

ABSTRACT

Foodborne illness is a growing public concern and, continues to affect millions of people each year. Therefore, food-related infection is an important health problem in many countries.

The objective of this study was to determine food safety knowledge and practices of students attending University of West Indies, St. Augustine. Other objectives included, to determine whether gender had a correlation with students' food safety knowledge and practices. Another objective was to prove that food safety practices are not entirely dependent on food safety knowledge.

The sampling group was composed of randomly-selected 100 students that are 55 males and 45 females. 30-itemed questionnaire comprised of demographics, knowledge and practice questions. Five areas were tested under knowledge and practice questions, they were Proper hygiene, Cooking and Serving, Cross-Contamination, Defrost/Thaw, Reheat, and Proper Storage of foods. They study found no significant correlation between any of the demographics (gender, age and year of study) with food safety knowledge or practices.

The study found that food students had food safety knowledge of 56 % and their practices were 39%. This indicates that students have food safety knowledge but do not practice what they know. Even though the results indicate that students have the knowledge, 56% is still at an insufficient percentage level of food safety knowledge. If it was at a sufficient level, food safety practices would have been optimal level.

Educational efforts to fill the gap between food safety knowledge and practices are essential in order to prevent future illnesses and even death.