of the Study

Over 2 million food poisoning situations in a year all over the world are reported by the World Health Organization (WHO) in growing countries like Kenya. These food poisonings are caused by poor personal hygiene, that is, washing of hands before, during and after handling raw and cooked foods, another main cause is poor safety of food, cross contamination, storage temperatures, critical cooking among others. Kiambu exercises culinary diversity from hotels and other hospitality institutions. Service providers across these facilities should consider adding skills to match the changing and quick growing industry and guest's knowledge on what to expect from service providers. Most research carried out in Kiambu on outside catering have had more inclination to job performance of hospitality employees.

A few documented studies will help show employee performance on food handling practices. A study by (Kivela, J., Lam, M. L., & Inbakaran, R. (2002)), food safety in school catering in the People's Republic of China. This study was undertaken in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region in the People's Republic of China (PRC) and it tested the safety of food gap provided in school meals. Results show that food safety gaps exist, and a specific managerial recommendation about how to reduce these gaps is given.

In addition, another study by (Baş, M., Ersun, A. Ş., & Kıvanç, G. (2006)), the determination of food hygiene knowledge and practices of food handling. The study showed that Turkish businesses food handlers have less training on the food hygiene basics, that is; critical temperatures of hot or cold foods, good refrigerator temperature ranges, and cross-contamination etc. Therefore, there is a need for training and creating awareness among food handlers regarding safe food handling practices

Kibret, M., & Abera, B. (2012), a study on the sanitary conditions of food service facilities and food handlers' knowledge and performances on food safety in Bahir Dar town, Ethiopia, there is a knowledge gap in food hygiene and handling practice. In addition, there was statistical variation between trained service providers and non-trained handlers concerning food hygiene practices. While more than 50% of the handlers make meals before the peak selling time, more than 50% of the left over was poorly used. This study showed poor personal hygiene and food hygiene practices of these service providers. Training programs aimed at improving the attitude of service providers, licensing and checking them more often, have been suggested.

An additional study by (Rotich, D. J. (2017)). Food Safety Risk Factors in choice of Outside Catering facilities in Nairobi, Kenya. The study showed a significant positive relationship between the hygiene, the process of food handling and cross contamination traits control and safety of food. In conclusion a good change in control of cross contamination, lead to supervision of food handlers, control of food handling processes in firms offering outside catering services would ensure safe food provision.

Therefore, this study will focus on social demographic factors that contribute to good food safety and hygiene of foods in outside catering facilities focusing on cascade hotel Thika town. Studies

on topics related to performance of outside catering services in comparison to employee attitude knowledge and performance are less and with this gap; the study will seek to find out service provider thoughts and contribution to attaining quality service and minimize food poisoning in these public events with specific focus to Kiambu county Kenya. Further research could open ways on how to apply this knowledge and systems to protect consumers from food related health hazards and to ensure food safety for all consumers.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Food handlers are the main factors in supporting the success of hygiene measures and food safety. In Kenya, cases of food poisoning, food infection and food diseases from food consumed from classic events have increased over the years due to these events having people from different communities, different social class and different backgrounds. Different groups help determine food choice to be consumed in different public events. The more skilled, knowledgeable and experienced the service providers are in these public events the better the quality of service they offer and the less the food contamination. The Kenya Association of Manufacturers has confirmed that city hall has not been testing food handlers for almost a year. This can cause doubt on the food the public is consuming in these public events.

There have been cases of food poisoning over the past years. August 21st 2019, Rodama, Kieni West, Nyeri county, four people died of food poisoning after consuming food at a dowry ceremony, several others complained of abdominal pains three days later and other severe symptoms like diarrhea. In addition, on January 5th 2020, a family of four consumed chicken at KFC Hurlingham, Nairobi and hours later their four year old who ate most of it was seriously ill while the rest had diarrhea symptoms. Therefore, this study will seek to understand the

consumer's knowledge on foods they consume from these public events, their practices of hygiene and measures of food safety

1.3 Purpose of the Study

This study meant to determine the influence of employee knowledge and performance on food handling practices in outside catering facilities.

