

Food Tourism Industry in SOCCSKSARGEN Region: Availability of Resources, Awareness, Attitude, and Compliance with the Implementing Rules and Regulations on Food Safety and Sanitation among Street Food Vendor

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ABSTRACT

A predictive correlational study determined the level of resources, awareness, attitude, and extent of compliance with the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRRs) on food safety and sanitation among street food vendors in food tourism industry in SOCCSKSARGEN Region, Philippines. The answers of 265 randomly selected street food vendors in the five cities of the said region of Mindanao to the 5-part questionnaire was the source of data for the study. Results showed that majority of the street food vendors have "occasionally available" resources. They were "less aware" about and have positive attitude towards IRRs on food safety and sanitation. The extent of compliance with IRRs on food safety was "satisfactory" and on sanitation was "very satisfactory." Civil status, type of premise, type of food sold and capital were significantly related to availability of resources. Type of premise was highly significantly related to awareness about IRRs on sanitation. Attitude significantly enhances the relationship between availability of resources, awareness and compliance with IRRs on food safety and sanitation. Level of awareness and availability of resources was a significant predictor of the extent of compliance with IRRs on sanitation, and on food safety, respectively.

Keywords: Awareness and compliance, resources, food safety, sanitation

INTRODUCTION

Background and Rationale of the Study

The food tourism industry in the SOCCSKSARGEN region of Mindanao, Philippines, is seen to be a major player in income generation in the area. The food industry is diversified and street food vending has become popular as people see the convenience of eating meals in public places considering its low cost, convenience and accessibility (Privitera & Nesci, 2015).

A significant challenge is safety and sanitation of the food sold. The food safety act of 2013 (RA 10611) is meant to protect the consumer by providing standards for the food service providers to comply with (Jeperson L., 2014).

The street food vendors particularly, are expected to comply with implementing rules and regulations on food safety and sanitation (Hutter, 2008).

However, the prevailing cases of food related health issues seem to indicate the inadequacy of food business operators to comply with the regulations resulting in unsafe food products and eventually compromising the health of the consumers (US FDA, 2019).

Thus, determining the extent of compliance with the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRRs) of RA 10611 was the main objective of the study with the influence of such factors as availability of resources, awareness, and attitude with compliance also considered.

The final output of this study was to develop an implication of the findings to the policy program that will be significant to the food establishment, to the association of the street food vendors in SOCCSKSARGEN region, to the health authority and to the other related agencies.

Objectives

Generally, this study was conducted to determine the level of resources, awareness, attitude, and extent of compliance with the implementing Rules and Regulations (IRRs) on food safety and sanitation among street food vendors in the food tourism industry in SOCCSKSARGEN Region, Philippines.

Specifically, this study aimed to:

1. Describe the respondents in terms of Personal characteristics, Non-personal characteristics and Economic characteristics;

2. Describe the level of the availability of resources in the food business operation;

3. Describe the level of awareness of the implementing rules and regulations on food safety and sanitation;

4. Describe the attitude towards the implementing rules and regulation on food safety and sanitation;

5. Describe the extent of compliance with the implementing rules and regulations on food safety and sanitation;

6. Determine whether the personal characteristics, non-personal characteristics and economic characteristics are significantly related to the availability of resources for food business operation;

7. Determine whether personal characteristics, non-personal characteristics, and economic characteristics are significantly related to the level of awareness of the IRR on food safety and sanitation;

8. Determine whether the level of availability of the resources is significantly related with the level of awareness about IRR on food safety and sanitation;

9. Determine whether the level of availability of the resources is significantly correlated with attitude towards IRR on food safety and sanitation;

10. Determine whether the level of the awareness about IRRs on food safety and sanitation is significantly related with the attitude towards IRR on food safety and sanitation;

11. Determine whether attitude towards IRRs on food safety and sanitation is significantly related with the extent of compliance with the IRRs on food safety and sanitation;

12. Determine whether the level of the availability of resources in the food business operation is significantly related with compliance with IRR on food safety and sanitation and controlling for attitude;

13. Determine whether level of awareness about IRRs on food safety and sanitation is significantly related to the extent of compliance with the IRRs on food safety and sanitation and controlling for attitude; and,

14. Determine the strongest predictor of the extent of compliance of the street food vendors with the IRRs on food safety and sanitation.

Theoretical Framework

There are two theories used to support the study.

1. One is the Theory of Planned Behavior/Theory of Reasoned Action (LaMorte, 2019), which describes the attitude of the person and determines by his/her intention to perform the given tasks. In this study the task

referred to is compliance to IRRs on food safety and sanitation.

2. The other theory is The Resource-Based Theory (RBV), (Holdford, 2018), which explains and predicts changes in individual awareness and attitude towards human social behaviors.

Scope and Limitation of the Study

The aspects looked into the personal, non-personal and economic characteristics of the respondents in the operations affecting the resources, awareness and attitude of the street food vendors in the food tourism industry in SOCCSKSARGEN, Region.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design: The research design used was predictive correlational design.

Research Instrument: A 5-part questionnaire duly validated with a reliability coefficient of 0.934 was used. Items were taken from RA 10611, PD856- Code of Sanitation and PF 522 – Sanitation Standards for Food Establishments in the Philippines.

Sampling: Stratified sampling was employed with cities of General Santos, Koronadal, Tacurong, Kidapawan, and Alabel Sarangani as strata. Of the 850 street food vendors of SOCCSKSARGEN region 265 was the computed sample size which was proportionately distributed to each stratum.

