



Faculty of Tourism and Hotels
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Evaluating Food Safety Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices (KAP) among Food Handlers in Food Retail Sector in Egypt.

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Abstract

Background: Food safety is an international major concern in all food establishments such as grocery stores. Food retailers provide a significant service to the public. Food safety-related procedures, and practices grocery stores are critical in protecting public health. The Egyptian retail food industry is expanding in size and popularity. In 2021, the Egyptian food retail sector recorded sales of \$31.3 billion. The knowledge, attitude, and practices of food handlers are the most important factors in ensuring food safety. However, there is a scarcity of studies conducting to evaluate these factors in Egypt.

Aim: The current study aimed to evaluate the level of food safety knowledge, attitude and, self-reported practices (KAP) of food handlers at food retail sector in Egypt and to evaluate the effectiveness of food safety training on their (KAP) level.

Methodology: A cross-sectional study was conducted among 262 food handlers in top ten food retail stores in Egypt. The food handlers were investigated using a questionnaire, which covered three major topics concerning food safety knowledge, attitude, and practices. Furthermore, an intervention technique was used to major the effect of training using pair-sample T test.

Results: A major part of food handlers 82.4% were men while women were 17.6%. About 64% of food handlers had adequate knowledge of food safety, almost one third of food handlers 36% had poor knowledge scores, knowledge score was (69% and 49%) about cleaning and temperature control respectively. Regarding food safety attitude, the average percentage of positive attitudes was 84%, almost all of them 94% mentioned that food safety is a high priority to them while in contrary 49% agreed that “raw fresh milk is healthier and more nutritious

than pasteurized or boiled milk” which is a great sign of danger. Self-reported practices average score was 80%,96 almost all % reported washing hands before handling raw and cooked foods while more than half (54%) of them thawing frozen food at room temperature. Accordingly, the study shows that food safety training has a positive impact on the level of food handler’s knowledge, attitude, and self-reported practices.

Implication: firstly, according to the literature this is the first study conducting in Egypt to evaluate (KAP) at food retail sector which serve the theory. Secondly, the food retail sector can use this study to evaluate food handlers in their place to know their weakness and strength Points then enhance and upgrade their level of food safety (KAP) by taking correction actions and training.

limitations: this study only evaluate the self-reported practices without considering the actual practices.

Key words: Food safety, Knowledge, Attitude, Practices, Food retail, Egypt, Five keys.