1.4 Conceptual Framework

Independent Variable

Dependent variable

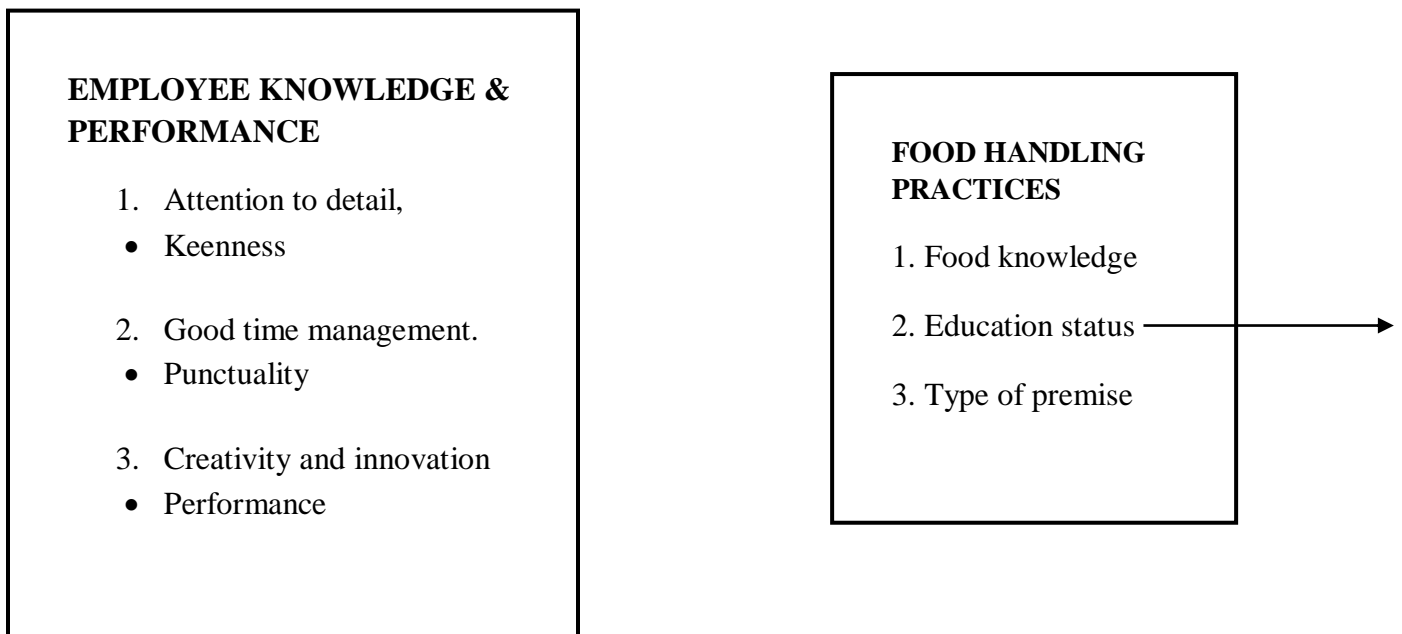


Figure 1.1 Conceptual framework

(Source; researcher, 2020)

1.5 Objectives of the Study

1.5.1 General objective

1. To determine employee knowledge and performance on food handling practices in outside catering facilities

1.5.2 Specific Objectives

1. To determine employee knowledge and performance in outside catering facilities in Thika town
2. To establish food handling practices in outside catering facilities in Thika town
3. To find out the relationship between employee knowledge and performance and food handling practices in outside catering facilities in Thika Town

1.5.3 Hypotheses

There is no statistically significant relationship between employee knowledge and performance of food handling practices in outside catering facilities in Thika Town

1.6 Significance of the Study

The researcher sought to help a number of beneficiaries in that; the outside caterers will understand the views of the clients on the quality of service to offer during their service provision. This study also sought to make the service provider understand how his or her behavior and activities contribute to food contamination and help them learn on how to keep food fit for consumption to reduce risk of food borne diseases like cholera. The researcher aims to help reduce the number of cases of food poisoning around Kiambu County by creating awareness of different variables to both consumer and the service providers

1.7 Scope of the Study

The research was carried out this study in cascade hotel Thika town, mainly focusing on the outside caterers of the hotel. The service providers were the respondents of this research.

