

Effectiveness of Multichannel Health Education Health Package on Personal Hygiene Practices of Food Handlers in a Tertiary Care Hospital of Delhi – A Before and after Interventional Study

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Abstract

Introduction: Food is a major determinant of health, nutritional status and productivity of the population. Personal hygiene is an important domain of food safety to prevent food borne illnesses. Health education intervention is the one of the most effective tools to improve personal hygiene practices to ensure that food is safe for customers and achieve compliance with food safety requirements.

Material and Methods: This before and after interventional study was conducted among 111 food handlers among food establishments in a tertiary care hospital of Delhi in 2022. Data collection was done using an interview schedule and observational checklist on personal hygiene based on WHO 5 keys and FSSAI guidelines. Health education intervention included health talk using flipchart, audio visual aids and demonstration. Endline assessment was done 2 months after the intervention.

Results: The mean differences of personal hygiene knowledge, attitudes and practices were 6.95 ± 0.93 ($p=0.046$), 2.97 ± 1.29 ($p=0.049$) and 3.98 ± 0.91 ($p=0.007$) respectively. Maximum change was seen in practices of keeping nails trimmed (11.7% to 94.6%) and use of head cover/cap (11.7% to 93.7%) while minimum change seen in use of safety shoes/clogs (6.3% to 9%).

Conclusions: The personal hygiene practices of food handlers showed a remarkable improvement after the health education intervention. Thus, education on food safety in medical institutions should be meticulously planned and held at regular intervals and in order to achieve the desired change.