Data Collection Technique:

The researcher requested permission to conduct the study from the Dean of CPU School of Graduate Studies and from the mayors of the five cities covered. The questionnaire was personally administered and accordingly retrieved. The data was encoded using the SPSS v. 25 from which analysis called for in the study was done and results generated.

Statistical Tools Used:

Descriptive statistics like frequency counts, percentages and weighted mean were used. Predictive correlation analytical tools include Eta, Chi-square test, Cramer's V, Gamma coefficient; zero order correlation, partial correlation, and stepwise regression were also used in analysis.

RESULTS

1. Street food vendors were relatively young, majority were females, attained secondary education, married, with average family size, Roman Catholics and were engaged in street food vending for the past five years.

2. Majority sell street food, that is, combo foods and local delicacies within 3 km distance from their residence, in mobile premises with a capital of Php 5,000 or less from which they earn Php 1,000 or more daily. Majority do not have other sources of income but a few do farming, driving or operate a sari-sari store.

3. The results further show that there was no significant relationship

between the level of availability of resources and extent of compliance with IRRs on food safety and sanitation controlling for attitude. Partial correlation analysis disclosed a highly significant influence of attitude to both awareness about and compliance with IRRs on food safety and sanitation.

4. Regression analysis indicate that availability of resources and awareness are significant predictors of the compliance to IRRs on food safety and sanitation. However, while level of availability of resources was a stronger predictor of compliance on food safety, awareness was a stronger predictor of compliance on sanitation.

Table 1

Summary of Findings Considering the Four Major Variables.

Variable/Parameter/Indicator	Food Safety	Sanitation
1. Availability of resources	Occasionally available	
2. Awareness about IRRs on food safety and sanitation	Often aware of 13 sections of IRRs on food safety	Often aware of all five (5) major provisions of IRRs on sanitation
3. Attitude towards IRRs on food safety and sanitation	Positive	Positive
4. Extent of compliance with the IRRs on food safety and sanitation	Satisfactory	Very satisfactory

Table 2

Analysis of Relationship between Independent and Dependent Variables.

Dependent Variables	Independent Variables			
	Civil status	Type of premise	Type of food sold	Capital
Availability of Resources for food safety and sanitation	Significantly related	Significantly related	Significantly related	Significantly related
Awareness about Food safety	No significant relationship	No significant relationship	No significant relationship	No significant Relationship
Sanitation	No significant relationship	Significantly related	No significant relationship	No significant relationship

Table 3

Analysis of Relationship among Study Variables.

Variables	Availability of resources	Awareness about IRRs on Food Safety and Sanitation	Attitude towards IRRs on Food Safety and Sanitation	Compliance with IRRs on
Availability of Resources for food safety and sanitation		Positive weak, significant relationship		Not significant relationship
Awareness about IRRs on food safety and sanitation	Positive weak, significant		Positive strong and highly significant relationship	
Attitude towards IRRs on food safety and sanitation		Positive strong and highly significant relationship		Positive strong and highly significant relationship
Compliance with IRRs on food safety and sanitation	No significant relationship		Positive strong and highly significant relationship	

Conclusions

1. Availability of resources among street food vendors are occasional with only two most indispensable items available among them.

2. The street food vendors were often aware of the sanitation standards but were always aware of the food

safety requirements and the potential health effects and risks to the consumers if not observed.

3. The positive attitude among street food vendors towards IRR on food safety and sanitation made them understand the need to provide not only sanitary food to the consumers

but amenities to maintain hygiene and sanitation such as comfort rooms and handwashing facilities.

4. The very satisfactory extent of compliance with IRRs on food safety is manifested in their practice of maintaining high quality of products sold.

5. Only four factors influence availability of resources for food safety and sanitation, civil status, type of premise, type of food sold and capital.

6. Compliance with IRRs on food safety and sanitation is determined by awareness and attitude, with attitude having a moderating effect to both awareness and compliance.

7. Availability of resources and awareness are significant predictors of compliance with IRRs on food safety and sanitation. Availability of resources was a stronger predictor of compliance with IRRs on food safety than awareness. On the contrary, awareness was a stronger predictor of compliance with IRRs on sanitation compared with availability of resources.

Recommendations

1. The profile of the respondents indicate that majority of the street food vendors belong to the vulnerable group specifically women, and it is suggested that food safety and sanitation guidelines more favorable to this group be formulated

2. Capitalization as one component of the business which in this study is rather low and needs reinforcement from stakeholders in terms of microfinancing. This considering that street food vending is the only source of income by the majority of the respondents.

3. Resources needed to level up the food vending business were not available among the street food vendors due to financial limitations. Mechanism must be set up to make these resources accessible to the street food vendors.

4. Street food vendors operate in premises far from their residence. A mobile facility may be provided so as not to compromise the quality of food sold which may be contaminated in transit.

5. The provisions stated in the IRRs on food safety and on sanitation is quite difficult for the street food vendors to understand considering that most of them had only a high school level of education. A simply worded guideline of the IRRs on food safety and sanitation specifically for street food vendors will be more useful.

6. It is likewise recommended that in order to assure high levels of compliance of the street food vendors to IRRs on food safety and sanitation, the existing rules and regulations must be reviewed and the relevant

provisions to the street food vendors be simplified for them to understand and eventually follow.

7. The guidelines on food safety and sanitation should be reviewed

periodically to maintain its relevance to the needs of the food business industry.

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