1.8 Limitation of the Study

The researcher expected lack of clear and true information from the caterers mostly on hygiene since some are less willing to open up on their personal hygiene during their catering services. Therefore, the researcher confirmed confidentiality to the respondents in order to get clear and true information about their personal hygiene while offering services. The researcher expected to face financial constraints during the research process due to travels to and fro the study area. The researcher will do the research to an accessible outside catering hotel for easy access to the caterers and reduce financial constraints.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter entails; review of employee knowledge on food handling practices, review of employee performance on food handling practices,

2.2 Employee knowledge and employment in outside catering facilities

Making sure that food is safe for consumption in public events is a big challenge in developing countries like Kenya due to poor management systems, inadequate knowledge and training by food handlers. Food handling practices varies among food handlers based on their age, sex, location, level of education and marital status, which impact the level of knowledge of food handlers. There is no influence capital income has on the level of knowledge on anyone handling food. Nora a., Amit K., (2017) agrees that inadequate knowledge of safety food practices primarily increases food borne illness risk. Food handlers have minimal knowledge on food storage, maintenance and usage of cooking facilities, personal grooming, food handling and food poisoning. Therefore there is room for improvement for food handlers by getting training on how to make food that is safe for consumption in these public events.

Mojca j. et al., (2007), Slovenia, on food safety knowledge and practices among food handlers agree that there is a knowledge gap of food handlers on microbiological hazards on catering of foods for the public. They also agree that there is an importance of the human resource department in any catering facility for ensuring employee work satisfaction which is not mostly given any consideration in these facilities and in the food supply chain. Any hospitality institution from the management should consider analyzing employee opinion towards

requirements of the safety of foods which has brought out hazards ascribed importance regard food safety.

In addition, there is poor hygiene environment around food handlers, in their cooking areas, storage of goods and surrounding environments. Most food handler's practices safe food handling practices but their environment is not clean. Slyvia B. RoseAmm M., (2014), Uganda, in determining the quality and food safety, the main aim is to consider bacterial counts in prepared food or water, which shows the adopted level of hygiene by those handling the foods during preparation of food, (Nkere et al., 2011). Guzewich and Ross (1999); Da Cunha et al., (2012) agree that most cases of food poisoning that come up from these public events is caused during preparation practices that is environmental hygiene, equipment contamination, thorough cooking of foods for consumption, storage temperatures, food handlers with inadequate training knowledge and skills.

July j. et al., (2016) of South Africa accept that most people handling foods in these public events only have high school certificates and most of them are over 36 years of age. Most facilities which deal with foods for the public don't use the hazard analysis critical control point (HACCP). In most cases, they completely have no idea of the hazard analysis critical control point programme. These food handlers also have inadequate knowledge, awareness and attitude on food safety measures and useful microbial hazards. Up to 60% of food handlers have no idea of what's required of them.

Employee performance has also a big impact of the future plans, development and direction on any hotel and catering institution. How the food handlers interact and associate with one another, with their customers and stakeholders any outside catering facility plans are influenced by employee skills and knowledge. In the United States of America, the Malcolm Baldrige

National Award was won by The Ritz Carlton Hotel Corporation in 1992 for showcasing good employee performance and practices standards in the hotel industry (Evans and Lindsay, 2011).

2.3 Food Handling Practices in Outside Catering Facilities

Food handling practices are evidently and inevitably changing with time and as such, great care needs to be taken into account whenever handling the food. A significant amount of food borne illness is caused by poor food handling and hygiene practices according to Jay et al. (1999). Food can be subjected to contamination with substances that are toxic when being mishandled, and thus the consumption of this contaminated food during catering can result to contraction of diseases which may come as a lack of knowledge by the food handlers, Legesse et al (2017).

Berning and Martin (2013) stated that many food borne related illnesses can be prevented by the use of proper practices of food handling during outside catering or even at homes. Any enterprise that does handle food that is meant for the public has got potential for the occurrence of illnesses that are food borne related within their operations. The establishments offering outside catering need to therefore put emphasis on the prevention of food borne illnesses through awareness and putting in practice food handling habits that are appropriate, and this should be well laid down to the employees of the establishments because as Robert's et al. (2008) noted, poor hygiene practices, improper food handling practices and cross contamination are a contributor to food borne illnesses. The outside catering facilities need to have high hygiene standards to reduce the spoilage of food and thus the food handlers are expected to put in place and adopt appropriate food handling safety measures that can prevent passage of contaminants, according to Rotich(2017). Hertzman and Barrash (2007) carried out a study to investigate the knowledge possessed by employees in regards to personal hygiene practices and other food safety concerns in outside catering. A good number of major personal hygiene violations were done including

not washing their hands before engaging in catering activities and not putting on gloves when working with food that ready-to-eat.

Food handling in the catering facilities (industry) can concern important factors like optimal cooking temperatures, food holding and food storage as these are effectively translated into the food handling practices among catering facilities according to Ovca et al. (2018).

2.4 Relationship between employee knowledge and performance in outside catering and food handling practices

These two have a close interdependence among each other as the knowledge of the employees on what's expected of them in food handling, in outside catering is as crucial. According to Strohbehn et al (2014), lack of personal hygiene amongst the food handlers is a most commonly reported practice and may be as a result of a lack of knowledge by the employ what's expected of them matters food handling hygiene. The knowledge of employees on food handling practices is important as food borne diseases are a big challenge and are a leading cause of illness especially by the outside catering facilities for both developed and developing countries according to Da Cunha et al. (2012) and Hassan et al. (2010). The people employed directly in food production and foodstuff preparation (Food handlers) are very integral to lowering risks associated to food safety (De Sousa, 2008 and Chapman, 2009), in the catering establishments. As indicated, lack of personal hygiene by those handling the food is the practice that is most commonly reported in contribution of food borne illnesses, Taulo et al. (2009). Personal hygiene needs to be ensured especially hand washing by the good handlers in outside catering facilities, as this has been cited as being a tool that is most effective in the prevention of the spread of food borne illnesses and infections (NHS Plus, 2008). In order to improve food safety and safe food handling practices in

outside catering establishments, developing and educating the employees knowledgeable in food safety and hygiene is necessary according to Onyeheho and Hedberg, 2013.

2.5 Theoretical Framework

The Health Belief Theory

This study was informed by the The Health Belief Model which is a theoretical model that can be used to direct health promotion and disease control programs. It is used to show individual changes in health behaviors. It is one of the most globally used models for understanding health behaviors. Its primary concept predict why people do what they do, example why do people take less seriousness in their personal hygiene when handling food, the benefits and barriers to behavior, their self-efficacy, you are confident in your creativity and innovation when handling food. Cues to saction that is your readiness to do what you are to do, good time management. Attention to detail in handling what they do, that is seriousness, do they consider all the factors to when handling foods to help reduce food contamination.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter comprises of the study design, research study area, target population, sampling techniques, sample size, measurement of variables, research instruments, validity and reliability, data analysis and ethical considerations of the research.

3.1 Research Design

The study used descriptive cross-sectional survey design as it does analyse both the interrelationships between variables and also gives information that's necessary in understanding the degree of relationship between the variables that are being studied, according to Mugenda and Mugaenda , 2003.

3.2 Study Area

This study was conducted in Cascade hotel, Thika Town, in Kiambu County, Kenya, which is located at **latitude** 1.0333 South and **longitude** 37.0693 East. Thika is an industrial town lying on the A2 road, 42Kilometres Northeast of Nairobi.it has a population of 139,853(KNBS 2019). The area was chosen because being around Nairobi it is highly considered for outside catering services and it is easy to access.

3.3 Target population

This study intends to target 35 respondents of Cascade hotel who are the service providers of outside catering.

3.4 Sampling technique

Total census will be done during data collection.

3.5 Sample Size

This study sampled 2 Cascade hotels. All the 35 employees of both hotels will be examined.

3.6 Measurement of variables

The independent variable was measured by attention to detail, timeliness, food knowledge, creativity and innovation. A Likert scale stretching from 1= strongly disagree to 5= strongly agree was developed using questions based on the independent variables. The dependent variable was measured by using a Likert scale which stretches from 1-5. The scale was based on food knowledge, education status and type of premise.

3.7 Research instruments

The study utilized questionnaires as the main research instruments. The advantage of questionnaires is that it permits collection of large amount of information within a short period of time and is relatively cheap (Kombo & Tromp 2003) Questionnaires were constructed by questions based on the independent and dependent variables.

3.8 Pre-Testing

A pilot study was carried out at the Sagret Hotel in Thika. The area is chosen because it has similar characteristics as the study area. The researcher gave sample questionnaires to some respondents to test whether the questions in the questionnaires are relevant and understandable so as to ensure accuracy during data collection.

3.9 Validity and Reliability

Validity was ensured through content validity which will be done by the supervisor. Test retest reliability was used to ensure reliability of the instrument.

3.10 Data Collection techniques

A formal letter from the researcher's institution was provided, to notify the cascade hotel on the study aims so as to be allowed to carry out the research. Valid questionnaires were then

administered to the population sample of interest. Upon being filled by the respondents, the questionnaires were collected back for analysis purposes.

3.10 Data analysis

The researcher used SPSS software to analyze data obtained from the questionnaires. Objectives 1 and 2 have been analyzed using descriptive statistics while objective 3 have been analyzed using inferential statistic for this study correlation was adopted. Representation of the data was achieved by the use of graphs and tables so as to make informed conclusions concerning the study.

3.11 Logistical and ethical consideration

The researcher sought consent from concerned study scope and also obtained a letter from Gretsia University to make the research official. The researcher ensured that the questionnaire is valid and strictly confined within study objectives. To also ensure a successful completion of the study, the researcher ensured collection and an analysis of data is correct and precise. On ethical considerations, the researcher maintained high levels of discipline throughout the study which included getting permission before administering questionnaires.

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS, FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents data analysis and the interpretation of the findings as per the objectives. Quantitative data was analyzed using various descriptive methods. Thereafter, frequencies of responses were filled and the results were tabulated in. Inferential statistics was carried out to enable a clear determination of the existing relationships between the variables of the study.

4.2 General information

4.2.1 Response Rate

Thirty-five (35) questionnaires were distributed to the respondents in Cascade hotels, out of which thirty-four were received back by the researcher. On performing cleaning and scrutiny of the data received, only thirty three (33) questionnaires were returned duly completed. This yielded a response rate of 94.28%

4.2.2 Gender

The respondents were asked to indicate their genders, and as shown in table 1.1 below, majority of the respondents were men at 54.5% while the females were at 45.5% therefore indicating that there are slightly more male employees than the females at Cascade hotels.

Gender				
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Male	18	54.5	54.5	54.5
Valid Female	15	45.5	45.5	100.0
Total	33	100.0	100.0	

Table 1.1: Gender distribution

4.2.3 Age group of respondents

Figure 1.2 below is an indication of the distribution of age group demographics of the respondents of this study:

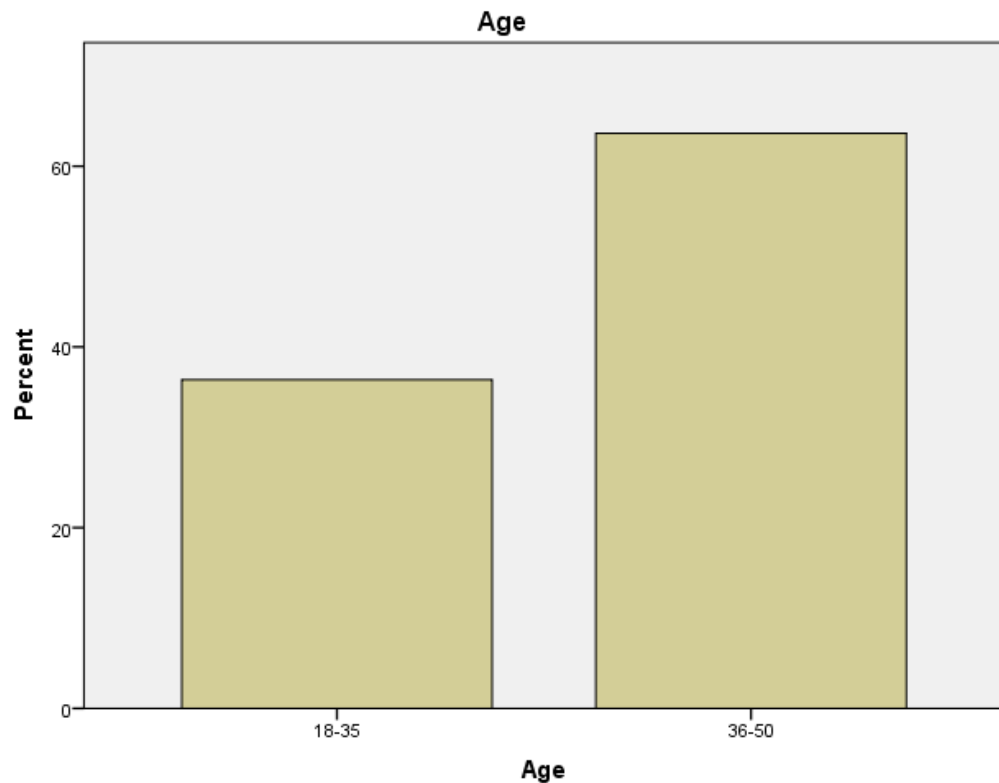


Figure 1.2 Age group distributions

Respondents within the age bracket of 18-35 were 12 yielding a total of 36.4% of the workers in Cascade hotels, Thika town. Twenty-one respondents were between the age of 36-50 years thereby yielding a higher rate of 63.6% meaning that majority of workers in Cascade are within this age bracket.

4.2.4 Period worked at Cascade

After the conduction of data analysis on the period the respondents have worked at Cascade, the results indicated that a slightly higher number of respondents (51.5%) have worked at Cascade

hotels for a period of between 2-5 years whereas the others (48.5%) have worked at Cascade for less than a year. From the data collected, no respondent has worked at Cascade hotels for more than 6-10 years.

Period Worked At Cascade				
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Less than 1 year	16	48.5	48.5	48.5
Valid 2-5 Years	17	51.5	51.5	100.0
Total	33	100.0	100.0	

Table 1.2 **Period worked at Cascade**

4.2.5 Academic Levels

Descriptive statistics on the levels of academic qualifications of the respondents working in the food production sections in Cascade indicated that none of the respondents is a master's holder as majority of the respondents (24) amounting to 72.7% have diplomas, while only five (15.2%) are degree holders and the rest four (12.1%) are certificate holders.

Academic Level				
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Certificate	4	12.1	12.1	12.1
Valid Diploma	24	72.7	72.7	84.8
Degree	5	15.2	15.2	100.0
Total	33	100.0	100.0	

Table 1.3: **Academic Levels**

4.3 Results of descriptive Statistics

The tables below presents the descriptive results of the study constructs after a successful analysis of the collected data:

Employee Knowledge & Performance Descriptive Statistics

ITEM	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
I am attentive to detail when handling food	33	3.64	1.055
I am keen on hygiene when handling food	33	3.45	.833
I am creative and innovative when handling food	33	3.06	.704
My performance skills according to me are good	33	4.36	.653
I manage my time so well when handling public food to ensure no cross-contamination	33	4.15	.667
I am aware of the effect of unhygienic food on the health of the customers	33	4.30	.637
Valid N (list wise)	33		

Table 1.4: Employee Knowledge & Performance Descriptive Statistics

Each of the measures of employee knowledge as it appears in table 1.4 has got means that are above 3.0 meaning therefore that majority of the respondents agreed to the constructs or items of employee knowledge & performance.

On the other hand, table 1.5 below shows descriptive statistics about food handling practices and its constructs in which, two of the constructs (3rd and 4th constructs) have means that are below 3.0 thus meaning that the respondents disagreed with these items. However, the three other remaining items (1st, 2nd and 5th items) have got means that are above 3.0 with positive standard deviation meaning therefore that the respondents agreed with the items.

Food Handling Practices Descriptive Statistics

ITEM	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
I have skills and knowledge to handle all kinds of food in the kitchen	33	4.18	.683
My education status influences my food handling skills	33	4.06	.659
This type of premise I am in has an impact on my food handling practices	33	2.76	.830
The hotel management offers training on better food handling practices from time to time	33	2.42	.902
I am very keen when it comes to food handling and ensuring food hygiene is maintained at all times	33	3.91	.879
Valid N (list wise)	33		

Table 1.5 **Food Handling Practices Descriptive Statistics**

4.4 Hypothesis Testing

Table 1.6 below shows the correlation results of the study hypothesis testing as was conducted by the researcher. Pearson Correlation was used to conduct a hypothesis testing so as to find out the inter-relatedness of the items being tested. In that matter, a confidence level of 99% was set as presented below:

Table 1.6 Correlation results

	Correlation	P- Value	Decision Rule
Employee knowledge & Performance of food handling practices	0.74*	.000	Reject

*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

The table above (table 1.6) demonstrates positive correlations. Since a confidence level of 99% was set, the results were only significant at the 1% ($p < .001$). The null hypothesis that states there is no statistically significant relationship between employee knowledge and performance of food handling practices in outside catering facilities in Thika Town, Kenya was rejected therefore. There exists a positive correlation also ($r = 0.74$), a clear indication of a strong relationship between the variables of study.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter provides an in-depth summary of the study findings, the conclusions of the study based on the objectives, recommendations for practice and suggestions for future research.

5.2 Summary

This study aimed at investigating the influence of selected factors of employee knowledge and performance of food handling practices in Cascade hotels and restaurants. On the conduction of descriptive statistics each of the measure of employee knowledge has got a mean of above 3.0, with also higher standard deviations thus implying that most of the respondents agreed with the items or questions under the variable on employee knowledge and performance. Descriptive statistics was also conducted on the variables about food handling practices and these three out of the five items measuring this variable were agreed upon by most respondents as they had means of above 3.0. Most respondents disagreed to the fact that the type of premise they are in has an impact on their food handling practices and that the management of the hotel offers employee training from time to time. These two measures had a mean of below 3.0 thus leading to the conclusions made above. Pearson correlation was carried out to find out the interrelationships between the variables, as it was discovered by the researcher that there is a positive statistically significant relationship between employee knowledge and performance of food handling practices ($r=0.74$, $P\text{-value}=.000$) leading therefore to the rejecting of the null hypothesis. There also exists a positive strength of relationship given the correlation (r) above.

5.3 Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, there exists a statistically significant relationship between employee knowledge and performance of food handling practices in Cascade hotels, Thika. This study set out to determine this and it was found that indeed, employees might have the basic knowledge concerning food handling practices but the management should not take this lightly as though it is not important. Given the correlation results of the study, the researcher can also conclude that the positive strength of relationship between the measures if the studies are a good show that indeed, the employees need to be well aware and informed of the proper food handling practices.

5.4 Recommendations for Practice

The study makes the following recommendations necessary for practice:

To begin with, the right and well skilled professionals should be employed to make sure they are able to understand fully, anything and everything about food handling. Secondly, it is just not enough to have employees that are professionals but also, having the rightfully skilled employees who are ready to take the first action in making sure that the hygiene of food is not taken for granted, even without being supervised to ensure so. Third, from time to time, the hotel management should offer training on better food handling practices. This can include initiatives like in –house training of these employees or attending seminars on food handling and benchmarking. Also, when it comes to hiring employees, then the right and educated ones who go line in line with the hotel goals need to be employed. Finally, the hotel should make sure a better way of being keen, and making sure there is a total maintenance of better food handling to ensure they retain and maintain higher standards of food hygiene.

5.5 Recommendations for Future Research

This research study examined the influence of employee knowledge and performance on food handling practices in outside catering facilities, and therefore, the results herein and above is purely related to this topic of study. However, a similar study, with a twisted but closer topic can also be carried out not only in Thika but also in other towns and other establishments offering hospitality related services. This study only focused on Cascade hotel, Thika, a similar study can be carried out in a different location outside Thika to compare the results of the findings. Other studies can also be carried out to look into food handling, focusing on different variables.

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APPENDICES

5.1 Appendix 1: Letter of Introduction.

Dear Sir/ Madam,

REF: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT A RESEARCH PROJECT.

I am Felistus Karwitha, a student at Greta University undertaking a degree in Hospitality Management. I am carrying out a research on “The Influence of Employee Knowledge and Performance on Food Handling Practices in Outside Catering Facilities in Thika< Kiambu County” in partial fulfillment of the requirements of my degree program.

Your assistance will be highly appreciated, if you could give your opinion regarding my research.

All information will be treated with confidentiality as the study is purely for academic purposes.

Thank You.

5.2 Appendix 2: Questionnaire

Employees Questionnaire.

Please answer this questionnaire as honestly as possible. All the answers will be treated confidentially.

SECTION A: Personal Details

(Tick/ Cross appropriately)

1. What is your Gender?

Male () Female ()

2. What is your Age?

18-35 () 36-50 () 51-60 () 61 and above ()

3. How long have you been working at the Cascade Hotel

Less than 1 year () 2-5years () 6-10years ()

4. What is your academic level

Certificate () Diploma () Degree () Masters ()

SECTION B

In this part, tick in the box as per your view:

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

A	EMPLOYEE KNOWLEDGE & PERFORMANCE	1	2	3	4	5
1	I am attentive to detail when handling food					
2	I am keen on hygiene when handling food					
3	I am creative and innovative when handling food					
4	My performance skills according to me are good					
5	I manage my time so well when handling public food to ensure no cross-contamination					
6	I am aware of the effect of unhygienic food on the health of the customers					

B	FOOD HANDLING PRACTICES	1	2	3	4	5
1	I have skills and knowledge to handle all kinds of food in the kitchen					
2	My education status influences my food handling skills					
3	This type of premise I am in has an impact on your food handling practices					
4	The hotel management offers training on better food handling practices from time to time					
5	I am very keen when it comes to food handling and ensuring food hygiene is maintained at all times					